

DOGGONE IT

I'm not that much of a dog guy. I like 'em enough, but never had one growing up and they always seem to sense that I'm not going to be their new buddy. Lucas Lownes' dog at Muirfield Village GC actually bit me yesterday when I was down there for the President's Cup. I guess she didn't like something I wrote.

But, I understand the value that a good dog brings to your operations. First, as employee – chief goose chaser and executive wildlife manager. Second, as cultural icon for your facility – members and regular customers are often more likely to know the dog's name than yours. And third, companion to you and the crew – the day simply isn't the same without them.

The bottom line is that dogs go with golf courses like cats go with crazy old ladies.

We here at GCI have resisted jumping on the doggie calendar bandwagon. I admit I was very jealous when the folks from the old Superintendent News – now TurfNet – launched that brilliant concept years ago. Because I'm a big believer in R&D (Rip-off & Duplicate) we considered doing other calendars: hunting/fishing trophies, insect of the month, stupid crap golfers say, "turf porn" shots, etc. But, none of them had the sheer cuteness perfection of dogs.

So, we decided to do what we usually do: research it! So, in this issue, we're proud to have partnered with Jacobsen Turf for a completely unnecessary but really fun statistical look at the Dogs of Turf. A few interesting findings: It costs more than \$1,000 per year to take care of these beasts but very few of you include doggie costs in your budgets. Fido is largely being maintained out of pocket.

You guys are not all that original when it comes to names (Bogey, Mulligan, etc.) but

one of you out there named your course dog "Miss Lacey Underalls." Nice.

Quite a few of you named your dog "Poa." Is it because you have a love/hate relationship with the pooch?

(To be honest, I shouldn't poke fun at odd dog names. The only dog I ever owned was named "Indy," as in Indiana. Get it?)

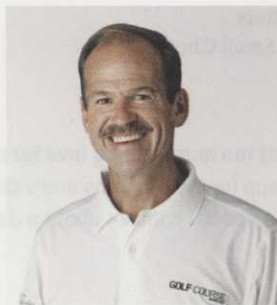
I'd be remiss by not paying tribute to a few other golf course workers from the animal kingdom. I met some folks in northern California recently who use falcons to control unwanted birds (cormorants, geese, etc.) at Pebble Beach Golf Links and other area facilities. Very cool and extremely impressive to watch a seagull explode into a giant pile of feathers when a raptor hits it at 140 mph.

Also, there are those adorable and hard-working goats. Goats and golf have gone

together since the days of Old Tom but had become forgotten until Pasatiempo GC popularized them again as a way to take down scrub and growth in rocky hillsides. I understand there's a waiting list for that herd on the west coast now.

But, leave it to our friends at the Trump organization to top that. Tyler Otero of Trump National GC at Bedminster not only has his own herd of weed-munching, PR-generating goats, but he recently and unexpectedly became the step-father to two new kids (the goat kind). We suggested naming them Donald and Melania, but Tyler wisely ignored that idea.

So, thanks again to the folks at Jacobsen Turf (who I'm told have lovely orange dog collars available upon request) for making this groundbreaking scientific study possible. And no, we still won't be doing a GCI doggie calendar. **GCI**



Pat Jones
Editorial director and publisher

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