

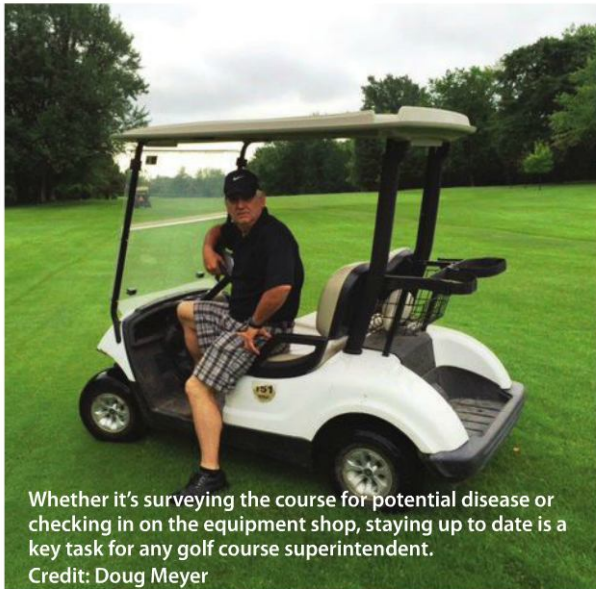
A Day in the Life of a Turf Manager

► **I am normally up around 4:30 in the morning. The first thing** I do is check the weather forecast to see what the day will bring. My job is so weather dependent. Rain (or lack of it), temperature, humidity and wind all factor into how I will approach the day. Next, I check my emails and messages to make sure none of my staff have called in sick.

I am at the course by 5:15 a.m. and spend a few minutes patrolling the pro shop, clubhouse and snack bar areas to make sure there has been no vandalism during the night. My next stop is the Turf Maintenance building where I open up for the



A daily meeting takes place to talk about the condition of the course and the plan for the next day.
Credit: Doug Meyer



staff and check the irrigation computer to make sure the irrigation system has operated as programmed and that the pumps are pressurized and functioning correctly.

My next task is to review the job board, which was set up the afternoon before, and meet with my assistants to go over our morning tasks for the crew, keeping in mind the golf activities planned for the day. At 5:50 we have a crew meeting and by 6:00 a.m. all the crew are out on the course to start their assignments. Generally, the first task of the day for the crew is mowing greens, tees, fairways and rough, changing holes, raking bunkers, checking and cleaning the course washrooms and filling water coolers with iced water.

Once the crew is started, it is time for me to do a scouting of the course. I visit each tee, fairway and green to look for potential disease or insect issues and note any other issue on the course that requires attention. I take the temperature and moisture readings of the greens and take Stimpmeter readings. At about 7:00 a.m., I take time to stop at the pro shop to see if there are any issues and to update the employees on our plans for the day. By 9:00 I have finished scouting the course and return to the office to write up my notes. Keeping track of disease and insect incidence helps me build a history of hot spots that in turn helps me predict future issues and catch them when they are in the very early stages.

Team meetings are held every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. with the General Manager and key managerial staff to discuss club business and facilitate coordination between departments.

When I have finished writing up the daily scouting report, I revisit the job board and assign a second task to crew members based on my observations of the course. This could be such jobs as weeding and trimming bunkers, trimming hedges, filling divots or working on

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any in-house projects that we have going. There is never any shortage of small details that need to be taken care of on the course.

While I am at the office, I take a moment to approve purchase orders and other paperwork and order any supplies that are needed. I check with our mechanic to see if there are any special issues with equipment and make sure all regular maintenance is up to date. I return morning phone calls and messages. By 11:00, it is time to take a short break for lunch.

At 11:30 the crew are finished their lunch as well and are sent out with their second assignment of the day.

My afternoon tasks are often varied and can include supervising projects, hands-on problem-solving of irrigation or drainage breaks and planning Board of Directors, Long-Range or Greens Committee reports and presentations. I am often out on the course supervising the crew. I always try to make myself available to members to hear their comments and concerns.

Around 1:30 p.m., I set up the job board for the next work day based on the golf calendar and weather forecast.

At "2:00" the crew has finished for the day and I have time to take a second moisture reading of the greens and program the irrigation system for the evening watering based on the readings and precipitation and temperature forecasts. I also take a few minutes to meet with my assistants to review the day and plan for tomorrow.

I do one last check of the course around 3:00 to check for heat stress and make sure there are no issues that require my attention before I leave the course.

Of course, a superintendent's job is 24/7 in the summer and I recheck the weather radar in the late afternoon and again in the evening. I can cancel the evening's irrigation remotely if weather conditions suddenly change.

I generally find time to get in some training; cycling, running or playing hockey in the late afternoon or evening, and then an early bedtime – 4:30 a.m. will come soon enough. **GM**

Doug Meyer, MS, CGCS, is the golf course superintendent at Club De Golf Beaconsfield in Point Claire, Quebec and a CGSA member.

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Surveying the site of a key project
Credit: Doug Meyer