PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow Members:

The 49th Annual GCSAA Conference and Show held in San Antonio, Texas February 12th-17th could be termed nothing but a huge success. In excess of 5,400 people registered for the conference of which over 1,400 were golf course superintendents. Both of these figures, I am told, are new conference and show records.

My personal thoughts in regards to the conference and show are for the most part positive except for the method employed, and the time involved, with the election of officers and directors of our international association. It is my personal feeling that the annual conference and show is cheapened somewhat by the politics involved and employed prior to these elections. My observation is that candidates for office, official chapter voting delegates, past GCSAA President and other conference attendees in general are so deeply involved in politics that the true value of the conference and show is affected in a negative way. Again let me stress these are my personal thoughts and observations, but I suggest that the appropriate GCSAA committee give some serious thought to revamping the election process. In the words of that immortal somebody, "To change is to grow, to stagnate is to die."

Looking forward to seeing you all at Twin Shields Golf Club in Dunkirk, Maryland, Tuesday, March 14th. Ed Wilson is our host, and with this being our first action-packed meeting of 1978, I'm sure you won't want to miss it.

Yours for better golf with finer turf.

Bill Emerson

March Meeting

B. EDWIN WILSON

The March meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents will be held on Tues., March 14, at the Twin Shields Golf Club in Dunkirk, Md. Our host superintendent will be B. Edwin Wilson.

Edwin is a native of southern Maryland with a lifetime background of farming and agronomy. He has actively participated in FFA (Future Farmers of America) and 4-H and held various state and local offices. He was awarded the degree of American Farmer in Kansas in 1966. On a part-time basis he continues to farm tobacco with his Dad and brother. He has completed various agronomy courses at the University of Md. and began as superintendent with Twin Shields in the fall of 1968 when the course was being completed.

HISTORY OF CLUB

Twin Shields is owned and operated as a profitable business by Messrs. Roy and Ray Shields. The course was designed by Mr. Ray Shields, and the construction of the course, which began in the spring of 1968, was supervised by Mr. Ray Shields with the assistance of Mr. Cliff Olinger as construction superintendent. The 18-hole course was completed and opened for play in May 1969. It has a fully automated Toro irrigation system on fairways, tees and greens.

The greens were seeded to Penncross Bent. Fairways and tees were seeded to 40% S.D. Common Kentucky Bluegrass, 40% Merion Kent Bluegrass and 20% Pennlawn Red Fescue. Due to disease problems of Fusarium Roseum, 70-90% of the bluegrass areas have been seeded to Manhattan Ryegrass.

We maintain our roughs at basically the same height as fairways to expedite play. Also, all tees and collar areas are mowed with fairway units to minimize cost.

The course is open for play year round except in snow conditions.

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Who In The World Put The Hole There!
by Frank D. Tatum, Jr.
Member, U.S.G.A. Executive Committee

The Open had reached its most dramatic moment. As Jack Nicklaus crouched over an eight-foot putt on the 12th green at Pebble Beach, Arnold Palmer hunched over an eight-footer on the 14th. Nicklaus needed his putt for a bogey 4, Palmer needed his for a birdie 4, and if Arnold Palmer made and Jack missed, Palmer would lead the Open by a stroke.

Both tapped their putts at about the same instant, and both putts ran practically straight at the hole. As everyone with any interest in these things knows by now, Nicklaus holed and Palmer missed, and Jack won his third Open.

What some spectators found a bit unusual, or unexpected, was the paths of these putts. They had not expected them to run so straight. Their experience with
The University of Maryland has been awarded another “Butter Fingers of the Year Award” for letting another fine agronomy professor slip through their fingers. I’m speaking of Dr. Hawes from the Institute of Applied Agriculture. Dr. Hawes has accepted a position with the U.S.G.A. green section and will be leaving for Texas in late May. Dr. Hawes has been a respected member of the local turf community since 1966. To see one of Doctor Hawes’ accomplishments one only has to open a Mid-Atlantic directory and count superintendents and assistants (I stopped at 25) that he has given to our profession. Dr. Hawes also has students in many other east coast states. He will be sorely missed.

The University has had trouble in the past keeping good educators (i.e. Dr. A. J. Powell and Dr. Jack Hall). Evidently this situation of losing professors to other Universities and private industry is happening all through the University and is not just an agronomy department problem. I’d say the “Ole U of M” better get competitive or the quality of students will drop. Turf students should, at least, know how to lay sod, you know green side up.

So, what now Agronomy Department? You’ve got two, new, young, fine professors in Drs.’ Darrah and Wehner. Dr. Darrah has showed us just how hard a worker he was while making Turfgrass 78 a success. We’re sure that Dr. Wehner will be just as hard a worker if given a chance. Come on Agronomy Department, let’s keep these guys around awhile. You’ve lost two good men in two years, three in a row and you can keep the “Butter Fingers Award” for good. That’s a rather dubious distinction, wouldn’t you say?

C.D. III, may the force be with you!

Sam Kessel, our Vice President, has lined up a real fine schedule of meeting places for the year. Some of the later months have not been confirmed yet, so here is the schedule for the first six months. In March we’re going to Twin Shields with Edwin Wilson as our host. I don’t know if many of you have seen Edwin’s course, but I have and it’s super. Pray for good weather and try to make it out to play. April will find us going back down to sample Ralph MacNeal’s eastern shore hospitality and his golf course at Talbot Country Club in Easton, Maryland. Our Pro-Superintendent Tournament will be at the Washington Golf and Country Club with Virginia’s “Godfather” of Superintendents, Lee Dieter, as host. With Lee in residence we know the WGCC will be in super shape. June is usually great golf weather, so we’re going to celebrate this at a great golf course, Indian Springs. Herb Hienlien will be our host. I hope that ornery Dutchman doesn’t pick the pin placements, he’s tough enough on his own turf. In July we’ll be traveling out to God’s country to visit Tony Goodly at Loudon Golf and Country Club in Purcelville, Virginia. Loudon is one of my personal favorites. August and September are automatic. August is our family picnic and September is our tournament with Philadelphia. This year “Philly” is the host and knowing them they’re going to try to win that “trophy” back. Let’s get a good team together and keep that trophy where it belongs.

Sam tells me that our November and December
Wayne’s Place
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meetings are open. Let’s give him some help and if you can book a meeting, please do!

On March 10th Moody Irrigation Inc. will be having a seminar on their irrigation systems. This seminar will be held at Hunt Valley Golf Club with Bob Orazi as host. Mr. Steve Pasquini and Mr. Steve Selerio will be doing the presentation for Moody and it will be a 4- to 5-hour class. Lunch will be available on a pay-as-you-go basis. For additional information contact Bob Orazi at the club.

Wayne Evans
Course Preparation Includes Superintendent’s Peace of Mind

Preparing a golf course for a show event like a club officials’ tour or a golf tournament isn’t easy for the person in charge. The overall mental approach of the golf course manager can make the difference between a nervous breakdown and a successful showing of his course.

To build a positive overall mental approach, try the following steps:

1. Insure yourself peace of mind by doing everything you possibly can to solve major problems in advance. This includes attending to your regular turf management. Give yourself credit for doing the best job you can.

2. Insure your emotional peace of mind by keeping major family commitments even when things are hectic at the course. You won’t be calm if you feel guilty about missing your daughter’s graduation in order to watch a crew member water the greens.

3. Mentally trace in advance everything you will do while your guests are on your course. Imagine what you will say and what they will see. The more detail your imagination can create, the better your chances of avoiding unforeseen problems are.

4. Maintain as normal a lifestyle as you can. Eat normal foods at about normal times for you, and keep your same sleep and rest schedules. Change is an enemy when stress strikes, and routine is a great tranquilizer.

5. Understand and accept internally that the sky won’t fall if something goes wrong. No amount of preparation can insure a perfect performance for anyone.

6. Switch your concentration quickly so you can concentrate completely on whichever problem you are handling at the time. Trying to solve one problem while worrying peripherally about another confuses the picture, clouds your judgment and creates stress. Deal with them in rapid succession if necessary, but only one at a time.

7. If your event lasts more than one day, check your performance each evening. What was successful? What went wrong? Correct the problems you can and restore your mental calm before moving on to the next day.

No one can guarantee harmony and peace for himself or for anyone else, but attention to these seven points will help ease your path and organize your inner self to handle whatever comes your way.

Dates to Remember

MARCH 14
Twin Shields Golf Club

APRIL 11
Talbot Country Club

MAY 9
Washington Golf and Country Club

JUNE 13
Indian Springs

JULY 11
Loudon Golf and Country Club

AUGUST
Family Picnic

SEPTEMBER
Philadelphia Tournament

OCTOBER
Hunt Valley Golf Course
Superintendents’ Tournament

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Sterilized Top Dressing
Top Soil
Peat Humus
Shredded Tan Bark Mix

- Our top dressing is formulated especially for the transition zone to specifications recommended by U.S.G.A. and leading universities.
- Eliminates additional liming when used as recommended.
- Absolutely no waste.

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CONGRATULATIONS GEORGE!

GEORGE CLEAVER
PRESIDENT
Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America
1978
other tournaments had conditioned them to expect holes to be cut in hillsides, behind bunkers or next to creeks, in places where only a lucky putt goes in or a lucky shot ends up in birdie range. They came prepared to condemn the man who put the hole there as some kind of a fiend.

They should not. He deserves not condemnation but pity. He is up before daylight, ready to start setting the holes as soon as light will permit. His early start expresses his concern that the players with the early starting times will have an equal opportunity with the late starters to see how the course is set up. He struggles with intense care to get it right. If he succeeds, he is blissfully ignored; if he fails, recognition is immediate, universal, bombastic and blasphemous.

I do not seek sympathy for these men. Theirs is a vital function. They can emasculate a great design, or they can accentuate its greatness. To assume such responsibility necessarily includes accepting its consequences. Like bad art, there is too much bad pin setting afflicting the championships to combine the art and the science of locating the holes so as to bring out all the qualities of the course on which they are played. Hopefully, the principles applied by the U.S.G.A. will be useful to others who squint into the rising sun hoping to find that small plot of good grass and terrain in the right part of the green for that day’s play.

The first principle is to be fair. Never pick a placement that will not fully reward the properly struck shot played from the right position. The hole setter, therefore, must not only appreciate the design of the hole, but he must also weigh such factors as weather, wind direction, and firmness of the turf, and determine in advance how that particular hole will play on that particular day. He must have done some planning. In a four-day championship, for example, this means he must have analyzed the course and generally determined the four areas on each green providing hole locations appropriate for the particular tournament. He must then plan his practice

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Who...Put The Hole There!
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round settings so that those areas will be preserved for
tournament play.

He should set up a balanced course for each day's play. A common error is to set up the course to play progressively more difficult each day by using all the easiest pin placements on the first day and proceeding progressively to all of the most difficult settings on the last. This tends to distort the course, at least on the first and last days. In a four-day championship the U.S.G.A. will evaluate each of the four areas preplanned for each green, rating the most difficult as 1, the easiest 4 and assessing a 2 and a 3 for the intermediate areas. Each day's setting process involves planning to avoid something like an "18" course (i.e. 18 number 1 settings) on the one hand, or a "72" course (i.e. 18 number 4 settings) on the other. The optimum for each day would be a "45" course, and the effort each day is made to get as close to that number in the total course settings as conditions that day will allow.

There are other balance factors to be considered, such as avoiding too many left side, right side, front or rear settings sequentially.

After a particular area has been selected for a placement on a given green, care must be given to picking the right spot. Here too a number of factors should be weighed. The U.S.G.A. recommends at least 15 feet between the hole and green edge. Ideally, for a radius of 3 feet around the hole there should be no changes of slope. This does not mean that such area must be flat; it rather means that there should be no change in the angle of slope over the area. The angle of slope, too, is an important factor. There have been instances where holes have been set on slopes so severe that as the green dried out it would not hold a ball. One occurred in a recent regional amateur competition where one contestant 7-putted (!) a green and the tournament winner took 4 putts there.

The area around the hole should be as free as possible of ball marks, other blemishes and changes in grass texture. It is right around the hole where the ultimate action takes place; the particular spot should be selected with commensurate care. The location should "look" right. Care should be taken to avoid placements which, from the player's point of view, present a distorted picture. Golf is a visual game, and the ultimate vision is of the location of the hole.

To assess the player's point of view, the person setting the hole should bring along a putter (and, hopefully, a reasonably representative stroke) to roll the ball at the selected spot before the hole is cut to assure that it will, in fact, play properly.

Perhaps pity is not what the poor pin setter deserves. He experiences the quiet beauty of a superb golf course shimmering in the early morning light. And if he does his job properly he will have planned and worked and placed the hole so that it will add the final touch to the artistry of the course designer and of the shot-maker; so doing should be deeply satisfying.