

DIVOTS

By Donald E. Kooyer, C.G.C.S.
Willow Lakes Golf Club



TO PLAY THE GAME

To play the game or not to play the game. We have heard this statement from the time we competed in sports and throughout our working career. It is not only our profession as professional golf course superintendents but in all aspects of the business world you have to know the entire scope of the profession you are in.

In our position as golf course superintendents we must be concerned with not only the aesthetics of our golf course facility but the playability as seen and played by our members or the public golfers. How many times have you heard from one of your members, Don, the course down the road has this or that and have you seen the difference it makes? I'm sure we all have, and if you

haven't, you will. Now, to be able to answer questions of this kind you have to get out to the other courses in your area and be able to evaluate your course situation with the one down the road. At my facility we have members and public play. I talk with our members about our routine maintenance and inform them of special cultural practices that will be done on the course. I admit that I don't get out and hit the ball as often as I should. And you can tell with the 26 handicap I have with our North Florida Superintendent's Chapter.

To compensate for myself not getting out to play as much as I would like I endeavor to place men that play golf and/or are interested in our field.

I am fortunate to have a general manager, Jim Smith, that has played in the U.S. Open and he surely knows the game of golf. What better ally could you have on your side? Lane Pace came into my office one morning (he is my golf course set up man and operator) and asked for a day off next week. Now, we just had a couple of large tournaments at our course and Lane did an excellent job of preparing our course for play. Lane said he would like to be able to play in a tournament at one of the clubs in our area that is being held by the U.S.G.A. We had prepared our course for this event the previous year and it would be an excellent way for me to extend my knowledge through one of my crew members and Lane also would be able to play the game that he so much enjoys. Well, it turned out that Mr. Pace won the U.S.G.A. Public Open first place in Florida! I'm in hog heaven now, our club has two U.S.G.A. qualifiers. What better man could I have than Lane for a course set up man? I am a golf course facility superintendent and one of my responsibilities is personnel management and I could not ask for anything better than having a professional as Mr. Smith or an amateur golfer as Lane Pace on my side. I have to thank both of them for giving me the knowledge of the game of golf as they have in the past. Now if I could just squeeze in a few golf lessons from these men!

I might not ever win a green jacket, but I will see you all at the the annual Golf Course Superintendents Golf Tournament and maybe Jim and Lane can be proud that they started their superintendent off number one tee in the right direction! ■

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