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Black Diamond must be great

Dear Dan & Irene:

I truly enjoy receiving and reading *The Florida Green* for two reasons:

a) Excellently written, well-timed articles illustrated with good photographs.

b) It keeps me up to date with my superintendent friends in Florida.

Your magazine, containing light humorous articles as well as meaty turf stuff offers the reader a mix that makes for a good, enjoyable publication. A wealth of information and top-drawer pictures.

As you might guess, I am way behind with my reading. More so than usual. Fact is, I just completed the Fall 1988 issue — which prompts me to write. The article and photos on Black Diamond Ranch was a masterpiece! Reading it makes you want to play it! Must be great! And different from most courses in Florida. But simply stated, all your publications contain interesting articles and topnotch pictures — both very high quality.

My best to you and all my friends in Florida. I am really looking forward to being in Orlando again next February and to see you all again (surely would love to play Black Diamond Ranch).

Sincerely,
Robert V. Mitchell
The Greenbrier
White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

Pleased to recommend

I recently saw a copy of *The Florida Green* and I must tell you that I found it an impressive publication.

As regional sales manager for BioTurf, Inc., it is part of my duties to recommend publications for our product line and I would certainly welcome an advertising rate schedule.

- Dick Campbell

Drooling in Arkansas

I appreciate receiving your fine magazine. The golfing people at UALR and in Little Rock that I show it to drool over the beautiful greens. Everyone says you do a fine job in publishing the magazine.

Have a fine year.

-Jerry Crittenden
U of Arkansas at Little Rock

Student takes us to Ohio

My name is Rob Kloska and I am interested in receiving *The Florida Green* while I am at superintendents school. I recently spent approximately six months at the Polo Club in Boca Raton under the direction of Rich Brogan, the superintendent and my brother. I am presently attending Nova University in Fort Lauderdale and I plan to transfer to Ohio State Agricultural and Technical Institute after Christmas.

Your magazine has taught me much valuable information.

-Rob Kloska
Steubenville, Ohio

Drying out some old joints

Just a quick note to touch base with you — I am moving from my old hometown, Ark City, Kan., to Scottsdale, Ariz. I have got to get out of the snowballs and freezing weather. The year-around sunshine is for me. I have passed the 80-year-old mark and the old joints and body have got to be among the sunshine areas.

I certainly enjoy and look forward to each issue of your publication. It stands alone in this field. I must say that I read it from cover to cover when I receive it. My hat is off to you, Dan. You are a true master of your profession.

My son Craig has been working with Tom Fazio these past five years and I told him to touch base with you when he gets down your way.

Sincerely,
Dick Metz
Scottsdale, Ariz.

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And just what is it you do for a living, anyway?



What do you do for a living?

How about the people who work for you?

When your new employee is asked about his job by Aunt Minerva, will she get a meaningful response? Or will she have to ask, “And what is that?”

As I was scanning the obituary pages this morning — too many of my acquaintances and contemporaries have taken up the nasty habit of appearing in them — I ran across the notice for a 71-year-old man who was described as “a golf course maintenance person.”

How sad, I thought, that this human being had devoted perhaps half a century to maintaining a facility which, during his working lifetime, brought enjoyment and innumerable lessons in humility literally to millions of people... and his legacy is the sterile designation, “maintenance person.”

What did he do?

Was he a mechanic? Irrigation technician? Spray technician? Equipment operator? Turf groomer? Tree trimmer? Ditch digger? Cup cutter?

Or was he a member of a crew that did all of those things? If that’s the case, he worked very hard. The least they could have done is call him a “maintenance worker.” There’s some honor in that.

But it still doesn’t answer Aunt Minerva’s

question, “What do you do?”

I don’t have the answer, but I suggest it’s an important question for at least two reasons:

The first, obviously, is motivation.

When greenkeepers began seeing themselves more as managers than as grass farmers, they changed their job title to superintendent. Their employers went along with the change because they got better golf courses out of the deal.

The same lesson could be applied to your “maintenance persons.”

The second has to do with survival of the industry.

A golf course “maintenance person” helps nurture a complicated ecosystem that returns fresh water to our aquifers and oxygen to our atmosphere. He protects more wildlife than any zookeeper and he preserves parklands that are not just pretty to look at, but actually serve a useful, healthful purpose for more than 20 million Americans.

Give a “maintenance person” a job title that reflects those contributions and maybe the toxo-terrorists, as Tim Hiers has dubbed them, will go pick on the real enemies of the environment.

What do you think?

Larry Kieffer

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