

**S**ince being named supervisor of the Duke University Golf Club engineering and mechanical repair department, I have developed a streamlined and affordable system for our golf maintenance operation.

We have *three mechanics* in the shop, because a great preventive maintenance schedule insures you will have equipment that runs properly from top to bottom.

Our system is recovering the cost of three mechanics many times over, and has created great results on the course.

Most golf courses have 50 to 100 machines, and employ one or two mechanics. They also try to use untrained workers in the shop to help the lead mechanic.

There is no way one mechanic at an 18-hole golf course with a full maintenance schedule can perform preventive programs; make emergency repairs; maintain repair logs; purchase products; keep the books; and clean the work area, all in a five-day work week. Some part of the overall program will suffer or simply won't get done.

When mechanics are over-worked, they're always playing 'catch-up.' Morale is low as preventive maintenance is increased, and the grounds crew doesn't like the machines they run.

The Duke University Golf Club suffered from what I call "The Alamo Syndrome." The mechanics were working against impossible odds.

Here's how to break out of the syndrome. We did it in one year:

- 1) Start with a clear, well-defined mission statement.
- 2) Establish your work philosophy and plan a work schedule that includes an extra, trained mechanic in the shop. As part of the schedule:
  - ▶ Design and follow an effective preventive maintenance schedule.
  - ▶ Ask your tractor rep for help on PM sheets.

## Why your shop needs three mechanics



*Norman Weaver*

**NORMAN WEAVER**  
Guest columnist

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▶ Give each piece a number. Include blowers, cutting tools, pressure washers, everything.

▶ Set up your files based on the numbering system, and log the work daily to include time and cost of parts.

3) Present this plan to your general manager, greens committee, or whomever else holds the purse strings.

As a result of our program, morale is high and we're never behind in our work. Our records are clear and concise for fast reference, and the equipment looks and performs better for more years. Superintendent Eric Shields no longer has to wonder whether or not equipment will be ready on time, and I'm looking forward to saving more than \$100,000 over the next three years.

That's what proper equipment maintenance is all about! **LM**

*Guest columnist Norman Weaver is supervisor of golf course engineering and mechanical repair at the Duke University Golf Course, Durham, N.C.*

**What's your opinion on the "state of the shop" at golf courses today? Have any solutions or suggestions of your own? Write to LM at 7500 Old Oak Blvd. Cleveland, Ohio 44130. Phone us at (800)225-4569 x 709; fax us at (216) 891-2675; or E-mail to: [tmciver@advanstar.com](mailto:tmciver@advanstar.com)**