

# 10 Great Reasons to Love Your Golf Course Superintendent

**1 He pokes holes in your greens twice each year, even when they're rolling like glass** – Without regular aerification, putting greens develop a layer of thatch beneath the surface. This spongy build up of organic matter makes greens bumpy and restricts the passage of water and nutrients. Oh, and by the way, Tom Watson once shot a course record 58 at Kansas City Country Club just days after the greens were aerified and sanded.

**2 He won't let you play on frozen greens, even after the sun comes out** – An ice cube remains an ice cube for a quite a while even after you put it out in the sun. The same is true for frozen putting greens. They can take a while to thaw out. And footprints on frozen greens kill the turf you tread on. Golfers who ignore this fact might play today but they will pay tomorrow.

**3 He demands that you fix your ball marks, even when you knock it close** – If every golfer ignored the indentations left by their approach shots, they would soon be putting on something akin to the lunar surface. And guess what, that would make us even worse putters than we already are. A putting green covered in unsightly, uneven, ball marks says a lot more about the people playing the course than the person trying to keep it in tip-top shape.

**4 He makes you leave your carts on the path, even though it hasn't rained since Sunday** – At roughly 1,000lbs with two sets of clubs and two golfers on board, the average golf cart places a lot of pressure on turf that is already being cut far lower than it wants to grow. Zipping that load across sodden fairways can literally tear the turf out of the ground and damage roots already struggling for oxygen in saturated soil. Take a deep breath and enjoy the stroll. It's good for you.

**5 He has a license to apply pesticides** – Chances are that your golf course superintendent is the only person you know who is trained and licensed in the art of chemical application. The average homeowner can, and often does, bombard his backyard with any old chemical cocktail under no supervision whatsoever. And there are a lot more homes in your neighborhood than golf courses. Be thankful someone at least is operating with the best techniques according to the best science available.

**6 He is on call 24 hours a day** - Long before most of us crawl out of bed and long after most of us have sunk our final putt of the day, our golf course superintendent is hard at

work. When he does go home, he knows that any phone call may be the one summoning him back to the course because a tree has fallen across a green, lightning has blown an irrigation pump out of the ground, or vandals have broken into the cart barn. Dealing with the unforeseen is par for a superintendent's course.

**7 He works as hard as anyone to make your game affordable** – The less money golf course operators spend on course maintenance, the more profit they retain from sales in other areas like the pro shop and the snack bar. And when golf courses are making a profit, there is less incentive to increase green fees, which would hurt your hip pocket. As the big spenders in any golf operation, superintendents are constantly under pressure to do more with less. The bar staff might be more attractive than your golf course superintendent but he's the one who deserves the hug.

**8 He has probably volunteered at a PGA Tour event** – The strong likelihood is that at some point in his career, or maybe even every year, your golf course superintendent will give up some vacation time to work for nothing at one of the multi-million dollar events hosted by the PGA Tour. One reason golf courses look so darned good on TV is because there are 100-plus volunteer turf experts out there making sure of it. Can you imagine giving up a week of your vacation to get up at 5am in a strange town and working for 10 hours a day without pay? Didn't think so.

**9 He is still going to school, even after all these years** – Advances in science and technology as well as legislative changes, mean that golf course superintendents are constantly updating their education. They attend seminars, study on line, travel to conferences, and network amongst colleagues just like most professionals. And you thought it was just a matter of turning on a sprinkler and waiting for the grass to grow.

**10 He just knows stuff that most of us don't** – Today's golf course superintendent commands expertise in a range of disciplines. At any given time, he may be working as a scientist, environmentalist, horticulturist, personnel manager, instructor, meteorologist or accountant, just to name a few. He can ride a mower, write a budget, drag a rake, find employees, negotiate contracts, read a weather map, identify turf diseases, calibrate a chemical sprayer, deliver presentations, and so much more. Isn't it great to know he's working so hard for the good of your game.

Produced by the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association and reprinted as a service of *Golfdom*.



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