

“A good superintendent is his own toughest critic.”

No golf course is ever perfect

Perfection is only a perception. It is often desired and seldom attained. If idealistic perfection is sought but not achieved, then perhaps realistic excellence will be the result.

Perfection is not likely ever to exist on a golf course. One man's fast greens are another man's three-putt nightmare. A tall rough is the low handicapper's challenge and the high handicapper's double bogey. One member shoots par and thinks the course is

“perfect” and the next person can't break a hundred and thinks the course is terrible. And so it goes.

Golf course superintendents should strive for perfection as they groom and condition their courses. They may never reach absolute perfection, but competent professionals will develop programs that produce overall excellence and improved playing conditions. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln: *You can grow some of the grass all of the time, all of the grass some of the time, but you can't grow all of the grass all of the time.*

It is very frustrating to hear of excellent dedicated superintendents,

who have rescued, renovated, and rehabilitated turf maintenance operations at club after club only to be faced with threats of dismissal when things aren't perfect. Imperfections don't have to be tolerated, but they should be understood. Focusing on a small problem can magnify it out of proportion to the overall excellent job being done by the superintendent.

It seems that even accomplished golfers can't quite comprehend that golf turf is a living, growing carpet of vegetation that endures use and abuse by people, machines, and mother nature. It is likely that during periods of poor growing conditions combined with heavy play there will be thin or worn turf areas. Trying to maintain 100 percent perfect putting surfaces at 1/8, 5/32, or even 3/16 of an inch day after day is an impossible task.

A good superintendent is his own toughest critic. He doesn't need someone who doesn't really understand the complex nature of golf turf conditioning to nitpick the golf course. A good superintendent with adequate resources at his disposal will address and correct the flaws that exist if it is possible to do so.

This is the season to be thankful for all the good things in our lives. If you have a superintendent who has obviously demonstrated his professional skills, be thankful and appreciative for the changes and improvements he has made to your club. This is a good time to be realistic and charitable in your perceptions about the level of excellence at your club. After all, no one is perfect!

Green Side Up



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