

Feedback

GCSAA president responds

In response to James Graham's letter (actually his name is James Graham Prusa), "GCSAA none of the way" (GB, January), I, as President of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, feel that an answer to his remarks would be appropriate.

I am sorry that Mr. Prusa did not have the patience or understanding to wait for the normal process needed to change the bylaws at our annual meeting held in February in Portland. At that meeting, a stronger Code of Professional Ethics and enforcement procedures were approved by the members of the GCSAA. Reflecting concern for the continuous improvement of professional responsibility, the members accepted a revised code and adopted bylaw amendments authorizing its strict enforcement.

Mr. Prusa also stated that "the GCSAA has lost the impetus established by Colonel John Morley in 1926." On the contrary, when you look at the original goals set forth at the time of our inception, you will note that our objective has always been "the improvement of golf course maintenance, the distribution of scientific and practical knowledge and information leading to more efficient and economical maintenance, and the uniting of golf course superintendents of the American continent."

Our expanded educational programs in recent years and our concern for new members are well within the original goals set forth by Col. Morley. The main thrust of GCSAA is undeniably EDUCATION with a concern for PROFESSIONALISM.

As to item 3 — "the establishment of a mandatory certification examination before acceptance into membership", and item 4, where he advocates a bachelors degree, or "equivalent," for future entrance into the association, I must point out that this is not the intent of the association, nor has it ever been. We are here to help all superintendents, not just the fortunate ones that were able to get a formal education.

At this point in the history of our association, we do not plan on making it an elite, "college grad only," organization. We attempt to provide educational material to all segments of our membership, regardless of educational background. Our goal is to upgrade the entire profession.

We have the certification program for those that feel qualified, and for those that feel they would like additional training before attempting certification, we offer several excellent self-improvement seminars. And for those that would like a basic course in golf course management, we offer study manuals. These are all designed to offer something for everybody.

Not all clubs require the same level of expertise from their superintendent. It is our feel-

ing that we are obliged to accept every superintendent regardless of his level of expertise, and then furnish him with whatever services he feels are necessary to help him reach his personal goals.

A golf course superintendent is short-changing himself and his club if he doesn't participate, and a club is short-changing its golfers if they do not insist that their superintendent join and become active in our programs — which are designed to help the superintendent provide his golfers with the finest playing conditions possible with the money available. In this day and age of the economic squeeze and the concern about the environment, it would be a great INVESTMENT for the club and the superintendent if he availed himself of the programs we offer.

In item 5, Mr. Prusa indicated that he would like to eliminate all "commercial" members from the association. I feel that the commercial member is a vital part of our association. He often adds his knowledge and expertise to our programs and is an invaluable asset, one that we would sorely miss. We have always cooperated with the manufacturers and their representatives who supply the equipment and materials needed to do our job. By working together we have been able to revolutionize and upgrade the "tools of the trade" so we all benefit.

I hope that I have explained the true purpose of the association to Mr. Prusa's satisfaction, and that he will reconsider joining us in our mission of educating ALL golf course superintendents. This is the only way that the level of professionalism can be elevated to the satisfaction of all.

I say to Mr. Prusa, quitting is the easy way out. Share your knowledge and join in and help all of us realize the dreams of Colonel John Morley! You can't do it alone.

Ted W. Woehle, CGCS
Oakland Hills CC
Birmingham, Mich.

Taxes north of the border

Your article on taxes (GB, March) relating to the golf club industry is most pertinent. It is quite obvious we have the same problems on both sides of the border.

We hope you are aware of a report by the Blair Commission on the Reform of Property Taxation which was just submitted to the government for their consideration, specifically, "Land Use for Recreational Purposes." Looking forward to seeing other articles on golf course taxation in your great magazine.

A. Ross Thompson
Executive Director
Ontario Canada Golf Association

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