

# THE LITTLE GUY

by Dave Fearis

- He or she is the golf course superintendent of a 9-hole course.
- Often times, he is the whole crew. Perhaps he might have a helper during the summer.
- It isn't uncommon for him to aerify and topdress all the greens by himself. He might be able to only do one green a day because he has to spread the topdressing by hand with a scoop shovel.
- He doesn't mow his fairways with a troplex; he crosses his fingers each day hoping that his 1972 or '73 triplex greensmower makes it through mowing greens.
- He can't push a button and automatically water the greens and tees. He still has to use the hose and roller base to water.
- He doesn't know what a stimpmeter is and probably doesn't care.

He's the "little guy" only in respect to budget. But he's a "giant" in the amount and quality of work he accomplishes. His greens are as true and consistent as those of any major course. Granted his fairways aren't watered, but they're weed-free and very playable. His budget is meager when compared to many other courses, but he still finds the time and money to beautify his tees or clubhouse with flowers.

Is this superintendent less of a professional than the ones at the 18 or 36 hole courses? Of course he isn't, and I'm not trying to put down those at the major courses. The point that I wish to emphasize is that the superintendents at these 9-hole, or even 18-hole, courses, with the small budgets are the forgotten or even ignored professionals. We are constantly reading in the trade magazines about those superintendents with the mega-budgets who are hosting the important tournaments. Also, I would venture a guess that our local and national turf associations are composed mainly of superintendents from the 18-hole courses with the "country club" budgets. Where's the "little guy" in these magazines, and he more than likely wants to go to the meetings. However, he feels "out-of-place" and somewhat uninvited. How we all could benefit from these "little guys," his methods, ideas, and practices.

Let's all make an effort in the future to include the "little guy." he is a very important part of our industry, and he does belong. ■

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