Accuracy Doesn't Mean Just Coming Close

It would seem that the word, Accuracy, hardly needs further definition. Webster describes it as "freedom from mistake; precision; exactness". It seems appropriate to quote from an anonymous philosopher who said:

- History is the study of man's successes and failures, but pay closest attention to man's failures — you will learn more from them.
- Always try to learn from the mistakes of others. You haven't got time to make them all yourself.

Were it not for the accuracy of modern timepieces our systems of appointments, transportation timetables, radio and television schedules and other facets of our daily living would become hopelessly snarled. Consider too, the importance of the accuracy of the stopwatch in determining the outcome of races of men, horses and vehicles.

Editor Blames the Printer

Anyone who has ever been in the publishing game knows what it is to live in constant agonizing dread of the unconscious, inevitable mistakes that crop up on the printed page. Gremlins mostly get the blame. Sometimes they are simply the result of temporary lack of discipline on the part of the proofreaders or others. At times one suspects that they might be the result of just not knowing the score.

The story is told concerning a family by the name of O'Hora, members of which regularly are in the news. For years they have been patiently correcting reporters and editors who insist upon spelling their name O'Hara. It is still going on.

This Takes Some Explanations

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Turf Dates

Feb. 6-15 — 34th GCSA International conference and show, El Cortez Hotel, San Diego
Feb. 21-22 — Minnesota GCSA conference, Minneapolis
Feb. 25-28 — Cornell U., Statler Hall, Ithaca, N. Y.
Mar. 4-6 — Midwest Regional turf conference, Purdue U., Lafayette, Ind.
Mar. 27-29 — Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph.

namic biological system. The supt. must interpret scientific findings in the light of his experiences and his knowledge of course conditions. Involved are machines, grasses, fertilizers, insects, diseases, chemicals and people. Mistakes happen, of course, but much less frequently than one would expect.

One Part Per Million

Some chemicals are so potent that the difference of a few parts per million can mean the difference between perfection and just another job. Others, too, may have difficulty visualizing 1 ppm. (one part per million). In other terms 1 ppm is:

one square foot in 200 putting greens;
one needle in a haystack of one ton (not precise);
one minute in 2 years (approximate);
one pint in 625 power sprayers with 200-gallon tanks.

Accuracy in developing correct dilutions is of little consequence if other measurements have a lesser degree of accuracy. Materials often are reported to have failed. Investigation reveals that the specified quantity had been applied to an area half again larger. For some unknown reason there seems to be a reluctance to measure turfgrass areas accurately. Questions about the fairway acreage may get the reply, "I really don't know for sure but I think it is about 25 acres." Actual measurement may reveal 45 acres of fairway turf. Manufacturer's recommendations for rates imply effective performance when applied as specified.
Many are the cases where the product was blamed instead of inaccuracy of application.

Jesse DeFrance used to maintain an area of putting turf at Rhode Island that measured precisely 1,000 square feet. Visitor’s guesses as to the area involved soared to 2,500 sq. ft. and dropped as low as 500. Truly, the eye can deceive.

**N Sources Important**

Part of our concept of Accuracy involves telling the whole truth, not just part of it. There are mixed fertilizers on the market that contain “xx per cent organic nitrogen”. Part comes from inorganics, part from natural organics, part from dry urea-forms. Only when it is known how much N each source contributes is it possible for the supt. to evaluate and to use the product properly and intelligently.

All labelled chemicals must carry a statement of the percentage of active ingredient. It was not always thus. Only thru concerted action was this accomplished. The seed industry has had its moments also. When Merion bluegrass came on the market there was a scramble to market “Merion Mixtures” and to capitalize on the free publicity. There was nothing illegal or dishonest about selling a mixture which, according to the label, “Contains Merion bluegrass” but the 2 per cent that some of them contained did nothing to produce repeat customers.

More than 30 years ago we were impressed with the need for accuracy in diagnosing turfgrass troubles. Several persistent attacks of “dollarspot” were dosed with every remedy in the book (and some that were not in the book) only to have supts. learn, sadly and much later, that the grass was being eaten alive by sod webworms. More common today is the diagnosis of drought for nitrogen starvation. Much like the “dollarspot-sod webworm” mixup, the symptoms are similar. Water mistakenly applied to correct a nitrogen deficiency only makes it worse.

**Winter Play Dilemma**

Q. Each fall when we close our club, I have the supt. remove the cups from greens and use temporary greens. We treat for snow-mold, etc., just before the supt. is through for the season. Complaints come rolling in from members, other post-season players and hundreds of college kids who play many rounds after we close free of charge. The board doesn’t think I