

We've Got Mail

■ LETTERS FROM THE FIELD



Readers Make Own Points About "Point/Counterpoint"

I read your interesting article – "Point/Counterpoint: Superintendents Square Off Over the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America's GCSAA's Certification Program" – in the July edition of *Golfdom*. While I find substance in the thinking of both Christopher S. Gray Sr. and Rafael Barajas, I'm more in agreement with Gray. Certification can certainly provide an ego boost and, perhaps, somewhere along the way a career boost, although I have a problem believing the latter. I, too, was a certified superintendent at one time, but I never found one person that received an increase in salary or obtained a position because he or she was certified.

Gale L. Love
Grass Valley, Calif.

Bravo! Great job. I agree with Christopher S. Gray and his points 1,000 percent. Letters after your name and a spray rig full of continuing education units don't make a superintendent. Thanks for your honesty and stating how the majority feels.

Steve Good
Superintendent, Oakmont Golf Club
Santa Rose, Calif.

You have to be getting a lot of feedback from your "Point/Counterpoint" feature. I don't get

worked up over industry issues such as this, but I guess this story struck a chord. I couldn't agree more with the point Christopher S. Gray Sr. made. I've been a superintendent for 20 years and an 11-year GCSAA member. I worked private golf for 10 years and public golf for 10 years. I've busted my butt for my golfers, my members, greens committees, boards of directors, private owners and myself. I know I'm good at what I do, and I don't care who else recognizes it.

My Class-A status was lost because I didn't have time to attend meetings or the budget to go to the "Show." I'm at work all the time, and I'm being fiscally responsible. I'm being the best environmental steward I can be. I'm a good father and have been a mentor to several younger staff members over the years. Keeping any kind of status or class level has never been one of my career goals. So I don't get invited to any special luncheons or get a pat on the back at a meeting from my peers. Oh well, chances are I'll be at work and unable to attend anyway.

Thad Thompson
Superintendent, Terry Hills Golf Course
Batavia, N.Y.

Thanks for covering this topic. I couldn't agree more with Christopher S. Gray Sr. and his comments against certification. The GCSAA shouldn't be creating more classifications and separation among its members, but the almighty buck is what drives the decision to do so. You're not better at your job and doing more of a service to your members or customers by attaining certification. Of course, it's important to continue to learn and grow, but that's better done in many ways other than by spending money to be certified by the GCSAA. Most of us want to be the best we can be and this is why we spend our time at the course working on improving the experience with sound agronomics, dedication and passion – not some title. You advance yourself by your performance day after day and year after year – not by a test and a title given out by the GCSAA.

Doug Brooks
Superintendent,
Denver (Colo.) Country Club

What Would the Big Three Say to Rowdy Golfers?

I read with interest Larry Aylward's article – "The Big Three on Growing the Game" – in the August issue. It was, indeed, an interesting read whose content was made credible with the responses from Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Gary Player. I believe they reinforced some factors that have been in play for some time.

There is another negative factor that has been growing for several years. I refer to course conduct of both participants and spectators. The conduct of most professionals on and off the course is exemplary, but the crowd conduct at many tour events has become akin to European soccer contests. Fueled by booze and beer sales to boost event revenue, the result has led to a small percentage of the spectators behaving like drunken sailors. Small in numbers as they may be, they're obvious by their boisterous and unruly behavior.

Particularly, the stadium events appear to support or look the other way to the disorderly conduct that takes away from the original congenial and respectful crowd atmosphere typical of the professional golf scene of a bygone era. Even television coverage has picked up on it. The crowd background noise at the recent Buick Open, along with Cialis and Viagra commercials, isn't the best for family viewing. Perhaps Gary Player can shed some light on how we should explain these commercials as we watch these programs with our grandchildren of both genders.

