THRU THE GREEN

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SUPERINTENDENTS: OFFENSIVE LINEMEN OF GOLF

Wise Words from Wisconsin

Have you ever felt that the only time you ever got noticed, as a golf course superintendent, is when something goes wrong on the golf course?

It kind of makes you feel like an offensive lineman in football. After all,when they're executing correctly, offensive lineman go unnoticed by the average fan. In fact, the only time you will hear an offensive lineman singled out in the NFL is after he has committed a penalty and the referee announces his number.

Recognition and fame on offense usually starts with the quarterback, then goes to the running backs, wide receivers and tight ends. Then comes the offensive linemen.

But the truth of the matter is that the others would have little success if the offensive linemen weren't doing their jobs.

This anonymity is one of the reasons that good offensive linemen must have an enormous amount of self-esteem and self-confidence. They must believe they are good performers, capable of blocking anyone they may face.

Without this inner confidence, an offensive lineman always will be thinking about being defeated and not focusing on what he must do on each and every play.

Go ask the golf pro at your club which football position he thinks he can relate to. The answer will undoubtedly be the quarterback. After all, it's the most glamorous big money position on the team.

When the offense is successful, the praise is directed toward the quarterback. When the offense fails, offensive lineman are usually at fault for lack of blocking.

Can you still relate? You bet!

Offensive lineman are the foundation for the whole team. They have to be solid. And they are.

In order to be successful, every position on a football team from the QB to the QL must work together to form a cohesive unit. Likewise, a partnership of mutual respect and understanding between the golf pro and the superintendent is invaluable to both. A true partnership is one in which the best interests of the club are promoted and maintained.

Have you ever wondered why we don't have a "Superintendent of the Year" award?

It's because of the same reason an offensive lineman doesn't win the NFL MVP award. There's nothing to to base recognition upon. The only stats kept on an OL is his number of penalties.

Should the most valuable golf course superintendent be the one who has the fewest things go wrong in a year? Forget it! Recognition has to be a personal thing.

Use our friend, the good old offensive lineman, as an example. Mental toughness allows him to take the field on series after series, year after year. He knows each time that he is winning little battles that ultimately will be reward with a team victory.

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