

Pacific Standard Time

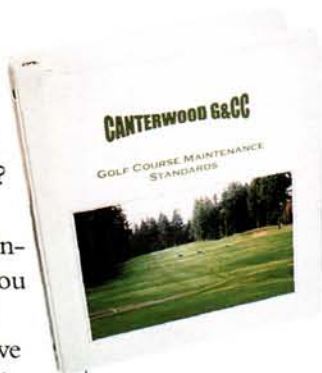
A simple method to create continuity for your maintenance operation.

BY LARRY GILHULY

Question — Does your golf course maintenance operation have a set of written standards that outline how the golf course will be maintained? If the answer is no, and your golf course suffers from the lack of maintenance continuity that is giving you a headache, maintenance standards offer the simplest method to achieve continuity while virtually eliminating the individual playing preferences of players. For an in-depth look at why maintenance standards should be used at your golf course, read “When In Doubt, Spec It Out!” by Pat Gross in the March/April 1997 issue of the *USGA Green Section Record*. Written maintenance standards created by the golf course superintendent and the Green Committee (or similar group) with approval from the Board of Directors provides a very definitive blueprint for the golf course superintendent. However, two golf course superintendents in the Pacific Northwest have taken this simple document to another level to educate players about their maintenance operation while providing a feeling of pride within the maintenance staff.

THE ROLLS ROYCE APPROACH

Forrest Goodling, superintendent of the Portland Golf Club, had a set of good written standards for his golf course, but he wanted more than just the written word. Along with John Manley, general manager, and Larry Lamberger, director of golf, they introduced the concept of adding photographs of the golf course and of regular maintenance operations that include various maintenance staff members. The budget at Portland G.C. also provided for the use of an outside



When photography is added to written maintenance standards, the level of professionalism and understanding of the golf course maintenance operation is greatly enhanced.

company to create the final document with color photographs, high-gloss paper, and a very professional appearance. At slightly over \$100 per copy, they provided their Green Committee and Board of Directors a highly visual and simple way to get up to speed on the maintenance operation, while answering many common questions through the use of photography. In addition to the maintenance standards, a historical perspective of the golf course is included, detailing all of the significant architectural changes since the initial construction during the early 1900s. Also, each golf hole was photographed from above and is described in detail, along with the practice facility, maintenance facility, and clubhouse area. The Portland Golf Club Course Manual is simply the finest method available to educate members about their maintenance operation! For more information, e-mail Forrest Goodling at pgccrew@aol.com.

THE CADILLAC APPROACH

While the maintenance standards document created for Portland Golf Club is

outstanding, many golf courses simply do not have the budget to produce such a remarkable document. Scott Young, CGCS, Canterwood Golf & Country Club, was very impressed with the Portland Course Manual, but decided to modify it slightly to reduce the cost. Using Microsoft Word as the software program, Scott used a combination of digital images and his written standards to create a document that is slightly different from Portland's, but still produces the same results — educating the membership about the maintenance operation. Scott made sure to include photos of all of his key employees to recognize their efforts, and included hours required to complete each task. The Canterwood G&CC Maintenance Standards booklet is not finished professionally with high-gloss paper and extremely crisp photography, but it is organized to allow the reader to quickly find any section of the book and write notes in the book if they have questions or comments. It is given to the Green Committee and Board of Directors and has proven to be very popular. At approximately \$10 per copy, it is well within budget and a very important tool in the member education process. For more information, contact Scott Young at (253) 851-2752.

If you do not have a set of maintenance standards or currently use only words to describe your operation, using photography is an outstanding way to educate your players about your maintenance program. It may be about (Pacific Standard) time for you to consider this idea.

LARRY GILHULY is director of the USGA Green Section Northwest Region.