



# Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER



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## Election Highlights Dec. 9 Meeting At Green Spring Valley

Highlight of the December 9 MAAGCS meeting at Green Spring Valley Hunt Club in Garrison, Md., on December 9 will be the election of 1987 officers and two new directors for three-year terms. The nominee for president is Lee Dieter and for vice president, George Renault. Bill Neus and Ken Ingram will contest the secretary's position, Walter Montross is the nominee for treasurer, and Steve Cohoon, Howard Gaskill, and Tom Regan are running for the director spots.

Green Spring Valley Hunt Club, where Grant Pensinger CGCS is superintendent, is an older course, its first nine having been built in 1912. Those nine holes were rebuilt and another nine added in 1955 by Robert Trent Jones.

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*The Woodholme Country Club team of (l. to r.) Wally Stedding, Supt. Steve Potter, Assistant Wally Whetsell, and Bob Stiffler won the eighth annual Musser Tournament at Manor Country Club on October 27. Holding the Grau Trophy is Dr. Fred V. Grau, president of the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation. The winning team had net twin best ball of 118, 10 shots in front of the team headed by George Renault of Chevy Chase Club and Sean Remington, Brian Keck, and Dave Hilliard.*



## "Killer Courses" - An Unnecessary Attempt to Frighten Golfers

A national golf magazine is an odd place to find an article devoted to the danger to humans of the pesticides used on golf courses. A publication of fanatical environmentalists or natural food advocates might be a more logical outlet for that kind of assault on golf course maintenance practices, so it was a distinct surprise to see in the December issue of GOLF magazine a piece by Bob Condor (not a golf writer, by the way) entitled "Killer Courses" and illustrated with a photo of a large black bottle bearing the skull and crossbones. And what was the article based on? Primarily the episode involving the use of Daconil on a Mid-Atlantic golf course and a death that has been blamed on the chemical, with an ensuing lawsuit by survivors that is still in litigation.

Taking off from there, the article then discussed Billy Casper's well-known range of allergies, primarily to certain foods but which apparently included a sensitivity to a weed killer, touched lightly on the EPA's re-registration program for chemicals, and passed on some simple hints about not licking golf balls and paying attention to possible allergy or poisoning symptoms. The author also quoted a USGA official on the potential for antipesticide sentiment turning into a witch hunt, as well as comments from a Massachusetts superintendent to the effect that it would be more economical not to have to use pesticides and fertilizers.

That, of course, is very true, however unrealistic. Chemicals and fertilizers cost a lot of money. But, given the preference of today's U.S. golfers for lush green fairways and soft, well-watered greens, it seems safe to say that most superintendents couldn't get along without their chemicals, whatever the cost. If fashions were to turn around and firm, dry, brownish-green golf courses that resemble those in the British Isles were to come into favor, it would be a different story. It's the watered, verdant golf course that makes a prime target for fungus and insects.

What the editors of GOLF plainly never considered is that scaring golfers away from their courses by referring to one unproven fatality blamed on a commonly used, EPA-approved fungicide, out of the millions of rounds played by American golfers each year, is not exactly in the best interests of a magazine for golfers. If there were a more solid basis for such dire warnings, it would be a different matter, but to point to rare allergic reactions, which are highly individualistic in any case, as something likely to be encountered by anyone, anytime, is doing the golf industry and golf course superintendents in particular not just a disservice but grave potential harm as well. The article was sketchy, not well researched, and slanted to raise unwarranted fears. Clearly, it should never have been written or published. — C.C.