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Happy superintendents stay longer. It seems pretty safe to assume this. If a superintendent is allowed to release the day-to-day tensions from salesmen, insects, weeds, weather, suppliers, crew, etc., it translates into a benefit for the club while costing them nothing. Those extra hours of "trained-eye time" can save them thousands of dollars by spotting problems before they erupt. Being able to play the course you work on provides that extra little motivation to keep the greens beautiful and healthy. You'll go that extra inch, yard, or mile, not only for club, but for yourself as well.

Please allow this writer to take this issue one step further. Should the golfing privilege be extended beyond the superintendent to his assistant and employees? This may raise a few conservative eyebrows and qualms among the owners and Boards of Directors of golf courses, but the potential benefits returned to the clubs are tremendous. When questioned about his views and policies, Henderson again gave the idea an emphatic yes. He has 18 employees and supports their playing, even encourages it.

M.H.: "The Board at Atlantis decided that employee golf privileges were allowed before I came here. Though I have refined the guidelines a little bit, my assistant can play all year 'round, and the other employees may play any afternoon from May thru October. One unique benefit that Atlantis provides to their employees is the use of a cart."

Does knowing the game have a positive impact on their view of their work?

M.H.: "Undoubtedly. For example, take raking sand traps. To a non-player, this isn't significant, but a golfer knows that you don't want any grooves marring the surface and hindering your game. A playing employee understands the little nuances involved which the non-playing employee doesn't instinctively recognize, even though he can be an excellent worker."

Do you think that golfing privileges for an employee is a factor in their staying at a specific course?

M.H.: "Yes, an employee who enjoys the game tends to stay longer at an obliging course, which reduces the turnover rate and helps you keep the good workers. Instead of moving on to another job, he'll stay where he can keep the golfing privilege."

Henderson and his crew (some of which are golfers!) have their hands full at Atlantis Golf Club this year, rebuilding 9 greens and installing a new computer irrigation system on all 27 holes. 18 greens are scheduled to be rebuilt next year.

Every superintendent polled revealed that they would prefer their employees to be golfers, to better understand their jobs. This privilege, from superintendents on down the line, benefits clubs in many ways.

Maybe now is the time for those clubs who do not allow their employees to play golf to re-think their "members only" policies. ■

Post Script: Between the interview and press dates, Mark, Leslie and son Jade welcomed Paris Mills Champagne Henderson into the world! She is an 8 pound, 7 ounce beauty (angel?!). Congratulations Folks!

EFFECTS OF CHEMICALS ON EARTHWORM POPULATIONS

Occasionally we get questions about the effects of chemicals on earthworms. This is a list published in a recent issue of Bug Dope, Ohio State University. Thought it might be of interest.

No effect: Diazinon, Dylox, Guthion, Oftanol, and Proxol.

Increase in Worms: Nitrogen fertilizers, Lime and Nitrate of soda.

Slightly Toxic: Malathion, Dursban, Parathion, Disyston, and Chloro-IPC.

Extremely Toxic: Sevin, Chlordane, Thimet, Temik, Furadan, Dyfonate, Benomyl, Chloropicrin, Methyl Bromide, D-D fumigant, Copper sulfate, Arsenicals, and Sulphate of ammonia.

NOTE; Fertilizer effect may be direct by changing the acidity of the soil, or indirect by changing the form and quantity of the vegetation that ultimately provides food for worms.



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