

Ed Fischer

Superintendent *of the* Old Elm Club

Golf course maintenance is more than a job to Ed Fischer. It's a living, breathing livelihood that enriches his days. So it's no wonder that the 59-year-old Fischer has been a superintendent for 36 years and counting. The certified superintendent of the Old Elm Club in Highland Park, Ill., for more than 24 years says of his profession, "It has the greatest group of people for which anyone could hope to be associated."

Golfdom: What do you like most about your job?

I like being outside and working with nature. The members I work for at Old Elm are the greatest, and they enjoy the golf course that my crew and I provide them. But what I like most about my job are my fellow superintendents.

Golfdom: How have you learned to deal with the pressures of your job?

When I was younger I didn't do a good job of handling the pressures of the job. Over the years I have learned that whatever happens today, there is always tomorrow. I step back, take a deep breath and think things out. If things get really bad, I spend a couple hours on my Harley and I'm a new man.

Golfdom: In 50 words or less, describe a good day at work.

Sunrise on a Donald Ross gem, and watching my crew members do their thing to get the course ready for the day's activities. Playing golf with three fellow superintendents and enjoying their good company. Watching the sun set on another great day.

Golfdom: What is the most important issue facing superintendents today?

The environment.

Golfdom: Finish this sentence: "The best thing that could happen to the golf course maintenance industry would be ..."

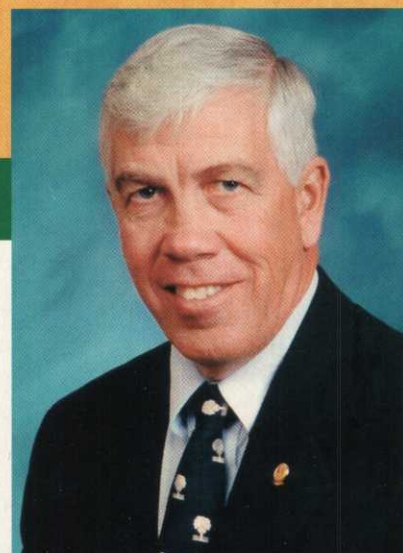
... for environmentalists to understand that superintendents aren't the bad guys. We love the environment, and we want to protect it as much if not more than they do.

Golfdom: What's the best advice anybody ever gave you?

Be yourself, don't forget your friends, use your ideas, and help and support your friends when you are able.

Golfdom: What's the best advice you ever gave someone?

If you have a problem, take a step back, think about it and use your common sense to solve it. And don't be afraid to ask your colleagues for help.



Golfdom: Who are the three most influential people or groups in the golf course maintenance industry and why?

The United States Golf Association and the PGA Tour are one. The tournaments we see on television every week show a golf course that a superintendent has worked very hard to peak for that week's event. Our owners or members see those events and expect those same conditions every day of every week.

Our local university researchers. We all want the best solutions for the problems we encounter on a daily basis, and they work hard to give us those answers.

We the people who mentor young assistants or interns are another influential group. The future is in our hands. The experience that we give to our assistants and interns is invaluable.

Golfdom: If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be and why?

Arnold Palmer, who's my hero. There isn't another person who means more to golf. His father was superintendent, and his brother is a superintendent. He's a man of class and sincerity.

Golfdom: What is your favorite movie?

Any movie starring John Wayne.

Golfdom: What do you eat for breakfast?

Orange juice and a banana. ■

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