



Practice made easy. A shag bag for collecting balls hangs from a hook on the edge of the practice green. Photo by Joel Jackson.

of 23.6 inches per hour. Tees and fairways are aerified in the spring and late fall and we verticut the fairways once a year.”

To communicate the maintenance schedule and progress of projects and course conditions, Keene writes several articles in the club’s monthly newsletter. One article is usually just the timing and dates of major maintenance activities and what to expect condition-wise so there are no surprises. The other article is on the what, why and how things are done on the course.

Keene also posts key information on bulletin boards in the clubhouse in case people miss the information in the newsletter. Not content with only the written word, Keene makes it a point to visit the clubhouse during lunchtime to be around and be available for questions. He also makes sure he is seen on the course and visits with the regular golfers.

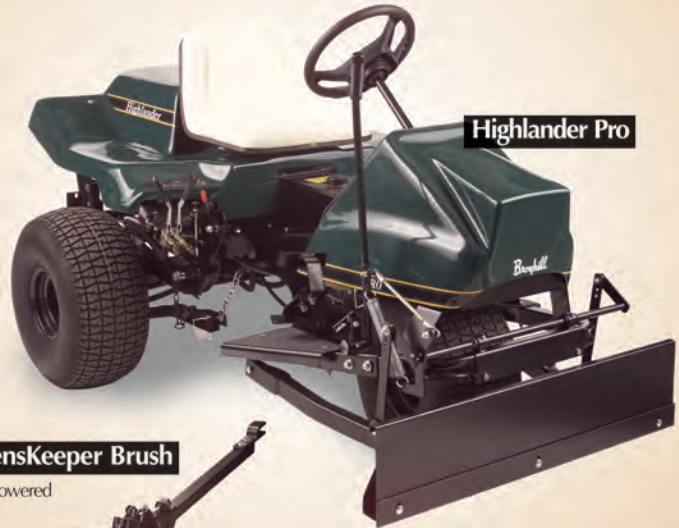
Keene says, “I try to give the members information in advance and let them know directly what’s going on. It has helped to dispel rumors and questions and keep them informed about the progress on the golf course. I think every superintendent should at least write a regular report or article and if there are no newsletters then at least make regular postings on a bulletin board at the clubhouse. The main thing is to stay in contact with your members.”

One of the key tools on a modern golf course is the irrigation system and Keene has two things going for him. One is James Wiley, a 40-year veteran and irrigation technician. Keene says, “James has seen it all and can do it all. We take very good care of our irrigation system.”

And second is a radio-controlled irrigation system that was installed in 1998. Keene continued, “We edge all the heads once a month

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If members don't pick up a scorecard at the pro shop, they can get one at the mail box on the first tee. Photo by Joel Jackson.



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Charles "Buddy" Keene

Originally from: Clermont

Family: Single

Education: Manatee Community College (business and real estate courses); 1995 Lake City Community College - AS degree in golf course operations

Employment history: 1984-88 all crew positions River Wilderness GC; 1988-93 Manatee County Parks and Recreation Dept on municipal courses and athletic fields; 1993 to present Gainesville



G&CC as crew member, assistant superintendent and superintendent since 1995.

Professional affiliations and awards: FTGA 1995 to present - board member and Event Committee chairman, Membership Committee co-chair; FGCSA since 1995, current board member and Education chairman; GCSAA since 1995, currently working on certified superintendent status.

How did you get into the business: Took a job at the River Wilderness Club out of high school.

Mentors: Mike Miles and Tim Cann hired me at River Wilderness and taught me a lot. Gary McDougall with Manatee County encouraged me to go to Lake City and get my degree. Without his advice and encouragement I wouldn't be here today. Last but not least, Jeff Hayden. He did so much for me and others too.

Goals: My immediate goal is to complete my CGCS certification. I'd also like to learn how to pilot a helicopter.

Philosophy of work/Advice: Always be honest with people that way you won't have to worry about what you told someone. Give people your best and more than they expect. Don't take your work home with you. Learn to relax and let it go. You can't please

everyone. Be yourself. Give back to your profession. Join and participate. Support research. Do something.

Memorable moments: I sent a new employee out to mow the clean-up ring on the greens. I showed him how to operate the mower and told him to mow greens 1-18. I set him up with a vehicle, trailer and extra gas and sent him to No. 1. I stopped by a few minutes later and he was doing a fine job. Three hours later he showed up at the shop really sweating and looking for more gas. His trailer was piled high with clippings. I said, "Boy you sure cut a lot of grass, and you're looking for more gas? Aren't you done?" He said, no, he was only on No. 8 and there were more than 18 greens. I began to get worried then, and we went out to see what he was mowing. Not only had he done the clean-up ring, he was also mowing all the tees. It looked pretty bad for two weeks, but I had to laugh. It was my fault for not making sure he really knew what to do, and I learned a valuable lesson about assuming things.

Hobbies/Interests: Wide variety of things I like to do: Hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, scuba diving and spear fishing, travel, and oh yeah, some golf. I am a member of Ducks Unlimited, which is a conservation organization.

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Gainesville Golf & Country Club

Location: Gainesville

Ownership: Members

Playing policy: Private

The Numbers: 18 holes, 6,938 yards. Par 72.

Course Rating 73.5/Slope 135.

Designed by: George Cobb. Opened in 1963.

Management: Club President John Galm; Club Manager Dana Saad; Green Chairman Dale Smith; Golf Course Superintendent Charles "Buddy" Keene.

Major renovations: All greens and some tees redesigned by McCumber Golf in 1992. New Hunter irrigation system in 1998. Ongoing projects: Drainage, drainage, drainage. Future projects: New maintenance facility hopefully.

Total acreage under maintenance: 120

Greens: TifDwarf. Avg. Size: 6,222 sq.ft. Total: 3 acres. HOC: .150" - .185" depending on season and weather. Overseeding: Poa trivialis @ 9-12 lbs/1,000 sq. ft. Green speed goals: 9-9.5. TifEagle putting and chipping greens for evaluation.

Tees: Ormond/Tifway 419 Bermudagrass - 2.5

acres. HOC: .500". Overseeding: 3-way Ryegrass blend @ 400 lbs/Acre.

Fairways: Ormond/419 Tifway/GN-1 Bermudagrass - 32 acres. HOC: .500". Overseeding 3-way Ryegrass blend @ 400 lbs/Acre.

Roughs: Ormond Bermudagrass - 90 acres. HOC: 1.25" - 1.50". Overseeded only when hosting Nike and Buy.com tour events.

Bunkers: 60, 1.21 acres. Sand type: Standard 37M. Machine raked 2x week with Toro Sand Pro. Hand raked as needed rest of the time.

Native areas: 70 acres of native forest and wetlands bordering golf course. Clubhouse overlooks Payne's Prairie Reserve. Five crushed coquina shell waste areas (.25 acres) in dense shade areas under trees.

Waterways/Lakes: Five lakes, 3.22 acres. Aquatic weeds spot treated as needed by outside contractor.

Irrigation: VFD pump station. Source: 3 deep wells permitted by St. Johns River Water Management District. Hunter Legacy radio controlled/computerized control system. 675 Hunter heads-85'-95' spacing. Fertigation system. Watering restrictions: No

watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Variances allowed per EPA/Product label directions.

Total staff including superintendent: 14 full time and 2 part-time. 600 hours per week. 50 hours overtime. Sometimes it's not enough. Project work done in the winter when the grass growth slows down a little.

Leadership: First Assistant Superintendent Lloyd Brown; Second Assistant Adam Strosser; Equipment Technician T. J. Poore; Irrigation Technician James Wiley - 40 year veteran; Administrative Assistant Diane Delzell. Equipment operators Ralph Durant and Willie Cobb - 30-year veterans.

Communications: Monthly club newsletter article - original articles as well as sharing from USGA Green Section and trade magazines. Monthly Green committee and staff meetings. Interact daily with members in grill room and on the course.

Environment: Fully certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. Wildlife inventory ranges from armadillos to waterfowl. You name it. We have it.



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Walking golfers can repair their divots on the course by picking up a handy clip-on sand bottle at the 1st and 10th tees. Photo by Joel Jackson.

and every Monday we check the operation of the heads and zones. We can't do them all in one day, but every Monday we are working our way through the course to make sure everything is operating properly."

The day that I rode the course for this story interview, the winter overseeding had just been put down within the past 48 hours. Keene said, "We only seed tees, greens and fairways. We did overseed the roughs three times when we hosted the pro tournaments. We don't bury the seed under a lot of sand. Our verticutting program going into the fall keeps the turf canopy open for good seed-to-soil contact and we do topdress a week before we seed."

Other than the golden brown color on the greens from the seed, the course was neat and clean in appearance, a testament to the hard work, organization and dedication of the crew. Two other crew members had 30 years with the club and several others were going on ten years.

The staff is made up of 14 fulltime and two part-time people including the superintendent. One half the crew works three hours overtime on Saturdays and Sundays. Keene's office assistant, Diane Delzell, works from 6 a.m. until noon and he says she has been a godsend in helping with phone calls and paperwork. He wished every superintend could have someone like her to ease the administrative load. The other part-timer does edging, trimming and mowing work on the course and gets about 25 hours a week. Keene says sometimes there's just so much to do and not enough people to cover all the bases.

The Gainesville G&CC's stable work environment over the history of the club has allowed superintendents to operate at a good comfort level that has allowed them in return to provide the club members with excellent playing conditions. After 44 years of success, what's next?

Keene says, "The club has talked

Most of the fairways are mainly Ormond bermudagrass, one of the oldest varieties used on golf courses. There are a couple of Tifway 419 and Greg Norman GN1 fairways as well. The greens are 11-year old Tifdwarf with some of the typical off-type patches in them.

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Plenty of sunshine and plenty of bunkers at the 11th and 15th double green complex. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

about a possible upgrade of our maintenance facility. That would be good investment when you consider all the changes in environmental and OSHA regulations that have come along since 1960. As our equipment gets more sophisticated and expensive, our need to store it and service it properly also increases.”

Keene and his staff challenge themselves each year to improve some aspect of the golf course. It keeps them sharp and prevents falling

into a boring routine. Says Keene, “The golf course may look the same to the casual observer, but it is a living, growing thing that changes all the time. Sometimes it’s just normal growth and maturity, and other times it is a reaction from weather stresses placed on the turf by Mother Nature. Our job is to diagnose the situation and react to the conditions.”

Sometimes clubs don’t fully realize the importance and benefit of having a long tenured

superintendent who has learned the in and outs of a piece of property. It takes time to learn all its wet and dry spots and how the turf responds to local weather trends and how to predict and how to modify practices to keep the turf as playable as possible under the situation. Superintendents like Keene and others truly appreciate clubs that learn to trust and respect their knowledge and abilities to manage the golf course, the most important asset of a club.

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A good healthy stand of *Poa trivialis* takes root on the 2nd green. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

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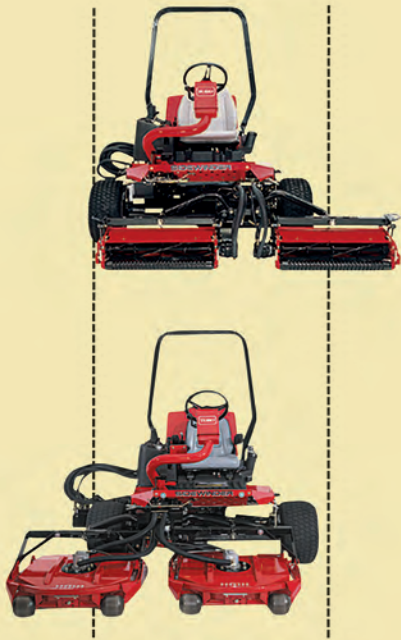
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In 2004 I Resolve... To Become A Better Golf Course Superintendent

Edited by Joel Jackson, CGCS

As I read the various trade publications and chapter newsletters over the years, I clip and save articles that I think are worth sharing. Since this is the time of year we make New Year's resolutions to get organized and overcome or resistance to changing ourselves and our operations for the better, I pulled out several articles that I thought might be helpful. The following is a collection of articles designed to help you make improvements in your personal growth and development as a golf course superintendent and provide some helpful hints in self promotion and communications.

Things That Affect an Image

From "Enhancing Your Value as a Professional Golf Course Superintendent," presented by GCSAA

Personal appearance: Are your clothes clean, neat, and well fitting? Are they appropriate for the occasion? Are your shoes shined, is your hair neatly trimmed? Are your mustache and beard clean and neat? Is your personal vehicle clean and well maintained? And is your home and lawn well manicured?

Staff appearance: Is your staff well organized? Does your staff know its role? Are staff work areas clean, neat and well organized? Is your staff well informed of the staff organization? Does your staff wear a uniform or appropriate clothing that distinguishes it from other employees of your club? And is your staff well informed of the role of public relations?

Work appearance: Is your maintenance facility neat, well organized, well maintained and generally clean? Is your office clean, neat and well maintained? Is the staff bulletin board well organized and up-to-date? Are emergency evacuation plans conspicuously posted? Are neat, well-maintained and appropriate signs displayed? Are work vehicles clean and well maintained? Are organization charts posted? And are grounds, flowers and shrubs adjacent to your facility well cared for?

Other areas in which a golf course superintendent's image can be affected and improved include:

- Attitude
- Job performance or results
- Communications: expressing oneself orally and in writing

- Job knowledge: overall knowledge of the profession
- Good record keeping
- Speaking ability
- Presentation of reports
- Well organized and well written plans
- Confidence in abilities
- Promptness and timeliness
- Cooperativeness
- Friendliness
- Flexibility
- Willingness
- Decisiveness
- Efficiency
- Use of good judgment and common sense
- A sense of humor
- Showing respect and appreciation of others
- Supportive of other club officials and employees
- Understanding
- Ability to handle unexpected situations
- Accessibility to golfers and various other publics
- Participation in civic and community activities
- Participation in local golf course superintendent associations activities
- Participation in GCSAA activities
- Relationships with local media
- Working relationships with staff and others at club
- Education (Continuing education)
- Certification (Class A PDI)
- The condition and beauty of your golf course

In order for the golf course superintendent and golf course superintendent profession to continue to improve its image as "professional," attention to these actions and behaviors will be required from each and every one. Strive to be the best that you can be in all aspects of the golf course superintendent profession.

Reprinted with permission from Georgia GCSA's "Through the Green."

Editor: That list of image factors might be daunting on the first look, but like any undertaking, if you break it down into smaller chunks it's easier to undertake and accomplish. This next article provides some step-by-step actions you can take to change old behaviors. Superintendents are always hard working, but often weak in the area of self-promotion, but in today's world you'd better be tooting your horn in a positive and proactive way to insure your success.

The Power of Self Promotion: From the CGCS Owner's Manual Published by the GCSAA

You know that keeping your job is up to you. You dress appropriately. You speak clearly and are easily understood. You've been published. You continue to learn.

So what else can you do?

Set up and execute a plan to gain greater awareness of you as a person and the job you do.

Here are strategies that successful people in businesses across the world have used to promote themselves. They can work for you, too!

20 Strategies to Success

1. Take responsibility for your own mistakes and for those of your subordinates. Blaming others, however justifiable, makes you look small-minded and weak. Earn a reputation as a "fixer" of errors, someone who can snap back from setbacks and learn from mistakes.
2. Acquire skills beyond those needed for your own job so that you help colleagues solve their problems. Offer to cooperate on projects, but do it without seeming pushy or threatening. Once you are seen as a team player and not a threat, you'll get new opportunities to shine.
3. Set goals for yourself in public. Intelligent risk-taking is an integral part of savvy career management. You will be noticed if you fail, but you will be noticed even more if you succeed.
4. Don't shy away from your critics. Look for ways to get your message across.
5. Associate yourself with those of status, those who are credible opinion leaders.
6. If you feel you lack personal charisma, imitate someone who has it.
7. Get along with others. Be a team player, whether you are in a leadership or team-member role.
8. Control your reactions. The champions in business are able to shrug off distressing situations and regroup emotionally - that is one important reason why they are successful.
9. Be honest. Build an ethical business reputation. Exhibit good values.
10. Make others look good at every opportunity.
11. Roll up your sleeves. Never be afraid to do what it takes to get the job done.
12. Set and maintain high expectations for all who work with you. Encourage others to do their best.