

The Golfer's Responsibility to the Golf Course

The Georgia Turf-Grass News
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Authors note: This is the first of a series of articles aimed to educate the golfing public on pertinent aspects of golf course management. I trust that these articles will find their way to a conspicuous area where the golfer will have an opportunity to read them.

Today's golf course superintendent has a very responsible job — everytime something goes wrong, he's responsible! Like the superintendents, the golfer has various responsibilities. When properly performed, he is adding to the playability and appearance of the golf course and lessening the burden of the superintendent and his crew.

The golfer must first realize that by simply playing the game, he is inflicting injury in many different ways to his golf course. Chopping pieces of turf out of the ground, scarring the putting surface with his approach shot and golf spikes, upsetting the playability of the sand trap and riding around in a very efficient compacting machine are the most common injuries afflicted by the golfer to his course. It is the golfers responsibility to remedy the wounds made by him as well as the wounds made by others who tend to be forgetful.

Immediately after a divot is taken, it should be replaced. There are several ways pertaining to this (see editorial). Some individuals have stated that a divot taken from an area of predominantly creeping grasses, need not be replaced for it will be covered in a relatively short period of time. The only problem with this trend of thought is that a golfer landing a divot, will have some degree of difficulty in executing his next shot. Now, you may ask, since the player gets to place his ball on the tee, is it necessary to replace a divot taken from a tee? Absolutely! A vast amount of time

and effort goes into the fine grading of a tee. Constant failure to replace divots results in an uneven surface which will lead to poor appearance caused by uneven mowing.

Immediately after a ballmark is created, it should be repaired. This is one injury that cannot wait for treatment from the grounds crew; it is essential that the one who puts it there clears it up. A ball mark repaired immediately will take 24 hours to heal. A ball mark repaired 24 hours later will take two weeks to heal.

Immediately after the golfer gets to within a few feet of the putting surface, he should be aware that his feet should move in a manner that will not mar the putting surface. Dragging a golf spikes and putting greens aren't a favorite combination. Remember that the person who plays behind you cannot repair injury caused by your golf shoes until he has holed out (Rules of Golf). If you have heavy feet, be sure to repair damage caused by your golf shoes.

Immediately after negotiating a sand trap, the golfer should rake it out as level as possible. He who lands in a depression in a sand trap is not the happiest golfer in the world. In addition to having a difficult shot, the golfer must be aware that his club cannot touch the

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sand on the backswing. It takes very little effort to keep the sand trap in the same condition you found it in, if not better.

Immediately after taking command of a golf car, the golfer should realize that he is operating a grass plants' nightmare. It is the most devastating facet in routine turf management on the golf course. The golfer should operate the vehicle in a manner that will minimize its detrimental aspect. Operating the golf car in rough areas whenever and wherever possible is a must. He should confine the vehicle to designated paths. Staying clear of wet areas and worn turf will result in better quality turf.

Another area of responsibility that rests on the golfer is permitting work to be accomplished on the course. The superintendent and his crew are constantly trying to meet work schedules around the golfers. However, there are times when the golfer should sacrifice a minute or two in order to let a particular job be completed. If a green is being sprayed and the operator has almost completed his job, let him finish. It seems quite absurd that the worker should stop for five minutes to let a foursome through when he can have his job completed in a minute or two. The same aspect applies to the men cutting tees, aprons, greens and fairways. If the golfer can observe that the job is just about completed, let the worker finish the job and let him move on. It is amazing how many man-hours can be saved if the golfer shows the same courtesy to the crew that the crew strives to show the golfer.

The last responsibility to be discussed is that of keeping the course clean. Wherever people gather, so does trash. Nothing mars the appearance of a golf course more than garbage, and the guilty ones are the golfers. It is the golfers responsibility to dispose of refuse properly.

By carrying out his responsibilities, the golfer will certainly add to the betterment of his golf course. By carrying out his responsibilities, the golfer will certainly win the respect of the superintendent and other golfers. By carrying out his responsibilities, the golfer will certainly become an asset to the operating of the golf course.

Some people are confident they could move mountains if only somebody would just clear the foothills out of the way.

Human nature seems to endow every man with the ability to size up every man but himself.

GCSA Certification Programs Changes

The Certification program now requires two, rather than three years as a Class A member of GCSAA. Specific requirements and procedures for recertification and retired status were also clarified.

All members interested in the Certified Golf Course Superintendents Program should direct their inquiries to the Director of Education, at GCSAA Headquarters Office, 1617 St. Andrews Drive, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

Our Mid-Atlantic CGCS climbed to 21 this month with the additions of Ed Schmitt from the University of Maryland Golf Course and Robert Bingham, who now operates his own turf management company.

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