



MID-ATLANTIC News Letter



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Sheldon R. Betterly

Sheldon has brought his new course along excellently despite the last two droughty years and the poor native soil. He has won the praise and admiration of his fellow superintendents.

THE COURSE

Chantilly was one of the first courses designed by our own local architects, Ed Ault and Al Jamison. It is laid out on a flat piece of former dairyland in Fairfax, Virginia. A large 15 acre lake adds to the interest of several holes and trees were added to eventually take the openness away. The 6610 yard, well trapped course has a par of 72.

MAINTENANCE

For the first two years the greens of 1 and 19 bent grasses were cut at 5/16 and 3/8 of an inch to develop a body and holding capability that was not possible to obtain from the soil alone. They are now cut at 1/4 inch except for the summer months when they are cut at 5/16. They receive at least 10 pounds of N annually from U. F. in three applications, one spring and two fall with supplemental feedings of inorganics as needed. Sheldon blames some of his problems on poor internal drainage and feels that his greens would be much better if properly drained.

Fifteen of the tees were rebuilt, regraded and planted to Tifway 419 bermudagrass. The winter of 62-63 had serious effects on the 419 planting and the tees have been overseeded with bluegrass-fescue temporarily. He plans to commence with his bermuda program using perhaps a hardier strain of bermuda.

The fairways are a mixture of Kentucky bluegrass and Illahee fescue and are cut at 1 1/8 inches. A 10-3-7 80% organic fertilizer is used to supply 4 pounds of N annually. The first two years spring applications of 2, 4 D and 2, 4, 5T were used to clean up the fairways and did an excellent job.

The K-31 fescue roughs were fertilized at 500 pounds 10-10-10 per acre plus a total of two additional pounds of N from urea to make it into the solid turf it is. The bunching usually associated with K-31 is not found in this vigorous turf.

The tees and greens are watered primarily by sprinkler from the lake by a 600 gallon P. M. pump. Sheldon has only had to syringe his greens four times in three years.

FUTURE

More trees will be added to the 600 pines, spruce and hardwoods already planted. Several more traps will be added to the original design.

DIRECTIONS

Out route 29-211 from Washington to Centreville, turn right and follow 620 for 2 1/2 miles to the club. Signs will be posted.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Thomas E. Doerer, Jr.

In these modern days of speed, conformity and confusion we sometimes lose that old personal touch with our fellow man. With the above in mind I thought it might be an appropriate time for a real old time get-together in the form of a one day family picnic.

This picnic is to be held at the Shenandoah Retreat Golf Club, Berryville, Virginia, on Tuesday, August 4, 1964. Our host will be superintendent, John Leavell.

John's club is an ideal location for this family picnic as it affords us fishing, boating, games area and a first class swimming pool. All of this can be enjoyed by the whole family. There will be plenty to eat and also a display of refreshments. Bring your fishing pole, softball gloves, bats, balls, badminton rackets and nets. Golf will be played by those wishing to participate. The cost will be \$5.00 per family or individual. All of the above will be followed by a brief meeting of the membership.

Our Ladies' Nite of last year was such a success we thought we would try to include our families in one of our summer meetings. Lets all try to make this outing a big success, maybe it could become an annual affair.

INVITATION

The members of the Central Virginia and Tidewater Golf Course Superintendents Associations have invited the members of the Mid-Atlantic to attend their March 10 meeting at Willow Oaks Country Club in Richmond. Directions: Take route 161 to Forest Hill Avenue, turn West and proceed one mile to club.

CONGRATULATIONS

We wish Bob Shields, the recently elected National Vice President, every success in his new office. We're sure that he will be a credit to himself and the Mid-Atlantic.

THANKS FROM NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

by L. Robert Shields

To the members of the Mid-Atlantic I wish to express my thanks and appreciation for their support and confidence in the recent election at Philadelphia. I promise to do everything I can for the advancement of all superintendents and to work with them in their efforts to help themselves. I also promise to do a good job on my golf course in an effort to set a good example and perhaps bring credit to superintendents as a whole.

Sincere thanks go to Jim Thomas, Tom Doerer, and George Gumm for their personal efforts to bring about the election results. Extra special thanks are extended to Jim Reid for many years of coaching, advising and teaching.

I'll call on all of you many times during the year for ideas and suggestions on how we can work together to upgrade the image of the golf course superintendent and how we can encourage more men to join our association.

Thanks again for this expression of faith. I'll try to be worthy of your trust.

NATIONAL NEWS

by L. Robert Shields

The National Turfgrass Conference held in Philadelphia, February 9-14, 1964, was a success in every way. Over 60 people were in attendance from the Mid-Atlantic area including GCSAA past president and Mrs. James E. Thomas; Mid-Atlantic President and Mrs. Tom Doerer, Jr.; Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Betterly; Vice President Angelo Cammarota and the entire chapter board of directors.

The Philadelphia equipment show was the largest ever held. Every foot of space available had been reserved as far back as last September. It is estimated that we could have

leased another 25% had it been available. The total attendance including superintendents, ladies, guests, exhibitors and turf grass students was 2,755, which is the largest number of people ever to attend a turfgrass meeting. The educational sessions were well attended and three official GCSAA jackets were awarded to lucky ticket holders. The big banquet on Thursday drew 878 people who enjoyed a delicious roast beef dinner and saw outgoing president, Roy Nelson, pass the gavel to our new president, Dave Moote, who hails from Rosedale Golf Club in Toronto, Canada. At least 1355 people attended the get acquainted party on Monday night.

Many functions were in progress at the same time. For instance, 74 people met for the green chairmen luncheon and forum on problems of the chairman; 36 interested in sod production had lunch and discussed their work; public course operators had an interesting meeting; the past presidents met; the new members met; fathers and sons in golf course work had lunch together and the 309 ladies were going all the time - thanks to the Philadelphia host chapter and their busy program.

There will be no new GCSAA National Headquarters Building this year but a committee has been formed to consider plans and inquire into architects' costs.

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

To make a final check on the winter overhauling, cleaning, and painting of equipment. Has something been forgotten or overlooked? Have all the tee benches been repaired and painted, new ones provided for if needed? Have you arranged for plenty of tee markers, ball washers, tee towels, putting green cups, flag poles, putting green flags, and direction flags for those blind fairway holes? With petty vandalism occurring so frequently nowadays it behooves us to have plenty of these items on hand, so that they can be replaced at once when needed.

Do you have plenty of those minor replacement parts in stock, the small ones which, if not in good working order, can tie up a mower for a few days? Are there plenty of oils and greases available, enough to keep the automotive equipment rolling and free of squeaks and groans? How about soap for the ball washers?

Are there places on your course in need of a clean-up job, such as leaves, trash, and broken limbs; or locations now requiring hand maintenance where a little work would make it possible to use power equipment? Will the irrigation system need checking, are the sprinkler heads in good repair, is there plenty of watering hose on hand? Are the tile lines functioning satisfactorily, does any area need additional drainage?

All of these are but a few of the routine chores which should be done and out of the way before the playing season is upon us. Remember the Boy Scout motto, "BE PREPARED". Let's not procrastinate, do it NOW before the busy season starts. Spring is just a few short weeks away.

RESIDUAL NITROGEN

by F. V. Grau

The term "Residual Nitrogen" defines itself to me as "that nitrogen which remains unchanged in the soil after a certain growing period, constantly ready to continue furnishing food and energy to soil organisms when conditions are favorable for plant growth".

It is significant that residual nitrogen is unalterably connected with the organic portion of the soil, the part that is living. It has been said that there is no mineral reserve of nitrogen. Thus, soluble and quickly-available sources of N can not be stored in reserve. They must be used at once or be lost.

In the early days of the Western Plains the deep rich prairie soils contained 16,000 lbs. of nitrogen per acre. This was Residual Nitrogen, tied up in the organic reserves ready to be released to the growing crops on demand. The plow, erosion and crops have removed most of that reserve. Now crops must be fertilized annually.

To build a reserve of nitrogen in the soil we must do two things: (1) We must use a source of N that is both food and energy for soil microorganisms and, (2) we must make conditions favorable for the development of life in the soil. We know that the nitrogen must be an organic. You can't build a reserve with solubles because they bypass the organisms by

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feeding the plant directly. Thus you have either a "feast or a famine" and the organisms can not do their work of keeping soils flocculated and porous.

Organic sources of nitrogen (natural and synthetics) furnish Carbon for energy and Nitrogen for food. Soil organisms thus are stimulated, populations increase, and nutrients are recycled continuously. The organisms "feed" at the first table. Grass "feeds" at the second table. Nutrients are released as the grass needs it and only through the action of the organisms which are the balance wheel of Nature. The dominant factor is the "Energy Supply".

Experiments at Beltsville show that 20,000 lbs. of Ureaform (38%N) to the acre continuously stimulate living organisms with no harmful effects.

Favorable conditions for microbial activity include pH range near neutral, adequate phosphorus, potash and other mineral elements, good drainage and aeration, temperature and moisture, plus nitrogen and a source of energy.

No one ever need fear a Reserve of residual nitrogen in the soil. Organisms will control the release in accordance with needs of the plants. This is especially true with ureaforms that are manufactured specifically to provide the desired uniform release through soil organisms.

THE VALUE OF A WELL QUALIFIED GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT

A recent survey, by a firm of well known accountants, shows that golf course maintenance costs have increased manifold during recent years. The tabulation is representative of fifty well known golf courses scattered throughout the country. These figures make one realize that providing for the game of golf today is big business. The operation of modern golf plants with all of their complexities calls for skillful management if rising costs are to be kept under control.

Club officials are beginning to give more notice and pay attention to the value of a well qualified golf course superintendent. They are starting to recognize the relationship that exists between the supervisor of maintenance and the game of golf. The man in charge of grounds operations can no longer be classified as just the greenkeeper. He is now somewhat of a scientist, a plant superintendent, and a modern businessman. This present status is going to develop considerably more, because the game is growing by leaps and bounds.

The better a course is groomed - the more exacting players become. Yet, they do not know or comprehend how complex the art of raising and maintaining quality turf is. The day is fast approaching, if it is not already with us, when the average country club must face the fact that the management of a complicated plant such as a golf course requires the services of a highly skilled and trained individual to guide its destiny.

The position of golf course superintendent is one of the most interesting of all agricultural professions. The challenge of new ideas, new courses, new grasses, new soil construction for greens, new fertilizers, new fungicides and insecticides gets into one's blood stream and becomes a part of him. These are the principal reasons why the old-timers in the business are reluctant to seek more remunerative fields. However, eventually there must be replacements for the oldsters when time and age force them to leave the scene.

The question of where these replacements are to come from is beginning to cause concern in some quarters, and will continue to do so. Many of our leading agricultural colleges are instituting courses in turfgrass management. These schools are teaching the rudiments of scientific agronomy, without which a successful golf course superintendent cannot operate. Unfortunately, most of these students when they graduate seek agriculture fields other than golf. Why? Because they are more lucrative, the compensation is better. A graduate who has ambition desires an opportunity affording continuous advancement, and does not wish to remain in a static position that has no future. He is seeking to earn further rewards through his own ingenuity and resourcefulness. What is the answer and the remedy? First, make the job worthwhile, see that the pay envelope is equal to the responsibility involved. Give your golf course superintendent the proper

recognition; full credence should be given to the fact that he is the custodian and supervisor of a large investment. Provide him with an understudy, so that you will not be left holding the bag, in case something should happen to cause the position to become vacant. Encourage his protege to become more proficient through study, help him to gain knowledge and practical experience.

These observations are made by one who has spent a lifetime on a golf course. They are not given with the thought of being authoritative, or of telling club officials how they should run their affairs. The writer's experience dates back to the period when eight clubs were considered a bagful. Since those days the art and technique of growing fine turfgrasses for tees, fairways, and greens has also changed and advanced to now where it is a major industry.

Management of a golf layout today requires a wide range of knowledge and experience. This in turn demands the services of a trained man, one who is a specialist in the golf field. His qualifications should include good executive ability and a thorough education in the technical phases of growing turf to meet the exacting requirements of golf players.

SUPERINTENDENT HONORED WITH U. S. G. A. AWARD

Joseph Valentine, who retired in 1961 after 50 years as superintendent of the Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, Pa. , was named winner of the Green Section Award of the United States Golf Association "For Distinguished Service to Golf through Work with Turfgrass. "

Mr. Valentine, 78, is the fourth recipient of the award and the first superintendent so honored.

The first Green Section Award went in 1961 to Dr. John Monteith, Jr. , of Colorado Springs, Colo. Prof. Lawrence S. Dickinson, of Amherst, Mass. , was the 1962 recipient and last year's winner was O. J. Noer of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The winner receives a replica of the Green Section Award, the original of which hangs in "Golf House", U. S. G. A. headquarters at 40 E. 38th St. , New York City.

It was near the 17th tee at Merion's East Course that Mr. Valentine discovered Merion bluegrass, the improved strain of Kentucky bluegrass now used widely for lawn, tee, and collar as well as fairway turf in all areas where cool-season grasses are grown. Throughout his career he worked tirelessly toward development of better turf for all purposes.

Mr. Valentine, a native of Italy, came to the United States when he was 20 and in 1911 became greenkeeper at Merion. His skill and pride in his work were conspicuous as Merion entertained 11 USGA Championships during his tenure.

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