And while I’m on the subject...

Of course, we’re biased. But it’s hard to imagine the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America choosing two more deserving recipients than Pat and me. Dr. Michael Hurdzan and I work for its President’s and Distinguished Service awards, respectively.

Both gentlemen serve on the Golf Course News Editorial Advisory Board, and they serve it extremely well. When it comes to putting issues on issues that affect superintendents, that staff here simply could not do without their knowledge, enthusiasm and perspective. Please take time to read Mark Leslie’s stories on Tim, the superintendent at Collier’s Reserve in Naples, Fla. (page 28), and Dr. Mike, the Columbus, Ohio-based superintendent-turned-architect whose star is definitely on the rise (page 30).

And while I’m on the subject, this month’s Q&A features Hurdzan’s mentor, Jack Kidwell, who has done just about everything there is to do in the golf business. In addition to designing, maintaining and managing courses in his native Ohio, Kidwell played a fair game of golf in his day. In fact, during his high school years, he competed on more than one occasion against a fellow future architect from Urbana. Some guy named E. Howard, it appears.

And while I’m on the subject, the Kidwell Q&A was conducted by the newest member of our editorial staff, Editorial Assistant J. Barry Mothes, who comes to GCN after a tenure at the Portland Press Herald. Barry further qualified himself for the job by working this summer on the maintenance crew at Portland Country Club under Superintendent Pat Lewis. In between cup replacements and GCN assignments, Barry continues to work an authorized history of Portland CC, a venerable Donald Ross design at the head of Casco Bay.

And while I’m on the subject (geeze, this column is all over the board!), congratulations to Jim Hodge, who succeeds Lewis as president of the Maine Golf Superintendents Association. Pat has served the association well and I’m sure Mr. Hodge—who co-owns Valhall Golf Course in Cumberland—will follow suit.

A little birdie has informed me (as one informed him) that National Audubon Society President Peter Berle will step down early this year. Wouldn’t it be great if the ubiquitous Ron Dodson, president of N.Y. Audubon and golf course bird sanctuary promotor, were considered for the nation’s top avian position?

“Nothing in the world,” laughed Dodson. “My job is national enough. If it were any national, my wife would toss me out.”

Indeed, I was amazed to actually catch the globetrotting editor on the rise (page 30).

Charing information. That is one basic, bottom, operative line for the golf industry in the 1990s. As epitomized at Golf Course Expo, the sharing information is lifeblood to the body of the golf course superintendents’ profession as well as the game’s designers and developers — a major change from decades ago when useful, helpful, innovative methods were held close to the vest and kept as secrets to take to the grave.

“What I have seen is, the superintendents’ associations have moved from being social organizations to truly one of the most professional of the trades,” said former superintendent Mike Hurdzan, now a golf course architect. “Look at the breadth of services the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America offers its members, and you can see why it is serving the development it offers, and the support it has. No longer are they hiding ideas. They try to share them. In the ‘50s guys wouldn’t tell you how they did something. Now they share equipment and manpower, if necessary, to help someone out.”

As a former pleaser for Golf Course News to introduce Golf Course Expo, the first conference and trade show to share information specifically geared to facilities, Maintenance, Development, and Management and Marketing education, I must say that the following keynote addresses from Arnold Palmer and Robert Trent Jones II, and this year’s Expo illustrate the need to exchange information.

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GOLF COURSE NEWS
We want to hear from you...

In an effort to track the growth of golf course management companies, we are requesting that any management firm operating five or more courses contact us by Jan. 15. We want to know the company's name, address, telephone and number of courses it manages. We will publish the information in the February issue of Golf Course News and will update the list every three months, noting the number and names of any new courses added during the previous quarter. Management companies currently operate less than 5 percent of the more than 13,000 U.S. courses. But as anyone who follows the industry knows, that number is growing as management firms vigorously compete against one another to bring privately and municipally owned facilities under their corporate wings.

If you want your management company to be included in our quarterly listing, please telephone Peter Blais, Associate Editor, at 207-846-0600 or write to Golf Course News, PO Box 997, Yarmouth, ME 04096.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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