



THE PERFECT MEMBER

By Scott Hoffmann
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When the MGA suggested to me that this article be written concerning those traits composing the "Perfect Member" from the golf course superintendent's viewpoint, my first reactions were that it would not only be a somewhat delicate subject matter, but also a poor one for someone having spent the last dozen years as superintendent of a resort golf operation. However, after giving the idea further consideration, I decided who better to comment on the Perfect Member than someone viewing the situation from the outside, and with little or no risk of experiencing the unpleasant ordeal of members wishing me great success in some new line of work.

I am sure to have missed a few other good qualities, but believe those already listed are probably enough in themselves to provide for a good hanging.

I'd also like to state that these observations are purely my own and in no way reflect the opinion of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendent's Association or any of its members. Oh, yes, all the names have been changed to protect the innocent and all events or dramatizations are purely fictional and should not be construed otherwise.

With all bases fairly well covered, I will now attempt to characterize the golf course superintendent's Perfect Member.

1) Even after completing the local Community Ed. offering of "How to Maintain the Perfect Lawn", and regardless of whether or not his home lawn is flawless, the Perfect Member understands the superintendent is the expert at the golf course. The Perfect Member knows in his heart, even if some of his methods at times appear

contrary to the game of golf, the superintendent has only the purest and most prudent of motives and the true best interest of the course in mind.

2) The "Perfect Female Member" knows the superintendent does not lie awake nights dreaming up new and devious methods of destroying an otherwise perfect "Ladies Day" by sending out his most deafening machinery, manned by temporary help procured from the local insane asylum, and always choosing this day to test the accuracy of the sprinkler system.

3) The Perfect Member is far too intelligent to compare his club to Slick Greens CC down the road. He realizes the superintendent is managing a living, dynamic, ever-changing commodity subject to a host of variables including budgets, soils, age of facility, grass types, club demands, topography, and last but certainly not least, the whims of Mother Nature. He knows one of the superintendent's greatest challenges is to manage these variables to the point where the membership will be unaware they exist.

4) The Perfect Member understands the superintendent closes the golf course to carts only when deemed to be in the best long-term interests of the golf course and would probably do so even if the lost revenue were providing for his children's college education or, at the very least, his assistant's children's education.

5) The Perfect Member repairs his ball marks, replaces his divots, and is an excellent reader, able to understand even the most difficult golf course directional signs.

6) The Perfect Member compliments his superintendent from time to time, and provides well-meaning, constructive criticism, but at the same time ALWAYS remembers complaints toward the golf course are akin to telling the superintendent he has an ugly daughter, and he avoids them at all costs.

7) The Perfect Member believes the superintendent is grossly underpaid.

8) The Perfect Member is wonderfully understanding and always gifted with a rare sense of humor.

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In all seriousness and with some hopes for atonement, I would like to state that superintendents have the greatest respect for their members, most of whom are already "Perfect" and share a common bond with them in our love for the game and continuing quest and desire to enjoy and provide "Perfect Conditioning."

EDITOR'S NOTE:

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A turfgrass management graduate of Michigan State University, Scott has been at Madden since 1975. Scott has served as president of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association.

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