



Yes, we've finally gone to the dogs!

This summer we put together a research project that examined your best friend on your turf maintenance team, that furry companion riding shotgun in your golf car, that four-legged, varmint-control expert – your course dog.

First and foremost, we want to thank the good people at Jacobsen for sponsoring this course canine project. Jacobsen has a long history of supporting the dogs of turf through their collar give-away program.

So what did we learn?

You'll find the results of this research project on the following pages. In some cases we broke the numbers down further to see if there were any distinctions between private- and public-course dogs. Sometimes there were variances, but more times than not the numbers held fairly true across the demographics.

In addition, we did some follow-up reporting and collected anecdotal stories from superintendents about what made their mutts special, as well as personal stories that just seemed to best reflect the kind of buddy they are to you. Frankly, we were impressed with the volume and honesty in your stories, as well as overwhelmed by the generosity of pictures and videos many of you forwarded us. Those we couldn't share in this story will be available in this issue's app edition.

In a nutshell, you love your dogs unconditionally. In fact, if we would have asked, we half expect many of you would've ranked them near the top of the most valuable members of your maintenance team. Heck, most of you subsidize your dog's care and kibble out of your own wallets.

Lastly, as a research incentive we pledged to donate \$1 to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) for every valid return. The ASPCA was the first humane society to be established in North America and is, today, one of the largest in the world. We're happy to report that we'll be making a \$500 pledge in care of GCI readers. – THE EDITORS

This research project was sponsored by



GONE TO THE DOGS



Do you have a course dog?

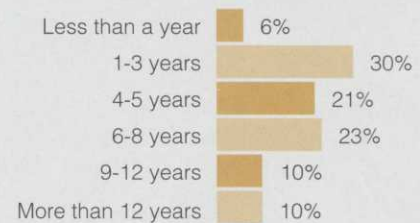
- 74% Yes
- 26% No



Is there more than one dog at your course?

- 73% No
- 27% Yes

How long have you had the dog?



What sex is it?

- 52% Female
- 48% Male

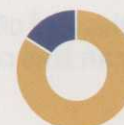
Pure bred or mutt?



Primary Role on the course?

- 45% Pest control
- 23% Turf maintenance mascot and liaison
- 20% He's just my buddy
- 12% Other

Editor's note: "Other" included "All of the above."



Does the course subsidize the dog's care?

- 84% No
- 16% Yes



Where does it spend the night?

- 96% Goes home with me
- 2% Stays at the course
- 2% It depends



KINGSTON, YELLOW LAB

I treat my dog as well as I treat my two kids. He means the world to me. I love him so much that I get a little anxious when he's not with me. We were driving down to the pump early one morning before the sun came up. He's 6 now, but he was only 2 years old at the time. There were some wild turkeys in a field that borders the 15th hole on our south course. I got him riled up, stopped the truck and let him get out to chase the turkeys. Well, he chased them deep into the woods. He usually responds to my call but he didn't return. So I went continued looking for him. After looking and calling for about 30 minutes, I started to get real nervous. I decided to return to the truck to grab my phone. Well, when I got back there, he was sitting shotgun like he usually does waiting for me. I have no idea how we didn't cross paths, but he amazed me. It was a big relief.

Jason VanBuskirk Superintendent 🐾 Stow Acres Country Club 🐾 Stow, Mass.

BASIL, AMERICAN STANDARD BOXER

Best thing a person can have with them daily is a dog. Hate it when she's not around. She helps with everything, most importantly mine, the crew's and our members' attitude. Hard not to smile and enjoy yourself when Baz is around. It was a stressful time one spring. We were in our morning meeting and everyone was on egg shells around the new boss who was making his presence felt and it was making things miserable. As we were delegating morning jobs he chimed in with a few choice words for some members of the crew and it soured everyone's mood further. Once he finished, Baz, just a few months old walked into the middle of the room and took a poop in the middle of the floor. Definitely lightened the mood and was the joke every morning for several weeks. The boss didn't like it, but it was exactly what the crew needed, something to laugh at together.

Trevor Morvay 🐾 Superintendent 🐾 Sawmill Creek Golf Resort and Spa 🐾 Camlachie, Ontario



POA, AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD

He's unbelievably loyal and too smart for his own good. He's by my side to say "Hi!" no matter how the day is going, and has been a wonderful companion for the 10 years (out of his 12) that I have been his caretaker. Poa would prefer me not share all his daydreams of heroic rescues and courageous adventures, and said to spare the stories of the numerous parades he's had on Main Street honoring his goose-chasing prowess. He's just been the perfect dog who hangs his head out the window on the highway – at the appropriate angle, of course, so you can hear his nostrils whistling – chases the cats at home to only be put in his place with a quick swat at his nose, greets visitors at home with a quick head shake and his distinctive multi-syllable "Awooooo-ooo-oooo" howl. He is nearly attached to my leg, following my every move (including from the couch to the recliner) and ready to please on whatever his next task is, even if it means to just "hang out." He loves everyone, lets my kids pull his hair and climb on him if needed, and REALLY gets the ladies' attention because he is utterly adorable. He is the best!

Jon Lobenstine 🐾 Director of agronomy 🐾 Falls Road Golf Course 🐾 Potomac, Md.

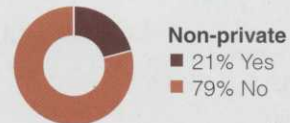


PRIVATE vs. NON-PRIVATE

Do you have a course dog?



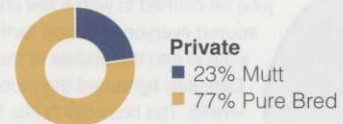
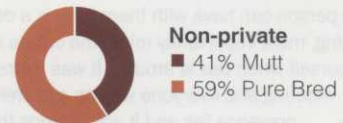
Do you have more than one dog at your course?



Male vs. Female



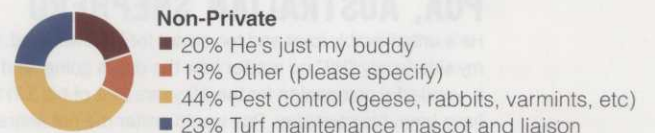
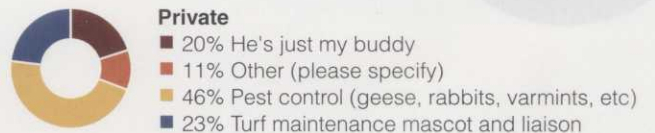
Pure Bred Vs Mutt



Average Annual Cost



Primary Role



JAGER, BLACK LAB

Jäger has adopted the art of armadillo eradication. Since construction of our course in 2009 we have battled armadillos and the damage they do to the turf. Since 2009 Jäger has "removed" 93 of those 'lil varmints from the course. There are so many memories and stories of him hunting and chasing these critters that make me laugh. The members want to throw him a party when he hits the century mark!

Bryan Brinkman 🐾 Assistant superintendent 🐾 The Patriot Golf Club
 🐾 Owasso, Okla.



OZZIE, AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD

We have a female who had a litter of 10 puppies 4-and-a-half years ago. When they were just a few months old I began taking them to the course to become acclimated. After just a few visits to learn the 'ropes' from their mother, three of the puppies and I happened to be driving home when I saw a small flock of geese on the 1st fairway. Naturally, as we got closer I got the dogs pretty excited about their upcoming test. Needless to say, I was not disappointed. When I got close enough to open the door the dogs took off like thoroughbreds out of a starting gate. After the birds got airborne the dogs nearly overtook them and then continued to chase them for another 200 yards. It was quickly obvious they were going to enjoy their work. Not only do they provide a valuable service for our facility but I consider them family members. I can't imagine life without them.



Kevin Smith 🐾 Director of golf course maintenance 🐾
 Bryan Park Golf & Conference Center 🐾 Browns Summit,
 N.C.

MURPHY, BASENJI MIX

Murphy and Jasper are shelter-rescued family dogs who get to go to work every day. Murphy is an 8-year-old Basenji mix. Jasper is a 3-year-old mix of undetermined origin. Jasper was my son's big Christmas present a couple of years ago and both love to chase geese. Murphy might not be able to tell the difference between skunks and cats and tries to sniff the butts of skunks. He no longer gets to run the course free in the dark due to five such encounters in 10 days a few years ago. A couple years ago, he was tethered to the cart. I was moving tee markers on a tee in the dark. I heard a commotion and turned just in time to see a skunk walk up to the cart, spray Murphy, and start walking away. Murphy lunged so hard at the skunk that he broke the chain and landed on top of the skunk. They tangled briefly before I was able to call Murphy back and the skunk disappeared into the darkness.



Chris Thuer, CGCS 🐾 Bear Slide Golf Club 🐾 Cicero, Ind.

LADY, LAB/BLUE HEELER

Jim Ellison, the retired Bay Hill superintendent, was visiting my course as the senior agronomist with Palmer Golf. We were touring the course and, at the time, I was contemplating bringing Lady on full time. Jim and I were standing on No. 15 green looking back down the fairway when we see Lady coming out of the woods. It appeared she was carrying something. We drove down to check her out and she has a ground hog in her mouth. Jim looks at me and says, "You better bring that dog to work with you every day." Enough said. She's been by my side ever since.

Joe Wachter, CGCS 🐾 Managing director of grounds and landscapes 🐾 Glen Echo
 Country Club 🐾 Normandy, Mo.



HERE, BOY!

Top 3 Golf Course Dog Names	Top Golf-Related Dog Names	Top Just Cool Dog Names	Obvious Penn State Reference
<p>1</p> <p>ROCKY</p>	<p>BIRDIE</p> <p>BOGEY</p> <p>DIVOT</p> <p>POA</p> <p>RYDER</p> <p>MULLIGAN</p> <p>CLOVER</p>	<p>MISS LACEY UNDERALLS</p> <p>HICCUP</p> <p>KINGSTON</p> <p>HOLLYWOOD</p> <p>GUZTAV LAZSLO</p> <p>PRINCESS SOPHIA ANN</p> <p>MARIE</p> <p>REECES</p>	 <p>NITTANY</p>
<p>2</p> <p>JAKE</p>			
<p>3</p> <p>CHASE</p>			



ROCKY, LAB

When Rocky was about 2 years old we had a terrible storm blow through our area. We were cleaning up around and in a lake, which had a lot of limbs in the water. We were getting what we could from the bank and I heard a splash. Rocky had jumped in the lake and started dragging limbs to the bank so we could put them in the back of the truckster. He wanted to help and he sure did. He has been the best dog/companion I have ever had. He follows me wherever I go – at work or at home. He sleeps at the foot of my bed, he rides in the front seat of my truck and is with me every step of the way on the course each day.

Tony Whitmer, CGCS 🐾 Golf course operations superintendent 🐾 CrossWinds Golf Course 🐾 Bowling Green, Ky.

MYLEE, GOLDEN RETRIEVER

Mylee is a big part of the golf course not only in the removal of the geese, but in the joy she brings to the workplace. When she is not here at the course patrons ask where she is and want to know if she is OK. Mylee is both a great friend to my family and my crew. Mylee really enjoys being out here at the golf course, she will get in and on just about any piece of equipment just to say hello. She will ride from hole to hole on a Triplex which is really funny to watch.

Greg Barnes 🐾 Assistant superintendent/mechanic 🐾 Wilmington Municipal Golf Course 🐾 Wilmington, N.C.



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CLOVER, YELLOW LAB/GOLDEN RETRIEVER

He means the world to me. He's my best animal friend and one of the family. Before I got the dog not too many golfers would talk to me. Clover has been the ice breaker I needed to meet and get people to talk to me.

Stephen Spontak 🐾 Superintendent 🐾 Beekman Golf Club 🐾 Hopewell Junction, N.Y.



MISS LACEY UNDERALLS, ENGLISH SETTER

She's a member of the family at work and at home. When we drive around the course, the ladies all say hello to Lacey and ignore me.

Steve Huffstutler, CGCS 🐾 Glen Eagle Golf and Country Club 🐾 Naples, Fla.



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