

Chapter Dress Codes: Are You Presenting a Professional Image?

CHAPTER RELATIONS — One of GCSAA's mandates is to improve and promote the image of golf course superintendents. At the local level, several chapters are also stepping up to encourage professionalism. Both GCSAA and its local chapters have important parts to play in promoting the positive image of golf course superintendents.

Some of GCSAA's affiliated chapters have adopted dress codes for meetings, golf outings and other chapter events. Often, suggested attire for chapter meetings refers to male superintendents and other attendees. However, similar business attire is also appropriate for female superintendents and assistants.

Charlie Tadge, secretary of the Greater Cincinnati GCSA, says a dress code promotes a superintendent's professional image among peers, the golf public and the staff at the club.

"The staff at the club see the superintendent dressed well, and it enhances the superintendent's public image," he says.

The dress code for the Greater Cincinnati chapter applies to all meetings and requires members to wear sport coats, ties,

dress shirts and dress slacks. When casual attire is specified for chapter events, or when members play golf, they are allowed to wear golf shirts and dress slacks, but not jeans.

"When the meetings are held at a country club or a private club, it's almost always business dress," Tadge said. "For meetings at public golf facilities, when there's not a speaker, then it's casual dress. Or, there might be casual dress with a speaker — depending on the speaker."

Members of the Maine GCSA are permitted to wear casual attire for the majority of chapter meetings, unless the club where they meet has a specific dress code. In those cases, the members respect the club's rules and dress accordingly. Blue jeans and cut-offs are not acceptable attire at any meeting.

David Child, secretary of the Maine chapter, says, "We are a professional organization, and we wish to portray that. We don't want to be seen as a sloppy group of individuals."

During the year, two of the chapter's meetings require members to wear blazers or sport coats. The first is the January meeting, when members invite their green committee chairs and educational presentations are made. The second occasion is the chapter's annual meeting in December.

Lowell Stone, president of the GCSA of Central California, says superintendents who dress professionally show they care about their profession and its image.

"When we walk into the meetings, we should look as professional as we can," Stone says. "I've seen our profession go so far . . . I have seen it go up and up and up. The only way we keep it that way is with proper dress codes."

The GCSA of Central California has implemented a dress code for meetings and golf, taking into consideration that casual dress is more accepted in California.

"California is very casual, and it's tough to get members to wear ties, but sports coats are required," Stone says. "The association secretary calls the club where our chapter meeting will be held and asks what the dress code is for the club and course. That information is then publicized in the chapter newsletter."

Members of the California chapter also have the option of playing golf after chapter meetings, and they are encouraged to wear slacks and golf shirts on the course, but not T-shirts or tank tops.

"Most courses don't allow blue jeans or designer jeans," Stone says. "We try to get the members to adhere to whatever the golf course dress code is, and we always encourage soft spikes."

"It's important to us, as golf course superintendents, to look as professional as we can," he adds. "Superintendents have to be proud of themselves and what they stand for."

Bruce Williams, GCSAA's newly elected president, is a firm believer that a professional image contributes to an individual's career success.

"A measurement of success in GCSAA's image campaign will be the day when it will be difficult to tell the difference between the superintendent, the golf professional and the club manager in the way they present themselves at work and when attending meetings," he says.

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