

Here's a newsflash: Apparently, not everyone agrees with every word we write in every issue of *Golfdom*. Egad! Crikey! Alert the magazine police, immediately!

OK, it's not exactly shocking when we get an irate letter or take a hit from someone on one of the online forums. And that's exactly what happened last month when a reader took offense to a satirical but less-than-flattering reference to golf professionals in Geoff Shackelford's column ("New[fangled] Revenue Streams," August).

Tongue firmly planted in cheek, Geoff suggested that one way the industry could boost revenues is to "charge all PGA of America members \$2 for every round they now play for free." In the same column, he cracked on lawyers (twice), the USGA (whose board consists largely of lawyers), *Golf Digest* panelists (who are often part-time lawyers who pay for their golf habits by suing people) and PGA Tour executives (who need lots of lawyers to negotiate their massive compensation plans).

But it was the mention of pros that hacked off one fellow who is in the rare position of being a certified member of both the GCSAA and PGA. He called Geoff's remark "incendiary, offensive and borderline ignorant." In a later post, he also cleverly referred to our humble publication as "Golfdumb." (Ooh, that one really hurt. I'm tempted to dare him to meet me behind the playground after school.)

It occurred to me that — beyond the juvenile taunt — his assertion that *Golfdom* sometimes takes an Anti-Pro point of view might have some credence. After all, our primary audience is golf course superintendents and their relationships with professionals are ... well ... not always perfect. In response, I decided to use this column to state my policy on Pro-Pro and Anti-Pro editorial positions.

I will be Pro-Pro when referring to golf professionals who realize they must have a partnership with superintendents and who understand that agronomic needs need to be balanced with business needs.

I will be Anti-Pro when I hear a golf professional tell a group of players, "The grass monkeys won't let carts out today." (True story).

I will be Pro-Pro when I come across golf

Professional Editorializing

BY PAT JONES



I DECIDED TO USE
THIS COLUMN TO
STATE MY POLICY
ON PRO-PRO AND
ANTI-PRO
EDITORIAL
POSITIONS

professionals who are serious about player development and donate time, equipment and support to junior golf programs and other efforts designed to build the game.

I will be Anti-Pro when I get "The Look" from a member of the golf staff as I'm attempting to check in someplace I don't play regularly. You know "The Look" I'm talking about. It's the withering glance from the 26-year-old, name-badge-wearing, five-handicapper, junior assistant wannabe pro standing behind the gigantic wooden megacounter who deeply resents that you've interrupted his conversation with the beverage cart girl to purchase a round of golf from his employer. (Whew! That felt so good.)

I will be Pro-Pro by promising to never again refer to individuals like the one described as "glorified shirt folders." Unless, of course, it's true.

I will be Very Pro-Pro when we meet one of the many unbelievably nice, committed golf professionals out there who jump at the opportunity to say genuinely positive things about their superintendents. This is the case at most of the good operations I visit.

I will be Very Anti-Pro when I hear horror stories about successful veteran superintendents forced out by new directors of golf or head professionals who want their "own guys" in the jobs. This stinks. I'd say exactly the same thing about a new superintendent who tried to force out a solid veteran pro for the same reasons, but I've never heard of that happening before.

So that's my policy on editorializing about golf pros. And in case you were wondering, my policy on lawyers remains unchanged. I shall only be Anti-Lawyer on days of the week ending in the letter "y".

Pat Jones is the publisher/editorial director of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com.