



Dean for a Day

Nobody made me Dean of Turf School. But if they did, here's my roster of must-have courses for the curriculum.

Introduction To Golf, 101 – Circa 1450 To November 27, 2009 B.F.H. (*Before Fire Hydrant*) – This comprehensive review will take us from the earliest days of Mary Queen of Scots whapping it around the first golf courses, to the Old Course's evolution under the watchful eye of the game's first superintendent and architect: Old Tom Morris. We'll zoom through the Jones, Hogan, Palmer and Nicklaus eras and finish with Tiger Woods' fateful left turn out of his driveway and into a fire hydrant.

Golf In The Post-Tiger Era, 201 – November 28, 2009 A.F.H. (*After Fire Hydrant*) to the Present – Featuring police images, witness accounts and a full rundown of the Taiwanese reenactment videos, this course will commence with a detailed reconstruction of the minor car accident that commenced the modern era of the game. The class will feature a thorough review of each of Tiger's major swing changes and engage in state-of-the-game discussions focusing on ways superintendents can improve the future by reducing costs, improving efficiency and maintaining their unique role as keepers of the green.

Introduction to Golfers, 101 – *Understanding Their Neurotic Tendencies, Strange Peccadillos and General Lack of Interest in Your Opinion* – For all of the claims that golfers are the most humble of recreational and professional athletes, this course will quickly set you straight. Guest speakers will share stories of how to deal with those who, seem-

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BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



ingly successful in life, can allow the pettiest misfortune to ruin their round and demand that they could do your job better than you. The course will be topped off by a celebratory beating of a piñata dressed in shorts, ankle socks and a logoed golf shirt.

Golfers As Your Boss, 201 – *Dealing With Boards, Committee Members, General Managers, PGA Professionals and Green Chairmen* – This dynamic class will prepare the student by teaching responses designed to help expedite painful conversations ("That's not the worst idea I've ever heard"), all with the goal of never putting you, the superintendent, on the record saying something that could later lead to termination. Clips from *Caddyshack* will be screened to prevent morbid depression from setting in.

Introduction To Golf Architecture, 101 – Since an alarming number of remodels, redesigns and overall changes to courses lead to hair loss, back pain, hemorrhoidal swelling and even job loss, this introductory class is designed to teach the basics of golf architecture while instilling just enough knowledge to give you a better architectural sense than many practicing designers. The various schools of design (strategic, penal, confusing) will be discussed. In the interest

of future job security, students will be encouraged to flesh out any of their desires to play architect later in life. Paper and pencil will be provided.

Player Architects And Other Low Points in Golf Design History, 201 – From the days when Old Tom Morris fended off charges from Allan Robertson that he redesigned the Old Course to fit his game, to modern day accusations of Jack Nicklaus designing any number of courses for his high fade, we'll study the many oddball moments in the history of design to better prepare students for their inevitable first meetings with visiting architects. We'll discuss what was going through Nicklaus's mind during his chocolate drop phase, the deeper meaning of Desmond Muirhead's mermaid island green, and the fire hazard risks associated with any Pete Dye course built during his railroad tie phase. Students should be prepared to memorize terminology that will make them sound intelligent and well informed when talking to architects and golfers alike. Because in this world, it's better to sound intelligent than to be intelligent.

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