

# The Individual's Responsibility for Golf Course Care

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Not all course improvement comes from the superintendent or the green chairman or the Green Committee. Each individual that plays a course carries with him a responsibility to improve the course by his consideration of the people who follow him and for the course itself.

Golf course maintenance is fast coming to the point where a good portion of the successful superintendent's planning must be done by first figuring out the psychology involved. How are the people going to react when faced with a change in the status quo? Are they going to help you or hinder you?

No one can say for sure how people will react in any given situation, but over a period of years we learn to guess pretty well what the general reaction is likely to be. For example, people are always prone to walk the shortest distance between two points unless given a reason to do otherwise. Now we can sometimes control where people walk by signs and barriers but wouldn't it be much better to coax them to follow another route by means of an inviting vista beyond or by a subtle row of flowers across the old path to beautify as well as direct?

We can demand that people dispose of litter properly but what good is it going to do if we do not provide handy containers for the trash and better yet, containers which are also attractive?

Someone must set the example. What good is it to talk about holes in the fairway if the general practice of the green chairman and members of the Green Committee is to take divots and let them lie where they fall?

Another problem is the large number of golfers who have not yet been educated in the love and care of a course. Here again, it is up to the golfers of long standing to set the example. According to statistics from the National Golf Foundation there are presently about 6 1/4 million golfers in the United States who play more than 15 rounds of golf a year. This figure indicates a tremendous growth over the last few years and we can well imagine that many of these golfers, along with nearly a million golfers who play fewer than 15 rounds a year, give little thought to what they can do to make the course more pleasant for others.

The big question now is how are we going to correct this situation. At least one answer is by holding group meet-

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## COMING EVENTS

### September 18

Illinois Turfgrass Field Day  
University of Illinois  
Urbana, Ill.

### September 22

Mississippi Valley Golf Course  
Superintendent's Field Day  
Westwood Country Club  
Clayton, Mo.

### September 23-24

Lawn and Turf Conference  
University of Missouri  
Columbia, Mo.

### October 8

Metropolitan GCSA Annual Field Day  
Winged Foot Golf Club  
Mamaroneck, N. Y.

### October 8-9

New Mexico Turfgrass Conference  
New Mexico State University  
State College, N. M.

### October 21-23

Central Plains Turfgrass Foundation  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan, Kans.

### November 4-6

Oklahoma Turfgrass Conference  
Stillwater, Okla.

### November 15-18

American Society of Agronomy Meeting  
Kansas City, Mo.

ings and exchanging ideas among ourselves. Next we must improve our public relations in every way possible so that even the once a year golfer has a sense of responsibility to the course. We must do a good job ourselves so that our members feel a sense of pride in what we are doing and want to help.

In the spring of 1963 almost every course in the Northeast experienced winter damage. This was a real headache and a disappointment to us in many ways. But in at least one instance many of the pains were soothed by a simple letter from the Grounds Committee to the membership stating the general conditions, what was being done about them and asking for cooperation in helping make the course one of the best. Such a letter lets the membership know what is going on and also makes members feel more a part of the activity.

There is another means by which we can make the individual feel a sense of responsibility toward the course. That is by putting him on a committee for

some phase of the operation such as tees, greens, fairways, trees and shrubs, traps, etc. By taking part in some of the decisions being made for the course the committeeman is likely to think about his responsibility next time he plays the course. Soon he begins to set a proper example for others.

We should keep good records to show the expense of raking sand traps, picking up trash and the cost of machinery breakdown due to objects discarded by golfers. Everyone is interested in getting the most for the club dollar. The members should certainly be made conscious of what their thoughtlessness is costing.

Last of all, the superintendent and the Green Committee have a responsibility to try to provide the best facilities and grounds possible so that the user cannot help but be aware that much time and effort is spent in his interest. Only by encouraging a feeling of personal responsibility and pride in the work being done can we expect help from the individual.



Supt. Bob Peters of Gulph Mills Golf Club, King of Prussia, Pa., constructed boxes of cement to store irrigation hose in close proximity to each green. Some are constructed so they can be padlocked.