

Golf Course Superintendents Merit Respect as Turfgrass Doctors

Golf Course Superintendents are professionals, not magicians. An analogy between superintendents and medical doctors can be drawn to illustrate the point.

After years of training and experience, both superintendents and doctors are prepared to examine ailments and prescribe treatment. Both are dealing with living objects. Both are concerned that the life continue. A great deal of mystery and misconception surrounds both

occupations and their practices. Often the cost of their services is considered too high, in some instances exorbitant. Appreciation is expressed only when the "patient" approaches some near tragedy and is "saved," to be useful and complete again.

One major difference between superintendents and doctors (other than income) is that superintendents must work to keep their "patients" at the verge of death, through extremely close cutting, followed by an armada of golfers and carts. The "intravenous bottles" of fertilizer and other soil conditioners can never be turned off, and should some virulent "infection" invade the course in the form of fungus, insects, drought, etc., the superintendent cannot let the "patient" recover through bed rest. He is lucky if he can keep carts on paths, let alone golfers off the course to let it recover naturally.

Each year stories circulate of how a superintendent has been fired because the "Course didn't measure up." Seldom do we hear of those who overcame the tremendous odds and did keep the course in great condition, and almost never do we hear of course officials recog-

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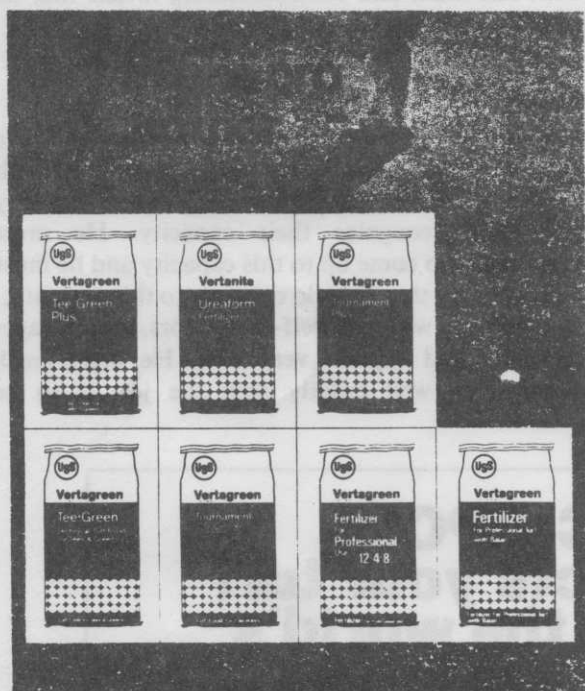
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nizing what may have caused the course not to measure up without pointing a finger at the superintendent. The common cold can remain uncured, but superintendents can have nothing short of perfection.

There are those who contend that all of this is what the superintendent gets paid for, and few superintendents would argue that particular point. What they might like to add, given the opportunity, is that should the "patient" suffer a setback or lose some vitality, conditions other than the superintendent's abilities and actions should also be given consideration. Superintendents are professionals not magicians and they can only perform minor miracles, regardless of budget golfers' desires and demands or other factors.

Although there may be a few charlatans in the business, superintendents over-all are more interested and aware of the conditions of their course than any golfer, professional or amateur, could ever pretend to be. If you wouldn't tell a doctor how to remove an unsightly wart, why should golfers assume so much knowledge and tell the superintendent how to perform his responsibilities?

March 16th Mid-Atlantic Meeting

The first Mid Atlantic meeting for 1976 will be held at Glenwood Golf Club. Paul Weeks will be our host. This will be a joint meeting with the Old Dominion Superintendents Association.

Please make note of the meeting date as it is March 16, which is the *third* Tuesday of the month.

All participants of the meeting should go to the Glenwood Golf Club. Directions for the dinner will be available there.

From Baltimore and Washington take Route 95 South to Richmond, Virginia exit. Take Route 64 east to East Nine Mile Road. - to Gordon Lane - left on Creighton Road - to Glenwood Golf Club.

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