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Golfers poll: 2004 looks like a rebounding year

Golfers surveyed in a recent National Golf Foundation (NGF) poll indicate that 2004 may be a rebounding year for the golf industry.

For its "Outlook on Play Frequency" report, the NGF surveyed 350 golfers in December. Across-the-board the respondents predicted they would play more rounds of golf this year than in 2003.

The most rounds in 2004 are expected

to come from players who are 60 years old or older and have played for 30 years or more; players who score 85 or less; and private-club members. However, the highest percentage increase is surprisingly expected from less skilled, less experienced and less frequent players. NGF's message to courses – pick one or more target groups of these golfers and vigorously pursue them.

Respondents were labeled as "best cus-

tomers" if they played 25 rounds or more per year, or have household golf-related annual spending of \$1,000. "Avid golfers" are those who averaged 52 rounds in 2003. As a group, avid golfers predicted they would play an average of 61 rounds this year. The report cautioned, "They may have been overzealous ... nevertheless, it's a positive outlook."

While taking a pulse on player intentions, the survey also identified ways to help golf course operators better market their facilities, including the following

- Younger people in the "avid golfers" group especially anticipated more rounds in 2004. So, to increase rounds, target younger high-handicappers.

- Many in the "best customers" group would prefer to play with family more than friends, but currently do not do so. The suggested solution: Create family-play programs.

- The top three things golfers like most about playing golf are challenge, outdoors/nature and its social aspect. Tip: Use these ideas in advertising and promotional materials for products and facilities.

- The top three things golfers dislike most about playing golf are slow play, playing poorly and poor etiquette by others. Tip: Begin to fight slow play and let golfers know you are doing so; invite golfers to take lessons; and educate golfers in etiquette through rangers, signage and group lessons.

- Better course condition is the primary factor that would get the best customers to visit their local course more frequently. Tip: Really need a tip?

Meanwhile, the NGF also asked golfers who played less than they wanted to in 2003, how many times they expect to play this year. This group encompassed 65 percent of the best customers, representing 5.8 million golfers nationally. If their hopes come true, it would mean an average increase of 12.9 rounds, which translates into an additional 74 million rounds.

The NGF stated: "If even half of these rounds were realized, the golf industry could regain many of the rounds 'lost' between 2001 and 2003." GCN

HOW MANY ROUNDS DID YOU PLAY IN 2003?
HOW MANY ROUNDS DO YOU WISH YOU COULD HAVE PLAYED IN 2003?
HOW MANY ROUNDS DO YOU EXPECT TO PLAY IN 2004?

(AMONG THOSE WHO SAID THEY PLAYED LESS THAN THEY WANTED TO IN 2003)

		2003 average rounds actual	2003 average rounds wish	2004 average rounds expected
Total		39.8	84.1	52.7
Age	18-49	37.8	85.0	48.0
	50-59	38.8	74.0	52.4
	60+	47.0	97.5	65.1
Average score	<85	53.6	107.5	69.8
	85-90	39.1	84.8	52.9
	>90	27.2	58.1	37.7
Years played	<15	37.8	82.9	51.4
	15-29	38.1	79.9	49.4
	30+	44.2	89.6	59.1
Rounds last 12 mos.	<30	16.1	45.1	26.9
	30-59	38.6	84.7	51.4
	60+	86.0	160.6	102.7
Household income	<\$75	35.4	82.9	51.2
	\$75-\$99	45.2	79.0	54.9
	\$100+	38.4	87.1	53.0
Private club member	Yes	47.3	83.0	69.6
	No	38.0	83.6	49.4

How to read this table: Private club members surveyed played 47.3 rounds in 2003, wish they could have played 83.0 rounds and realistically expect to play 69.6 rounds in 2004.

There are times when bigger is better.



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H O M E O F R I V E R D A L E B R A N D S



Jack Brennan founded Paladin Golf Marketing, Plant City, Fla., in 1989 to help golf course owners and managers market their courses more effectively. He can be reached at jackbrennan@ij.net.

Improve your brand

What's your favorite car? Soft drink? Golf clubs?

Whatever came to mind as you considered these questions is not there by accident. Part of your response depends upon your personal likes and dislikes, the opinions of others similar to you and your experience. Part of your response was put there by marketing folks who invested a lot of time and money to get to know you and your wants, before crafting their products, packaging, pricing and advertising messages to help you make your decision about your favorite brands.

Branding is something the major companies all do, but what about branding for the golf course?

The answer to that question is that some golf courses are brands among golf enthusiasts just like major branded consumer products. Pebble Beach, Cypress Point and Augusta National are brands that golfers and even many non-golfers recognize. Now, while your club might not have attained a national public brand status, nonetheless, it does have a brand. The reason I can say that is something fundamental to a brand – it is often measured as “share of mind.” For example, Coke or Pepsi could be your favorite soft drink, or some other brand, but something pops up on your mind when asked, “What’s your favorite soft drink?” No, the answer can’t be Budweiser!

Marketers measure this share of mind to see where they stand in comparison to the competition, to measure if they are making progress, and even to determine who out there makes up their best customers.

So, back to your course. When your course’s name is mentioned, peoples’ responses can either be that they have never heard of it, or they have some opinion about it – expensive, can’t get in, excellent course, great third hole, or whatever. Their opinion might be limited to just driving by it everyday, but that means they are aware of it and probably have some kind of opinion, too. They might like the fact that it looks like a park. Or, that they always have to wait for carts to cross. Or, that they wonder what it would be like to play it.

Now, what all this has to do with the superintendent is that you, more than anyone else, are in a position to shape your course’s brand among golfers and potential golfers. Marketing is not theoretical. It’s intensely related to what you and your crews

do every day. One of the objectives I have in working with superintendents as a consultant is to show them how their work impacts the course’s marketing efforts.

Golfers pay the bills, so anything that affects their experience in a positive way contributes to the marketing program and ultimately to the financial success of the course. What I try to stress to superintendents is the golfer’s experience, since that ultimately shapes their brand perception.

Following are five areas where the superintendent can improve the perception of his or her course. These ideas work on public or private courses:

1. Landscaping around the clubhouse. The clubhouse is the first thing the golfer sees. It’s the curb appeal of the course, but often it is poorly landscaped. Some superintendents don’t want to take responsibility for anything beyond the greens, fairways and tees. They don’t see landscaping around the clubhouse as their responsibility. But who is more qualified to improve and maintain the landscaping than the superintendent?

2. Attention to details. Anything that golfers will come into contact with needs special attention. Not all golfers will notice a little *poa annua* in the roughs, but they will notice the condition of the golf cart paths, signs, overflowing trash bins and

about the hole or green they’re on. Most golfers would love to meet the superintendent in person, and when they do they will tell other golfers about it the rest of the day. Be sure to ask them questions and probe any answers that involve likes or dislikes.

4. The condition of the maintenance buildings. It’s a rare golf course that has maintenance buildings that look nicely maintained, yet what a great impression professional-looking buildings make.

5. Communicate maintenance and problems proactively. You know and understand what you are doing on the course and why, but do your golfers? Do they understand your technical terminology? Do they have any concept of why you have to overseed or aerate? Communicating what you are doing can be critical to the experience of golfers. I knew of one superintendent who damaged his greens one year with a pre-emergence application. He put signs up near the practice greens explaining the nature of the problem, what he was doing and that the greens would fully recover. He updated the signs and used photos to show progress. Golfers on the course commented how much they liked to be informed of what was going on. If something goes wrong don’t try to hide it. People are curious creatures. Tell them what’s happening to the course.

‘Marketing is not theoretical. It’s intensely related to what you and your crews do every day. One of the objectives I have in working with superintendents as a consultant is showing them how their work impacts the course’s marketing efforts.’

empty water coolers – nothing says “we care about you” like cold water on a hot day. Superintendents and assistant superintendents should visit their own course to experience it as a golfer would, and pay special attention to the details. Start by parking in the parking lot. Then visit the clubhouse and pro shop. Then play the course. Better still, invite some superintendent friends to come play and tell you what they think of the course from a player’s perspective, and also as a professional superintendent.

3. Greeting golfers. Go out on the course and greet two or three foursomes and talk

If you do they’re likely to overlook problems when they encounter them as opposed to complaining among themselves about the poor conditions.

Now, the superintendent is not solely responsible for the brand perception of the course. The pro shop, golf instructors, quality of food in the clubhouse and even the parking lot condition all impact a golfer’s total experience. For this reason, all managers and employees need to see the role they play in building a successful brand. GCN

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The master plan and consensus

Recently a caller began a conversation by saying, "I'm on the green committee at my country club, and I represent a small faction of members who..." I soon wished the call had come from "60 Minutes" or the IRS!

The caller, having just rotated onto the committee, was trying to get up to speed on a renovation plan that was well along in the process. He wanted to know whether spending \$3 million on the architect's proposal, which included some re-routing for length, was "right for their course," and whether they should bring in another architect for a "second opinion."

His timing was wrong. At best his questions would disrupt or delay the process. At worst, he would set up a daring ambush for the voting meeting, the likes of which have not been seen since Bonnie and Clyde!

I told him that the master plan is not the pretty picture you see on the clubhouse wall. It's really the collaborative process that develops that picture. While there is no one right way to approach renovation, in terms of style, there is a right way to complete the master plan process. Each club must achieve a consensus, and club leadership must unite behind that consensus.

Obviously, that can be difficult! Just as obviously, this member was working outside the consensus process. However well intentioned, no matter how "right" he feels he is on either the cost or the direction of the design proposals, this member's actions can't benefit his club.

I've seen this happen. Whether due to a member who simply likes to create havoc, clashing personalities, or payback for old disputes, it's called "club politics." The good news is most of these situations arise because members truly love their courses and agree it would be terrible to make a major renovation mistake. The bad news is that, like the Democrats and Republicans on the national political scene, that's about all they agree on! Politicians have divergent views about what's "good for America" as do members about "what's best for the club."

Everyone at the club has their own unique perspective.

Some members may want a restoration of their fine old course. Others want a new look. Older members fear losing playing time with course closure for renovations,

and fear the new course will be too difficult. Younger members want a tougher course.

In the current economy, many members are struggling just to pay current dues, much less any new assessments. These members may question golf course renovation costs, perhaps cloaking their true motives behind other issues. Others simply prefer to put off costs until the need is pressing – usually when disaster strikes in the form of major course loss or damage.

The club manager is probably looking further ahead, hoping to make the course as attractive to new members as it is to existing ones. The superintendent wants changes that allow him or her to maintain the course to everyone's high – and ever-rising – standards, knowing that budgets will always be tighter than desired.

While all are valid perspectives, they lead to conflicting goals. Any green committee larger than one benevolent dictator will have lingering differences, and several "pet issues" to resolve. It's best if a few well-respected members agree to be "flag bearers" for the master plan. They need the leadership capabilities to make good decisions. They need the people skills to overcome inevitable objections. And they need sales skills to gain approval for the plan, which means demonstrating some tangible benefits of the proposed plan for nearly everyone.

An experienced architect helps make the right decisions and communicates them, based on analysis of your course needs, and what you can afford to spend. I've recently completed renovations from \$350,000 to over \$3 million. Each was the right solution for that particular course, so don't be surprised if costs come in higher – or lower – than you expected. Be open to the proposals of the architect you entrust with your course and never assume your project should be like the one down the street.

It's great when members have strong interests in their courses. Healthy and timely debate is part of the master plan consensus process. However, overly strong, untimely or uninformed opinions and input that override a well thought-out process can torpedo the best plans for no reason. Remind those who disagree strongly during these debates that golf course remodeling is not a life and death matter.

It's also wrong for this member to imply that a reputable architect is selling changes to make more money. Unsuitable and/or overpriced projects eventually diminish business for architects, as word travels. It's a great incentive to keep things realistic.

My caller ignored the fact that their architect had already developed several design proposals, based on all available information and perspectives, using his "disinterested opinion" on matters that may be emotional for members. He has probably answered objections, quantified benefits, and assisted the green committee in selecting the most favorable plans. In short, one architect is usually capable of looking at the project in many different ways, negating the need for a second opinion.

A second architect would be under pressure to offer differing opinions. Even if his or her ideas fit the small faction's tastes, would they be representative of the club as a whole? Would they be better? Would there be consensus? Changing architects mid-stream achieves a new start, not a quick or suitable conclusion.

Some clubs do go through a series of architects, often for the wrong reasons, and usually for the wrong results. It is a mistake to interview architects until they find the one who'll tell them what they want to hear regarding cost or direction.

Some green committees legitimately learn as they go. They come out of their first master plan united only in the opinion that they "need a mulligan" by virtue of knowledge gained in the process. And, there are "horses for courses," meaning that an architect may unfortunately prove less experienced or philosophically different than the needs of your project demand. If so, they should tell the architect that his or her skill set is not what they need, and find one that better suits them.

Ideally, your club will pick the best architect initially and stick with them throughout the project for continuity. If you go through the proper process of selecting your architect, developing and communicating your master plan, and getting it approved, the result is confidence that you have probably done the right thing. There also will be fewer membership challenges. More importantly, you'll have greater chances of success. GCN

Relocating GCSAA

GCSAA has debated the relocation of its headquarters from Lawrence, Kan., since the late 1970s. Talk to executives who have faced the challenge and responsibility of relocating any organization's headquarters, as I have, and you will be told that this is one of the more harrowing tasks within the world of business management.

GCSAA is once more considering relocating, and having learned from the past, the present association leadership is patiently putting a workable plan in place for membership consideration.

The keys are the plan and communication. Relocation initiatives do not fail because of weak planning. Rather, they fail to adequately communicate solid planning throughout the organization.

This has been the case in past GCSAA relocation efforts. With today's Internet technology we can expect that no relocation vote will be taken unless and until the membership has been fully informed.

GCSAA has planned well in the past when looking to relocate its headquarters. For example, it has identified the following 10 criteria to evaluate candidate cities/regions against:

1. Serving as a major tourist attraction to help to draw GCSAA members and golf community families year-round.
2. Being located at a natural intercept point within a busy city-to-city corridor.
3. Serving as a major hub airport.
4. Qualifying to host the GCSAA trade show on a regular basis.
5. Able to attract and hold the highest caliber of career-minded employees.
6. Offering a reasonable cost of living for the association and its staff.
7. Having a comfortable year-round climate for golfing and other recreation.
8. Serving as a vacation "winter haven" or a retirement community opportunity for members.
9. Allowing GCSAA to affiliate with an established educational institution.
10. Allowing GCSAA to affiliate with a respected 18-hole regulation golf course.

When the above criteria have been applied to the leading candidate cities across the country, both in the early 1980s, and again recently, the following consistent matrix results were produced: Orlando had a 95% criteria compliance; San Diego 81%; San Francisco 65%; Los Angeles 62%; Washington, D.C. 59%; Dallas 59%; Jack-

sonville 59%; Denver 51%; Chicago 51%; Phoenix 49%; and Lawrence 30%.

Orlando is the most effective target city for relocation. Conversely, remaining in Lawrence would be a serious mistake because this location has substantively stymied the growth of GCSAA and the profession for more than 30 years.

The present GCSAA leadership is aware of these earlier findings as it continues to look into the relocation issue today. Will this leadership once again confirm Orlando as the primary target city? Only time will tell. Where ever this decision takes GCSAA, it can fairly be assumed that the board of directors will be on top of it.

What does relocation matter to the average GCSAA member or potential member?

A look at the advantages of Orlando shows the city's potential to act as a powerful magnet capable of attracting high volumes of members and golf industry officials to GCSAA headquarters on an annual basis. For example, the tri-annual appearance of the GCSAA trade show in Orlando would be expected to bring up to 30 percent of the association membership to the city. The presence of Disney World also would attract many hundreds of GCSAA member families to the city annually. Finally, the city's prime location within the busy Boston-to-Miami corridor would allow thousands of East Coast private club and public golf course officials to comfortably stop by Orlando during business or family vacation trips. Many others from across the country will fly directly to Orlando for the sole purpose of participating in GCSAA headquarters programming.

There is a further advantage. The collective potential impact of this volume of GCSAA members and golf industry people converging on Orlando each year creates a significant educational opportunity that the golf industry has not seen before and may never realize otherwise.

The inherent problem with past and present GCSAA educational programming is that it is one-dimensional; i.e., solid within the agronomic and turf management fields, but virtually vacant relative to member career planning; establishing professional communications and management standards for chapters; and briefing green committee members and public golf course officials regarding the operational world of the golf course superintendent.

GCSAA relocating to Orlando would

address this problem by serving as a springboard to launch much needed multi-day certification and workshop level programming at the association's headquarters, leading to Internet and formal college curricula. A relocated GCSAA Learning Center would foster greater member and industry-wide participation in educational programming that would include:

- A workshop for private club green committee members (with a parallel workshop for public golf course officials) that would include presentations on job descriptions for a green committee chairman and for the golf course superintendent; maintenance program budgeting; equipment rotation/scheduling; legal and safety issues; golf course renovation planning; and an introductory agronomic course to educate lay committee members so that they would be better able to support the work of the golf course superintendent.

- A workshop to upgrade the management and public relations capabilities of the more than 100 chapters across the country. This is needed because GCSAA chapters will always be the frontline interface between the game's many players, officials and institutions that will continue to predominantly define the image of the golf course superintendent profession.

This program would focus on a job description for and the methodology for engaging and funding a chapter executive director, and counseling newsletter editors to ensure that more vital, diversified and entertaining publications will be produced and circulated within their respective local golf communities.

- A workshop to expand upon the career planning seminars recently presented at the San Diego conference.

Relocating GCSAA headquarters to Orlando would afford it a unique opportunity to both serve its members more effectively and to develop an industry-impacting educational program that would generate immense pride within the profession. An Orlando headquarters would allow GCSAA to strengthen its leadership position within the industry and create the educational capital of golf. The day would soon come where no self-respecting green committee chairman would accept his/her assignment without first having participated in a GCSAA workshop on the subject.

Orlando is a GCSAA party waiting to happen. GCN



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Today's to do list: Meet with the crews, price out an engine rebuild, finish the drainage project, meet with the chair of the green committee, run the kids to soccer practice and attend the quarterly club-planning meeting.

Sound familiar?

For most superintendents life means getting pushed in as many directions as a high-handicapper's tee shots. But it doesn't have to be that way, says Bruce Williams, CGCS, superintendent, Los Angeles Country Club. By taking a hard look at how you use your time, and taking better control of the time available, superintendents can find the hours needed to get more work done, play golf, spend more time with family and get more than five hours of sleep per night. Williams says carefully managing time can yield eight to 10 extra hours each week.

Step One: Analyze

"You can't analyze how to save time or manage time, until you analyze how you are currently spending time," Williams says. The solution is to begin keeping a daily time log of how you spend your time for a few weeks. After the information is re-

corded, analyze the way you spend your time using three tests to critically review all the tasks you complete

1. Necessity: Is this activity necessary?
2. Appropriateness: Who should be performing this task?
3. Efficiency: Is there a better way to complete this work?

Once you have critically evaluated all the ways you spend time during a given day, you should find ways to eliminate the low-priority tasks by finding someone else to take on some of your responsibilities, then be more efficient at the tasks you must handle.

Williams encourages superintendents to take a hard look at the forms and meetings that can suck time out of a day. For instance, are their forms you are completing that just get filed away and are unnecessary? If so, stop using them.

"Sometimes it is irrelevant for me to be in a meeting. For instance, our catering department reviews all food and beverage activities for the week. Superintendents have some interaction with the food and beverage people, but at our club they meet for an hour and a half each week to review prospective events. Now the catering manager's secretary highlights anything from the meeting that con-

Five time-saving ideas

To save time and use it more effectively try the following:

1. Make a list of the things you want to and could do if you had more time and use the list as motivation to improve your time management.
2. List and prioritize weekly objectives.
3. Continually ask, "What is the best use of my time right now?" and do it.
4. Devote primary attention to Priority A tasks.
5. Take advantage of available technology such as handheld computers, cell phones and call forwarding.

cerns me. Saving an hour and half doesn't sound like much, but when you are working 60 hours a week, now you're down to 58."

Step Two: Delegate

The toughest part of time management for many superintendents can be learning to let go of certain tasks. Superintendents are often proficient and being efficient, but have real challenges when it comes to delegation. "I talk to some superintendents who are afraid to give some things up and are afraid to empower their people and want to be the 'hands-on guy.' Well if you want to be the hands-on guy, then welcome to 12-hour workdays," Williams says.

"My motto is to hire the right people, train them appropriately, empower them and then do what you need to do to retain them."

Step Three: Schedule

As the saying goes, "Failing to plan is planning to fail." While planning takes time, it ultimately can save more time for you and your staff by organizing days, months and years better.

Williams also advises planning your daily activities around your personal energy cycle. "Some people are at their best early in the morning. Others peak in the afternoon. Whenever possible, try to plan your daily schedule to match your prime time," Williams says. Schedule work that requires concentration during your prime time and leave less demanding activities, such as mail or returning phone calls, during your non-peak performance time.

Extra time cannot be manufactured, so when scheduling set priorities realistically on what to do and not to do. To set priorities, first list what needs to be done, then prioritize them. An easy method is to prioritize tasks using an A, B, C method. Priority "A" tasks are must do. Priority "B" are the things you should do. Priority "C" are things that would be nice to do, but that are not essential.

When creating plans, don't forget to leave room for unexpected events, Williams advises. On a golf course any number of unexpected equipment breakdowns or weather delays can wreak havoc with a superintendent's schedule. So, allocate some time in your daily and weekly plan for coping with the unexpected. GCN

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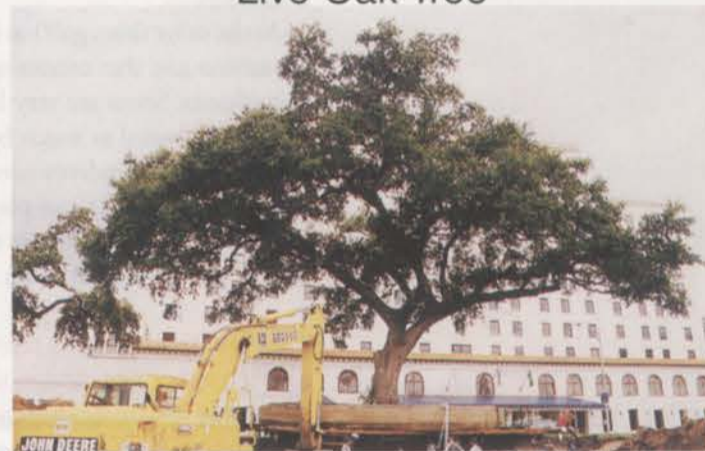
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Q What is changing in the area of golf course consulting?

In one respect little has changed. Golf has always involved consultants. We have consultants that specialize in water salinity and testing. We use engineers to resolve drainage issues. We hire architects to improve the design of a course and its play. By definition the golf course superintendent deals with a broad range of issues, and no one can be an expert in every particular area, so we need to call in those who bring the necessary expertise. Our job is to protect the club's assets and to make sure that what we do is correct in the long term. The smart superintendent knows what he doesn't know, but gets the consulting help he needs to keep the course in great condition.

At the same time, golf has become more of a business and that creates opportunities for consultants. Some are very helpful and others are motivated as much by self-interest as service. Superintendents need to understand the role consultants can play, how to work with them, how to manage them, and to be aware of the potential down side.

Q What do you mean by the potential down side?

A number of superintendents have lost their jobs after their clubs hired consultants. The superintendents that seem most prone to this scenario work for private golf courses, are more than 40 years old and have higher salaries. Of course, when a consultant is hired he or she has been positioned to the superintendent as a resource to help them and improve the course. Later, the superintendent was let go.

Q Are there warning signs that the superintendent's job might be at risk?

In all of the cases the superintendents fired had no idea that a consultant was being hired. A number of these superintendents were called

to a meeting and found a consultant sitting there. Some have come to work in the morning only to find a consultant sitting in the office waiting for them.

Q Sounds like some golf courses are hiring consultants to get rid of their superintendents.

There are a range of possible reasons to explain what's going on. The firings I've heard about have been mostly on private courses, so politics is a possible factor. Some clubs want to make a change at the superintendent position but are not willing to do it themselves, so they hire a consultant to do it for them. The consultant's role might even be to come up with the justification to fire the superintendent.

But there are other possible motives. Budgets are tighter and if a club is told they could replace their superintendent for a big name person – at the same cost or less cost than the superintendent's salary – there's a temptation to do it. The scenario I am describing does not involve replacing the superintendent on a full-time basis, it involves a part-time, ongoing consulting relationship.

Some of the superintendents who have been fired were told that their clubs wanted to take the course to the next level. That is a legitimate objective, but I question if these club owners and managers even understand what the next level is? I also question why so many apparently did not bother to talk to their own on-site consultant first – their superintendent – about the desired changes before turning to an outside resource?

Q Should the superintendent be told if his club is considering hiring a consultant?

Absolutely, for two reasons. First, it's good business. If the desire is to improve the course, or to get ready for a major tournament, then the superintendent and the consultant will need to work together as a team. The consultant may bring special expertise, but the

superintendent knows the course better than anyone. So, why would any course not want their superintendent fully involved in this process, even to the point of helping to select the best consultant for the job?

Second, hiring a consultant without talking to the superintendent is unethical. It's not good business or the professional way to conduct a business.

Q That assumes the superintendent is not the problem.

If a course has a problem with their superintendent then they need to confront him or her and work out a solution, even if that means making a change. But being up front about this is the ethical approach.

Q Can a course really get by without a full-time superintendent?

A consultant can make the pitch that he offers greater expertise and experience for less money. The consultant determines the program, then assigns day-to-day operations to an assistant superintendent or to some other person who will be on the course every day. Unfortunately, I have heard that such programs have failed on a number of courses.

A golf course is always best served by having an experienced superintendent on site every day. Course conditions can change rapidly and someone with the necessary experience needs to be on site to make the right decisions regarding what to do and how to allocate people and other resources. No one can understand the weather patterns, equipment, staff, the club and members like the superintendent. None of this is cookie cutter stuff. It takes time and experience to know your soil types, irrigation water and the microclimate on a green that's in the shade on the hill, or on another green that has heavy clay soil. There are so many things that make every course different. Certainly the same principles apply to every course, but no two golf courses are exactly alike. One course I