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What Is a Leader?

"The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind in other men the conviction and the will to carry on."

— Walter Lippmann, an early 20th century American journalist

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says. "And they say, 'Why can't we be like Pine Valley GC?'"

Which brings to mind another leadership component: If you're going to be a leader, you had better have skin as thick as a hammerhead shark. The pressure on superintendents to keep their courses Augusta-like has never been more intense.

Spence recalls the days when golfers didn't complain if a green got cooked in the sizzling, summer sun. Nowadays, golfers won't stand for such flaws.

"Superintendents lose jobs over that kind of stuff," Spence says, "and that creates a different working environment."

Ask Danny Quast about enduring criticism. Last August, pro golfer Lee Janzen indirectly ripped Quast for not having the greens in good condition for the PGA Championship at Medinah CC, where Quast is grounds manager. Quast could have taken Janzen to task and asked him to try growing grass during a sweltering Chicago summer with triple-digit heat indexes. But the scrupulous Quast, a superintendent for 30 years, would only say he was doing the best job he could.

"You have to expect that," Quast says

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Danny Quast: "I can't control what people say or think."

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through the master plan which we have under way.

What's your favorite television show?

I watch a lot of football, but I really like watching the Yankees during the baseball season.

Leahy was nominated by Paul Gursky and Matthew Dutremble, assistant superintendents, and Andrew Stevens, a summer intern.

"I learn from him every day," Gursky says. "His methodical approach to situations on and off the golf course is something I hope to take with me when I become a superintendent."

Trent Inman

Age: 25

Course: Royce Brook GC, Somerville, N.J.

Title: Superintendent

Education: Bachelor's degree in agronomy from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

Mentors: Steve Glossinger, CGCS at Caves Valley GC in Owings Mills, Md.; Ryan Fisher, superintendent at Coffin GC in Indianapolis.

What inspired you to become a superintendent?

I had success playing golf when I was younger, but there was always someone better than me. I wanted to find an avenue in the sport where I could excel. I've been working on golf courses for 10 years. I don't know how to do anything else.

What makes you a leader?

I started at the bottom. I know what it takes to do every menial task on a golf course. You have to have been there to get employees to respect you.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

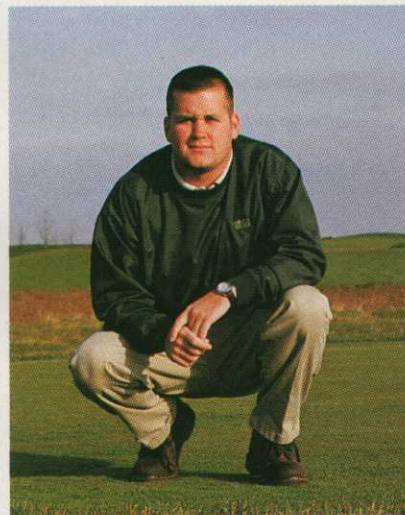
I would love the pressure of being the superintendent of a golf course that hosts a Major.

What's your favorite computer game?

I don't have one. I'm too busy playing outside.

Inman was nominated by William Troyanoski, golf pro at Royce Brook.

"What impresses me most about Trent is his interest in learning and his desire



to teach," Troyanoski says. "These are the professional character traits I believe all great leaders possess."

Anthony Girardi, CGCS

Age: 31

Course: Rockrimmon CC, Stamford, Conn.

Title: Superintendent

Education: Bachelor of science in turfgrass management from Rhode Island College in Providence, R.I.

Mentors: Larry Pakkala, CGCS at Woodway CC in Darien, Conn; Timothy O'Neill, CGCS at Country Club of Darien in Darien, Conn.

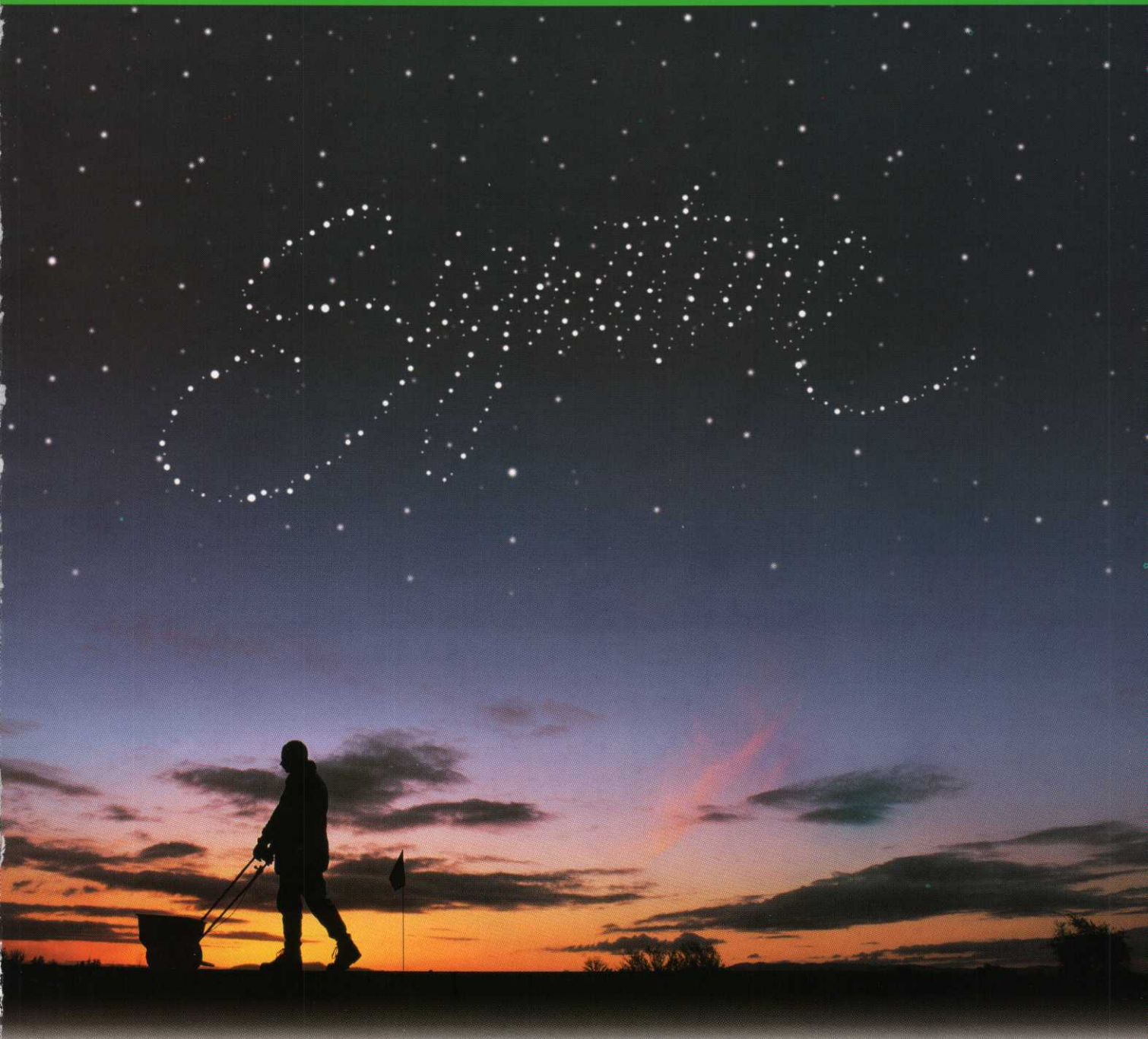
What inspired you to become a superintendent?

I grew up working in a family-owned nursery and landscape business. I was also an avid golfer. I decided to pursue the superintendent profession while in college. I work at a high-end private country club. It has been a lot of

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TAKE THE HELM

George Sweda, a former superintendent and current president of Sweda Training & Development, is an expert in bringing out the best in the people you manage. He offers these qualities needed to be a successful leader:

1. **Visionizing** — Creating the vision and the possibilities.
2. **Inducting** — Getting commitment and buy-in from individuals.
3. **Expounding** — Extolling the essence of the group.
4. **Challenging** — Challenging the group to be and to do even better.
5. **Accommodating** — Being available and a source of help.
6. **Directing** — Using your qualifications to show them the way.
7. **Focusing** — Keeping everyone concentrated on the mission.
8. **Celebrating** — Recognizing all victories and successes.
9. **Modeling** — Leading and demonstrating by example.

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work and very challenging. I'm at a good career stop. They treat me well. I'm also on the board of directors for the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendent Association.

What makes you a leader?

I have a high ambition and expectation level for myself and the people that work for me. I have an inner drive to excel and better myself. An important leadership trait is to have confidence in yourself and to instill confidence in others so they can believe in you.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I want to better the industry through my local association. I would like to see two or three people who are currently working as assistants for me to move on and become superintendents.

What are your favorite pizza toppings?

Pepperoni and artichoke hearts. Did you ask me that question because I'm Italian?

Girardi was nominated by himself.

"It's an important goal of mine to continually give back to the industry like so many others have done for people like me over the years," he says.

Darren Davis

Age: 32

Course: Olde Florida GC, Naples, Fla.

Title: Superintendent

Education: Certificate in turfgrass management from Penn State University in State College, Pa.; associate of arts

degree from Tallahassee Community College in Tallahassee Fla.

Mentors: Joseph Duich, professor emeritus at Penn State University; Tim Hiers, CGCS at Collier's Reserve in Naples; Gary Grigg, CGCS at Royal Poinciana GC in Naples; Paul Latshaw, superintendent of Winged Foot CC in Mararoneck, N.Y.; Matt Schaffer, superintendent of The Country Club in Cleveland; David Frank Dobie, superintendent of Sharon GC in Sharon, Ohio.

What inspired you to become a superintendent?

A love of the outdoors, and I appreciate the sport. It's a respectful career that has been enjoyable. I feel fortunate to be where I am.

What makes you a leader?

A good leader empowers people. A leader provides other employees the knowledge and support they need to advance themselves in their careers. A good leader is constantly learning and is proactive in the profession.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

It's possible I could still be here. I have reached most of my goals, but I need to continue to hone my skills, force myself to learn and remain gung ho and excited about the job and profession. I also want to continue my professional affiliation and service to state and national organizations.

What do you love most about Florida?

I love the winters. Everybody and their brother wants to come visit you in the wintertime.

Davis was nominated by himself.

He cites his extensive experience in all

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What Is a Leader?

"I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles. But today, it means getting along with people."

— Indira Gandhi, former prime minister of India

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of the incident. "I can't control what people say or think."

While Quast is admired for his judiciousness, his experience is an example of the duress that more superintendents must deal with today. Peter Salinetti, CGCS and general manager for Schuyler Meadows Club in Loudonville, N.Y., says overseeing a course is like managing a professional sports team.

"There's tremendous pressure," he says, adding that growing grass was more fun 30 years ago when golfers better appreciated well-maintained courses. "Now golfers ask us, 'What have you done for me today and how much faster can we be than 10.5 on a Stimpmeter?'"

It's a business

If you want to be a strong leader, you had better possess good business sense, veterans say. More than ever, golf is a business as competitive as the rivaling computer geeks in Silicon Valley. The bottom line is the bottom line: Courses are out to make money, and they don't dare lose golfers to the club down the street.

Spence advises young superintendents to treat golf as a business, not just a game. "Your employer is going to treat it as a business and treat you as a young businessperson," Spence says. "You must reciprocate."

Zontek says being a superintendent today is like being a small-business owner. "It's not unusual for an 18-hole golf course to have a budget from \$500,000 to \$1 million," he notes.

While there's more pressure, there are more rewards, Zontek notes, as in premium jobs with great pay. Some superintendents are courted like star athletes, such as Bruce Williams, who signed a five-year contract and received a \$25,000 signing bonus when he joined the Los Angeles CC about three years ago. Williams knew the LACC brass wanted him, so he listed his demands.

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phases of golf course operations, management style and commitment to environmental stewardship as leadership attributes.

Scott Pike

Age: 28

Course: Westwood CC, Rocky River, Ohio

Title: Assistant superintendent

Education: Bachelor of science degree in agronomy/turf management from The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

Mentor: Joseph Baidy, director of golf courses and grounds for Turning Stone Casino Resort in Verona, N.Y.

What inspired you to become a superintendent?

I've always loved golf, and I've been working on courses since I was 16. I originally went to college to study golf course design, but I discovered that you have to know how to take care of a course if you want to design one. That's when I fell in love with the field, and I've been in it ever since.

What makes you a leader?

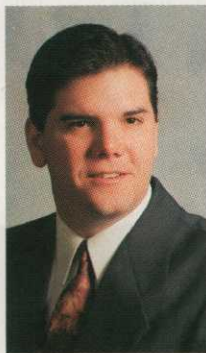
I'm a person that can listen. I'm also a good motivator. I can also adjust to situations when they don't go my way.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I'd love to become a superintendent and a CGCS.

What's your favorite classic movie?

"Caddyshack." We get stressed out about our profession, and this movie can bring us back down to reality by putting



our profession in a different light.

Pike was nominated by Baidy.

"Scott is a dedicated, competent and sincere individual and a credit to the golf course profession," Baidy says.

John Szklinski

Age: 35

Course: Southern Hills CC, Tulsa, Okla.

Title: Superintendent

Education: Bachelor's degree in turfgrass management from Penn State University in State College, Pa.

Mentors: Richard Szklinski, father; Armen Suny, former superintendent of Castle Pines GC in Castle Rock, Colo., and now general manager of Shadow Creek GC in Las Vegas; Ed Miller, former superintendent of Desert Forest GC in Carefree, Ariz., who's now developing an 18-hole course in San Antonio; Joseph Duich, professor emeritus at Penn State.

What inspired you to become a superintendent?

I grew up on an 18-hole course in State College, Pa. I enjoyed the work and science involved with turfgrass management. I enjoy trying to grow the best grass and producing a high-quality product.

What makes you a leader?

Honesty; strong communications skills; leading by example.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I don't know if I can answer that. I feel fortunate and delighted to be where I'm at now. I don't know where I'll be in 10 years, but I'll still be in this industry.



Is the glass half full or half empty?

It needs to be half full. But from time to time it appears to be half empty.

Szklinski was nominated by Dave Wilber, a Sacramento, Calif.-based agronomist.

"John has to be one of the hardest working guys in the business," Wilber says. "He has an amazing ability to see the details and make handling them a part of his program."

John Pollok, CGCS

Age: 32

Course: Robinson Ranch, Santa Clarita, Calif.

Title: Director of golf course operations

Education: Certificate of turfgrass management from Penn State University in State College, Pa.

Mentors: Roger Pollok, father; Seymour Chernov, former general manager at El Cabalero CC in Tarzana, Calif.

What inspired you to become a superintendent?

I was 14 when I started working on a golf course picking up range balls. It was easier work than working on the farm back home in Cannon Falls, Minn. — and better pay. I fell in love with the sport and the idea of being able to manicure a park-like setting into a playing field.

What makes you a leader?

Setting a good example, and having pride in the work I do. I'm not willing to satisfy for second best.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

As director of golf course operations/general manager for a major golf facility.

What do you like most about Southern California?

Oh! — the weather. And the California girls.

Pollok was nominated by Dave Wilber, a Sacramento, Calif.-based agronomist.

"John is an amazing guy," Wilbur says. "After his good friend and fellow superintendent Duff Shaw died of cancer, John started the Duff Shaw Benevolent Trust. If he's not a model example of the future of our business, I don't know who is."

Steve Curry

Age: 31

Course: Berkshire Hills CC, Pittsfield, Mass.

Title: Superintendent

Education: Bachelor's degree in agronomy from University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Mass.; associate degree from

Stockbridge School (at the University of Massachusetts).

Mentors: Bill Bianowicz, superintendent at Litchfield CC in Litchfield, Conn.

What inspired you to become a superintendent?

A lot of it had to do with working with
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