

THRU THE GREEN

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Every year at this time we seem to get caught up in the holiday spirit. Our attention shifts from fighting our membership to fighting the crowds in the stores. Instead of worrying about keeping our grass alive we now wonder if we'll make it in home in one piece. Somehow we seem to overlook what the true meaning of the holiday season is all about.

If we take a few minutes, I think you'd agree, we have a lot to be thankful for. We're members of a growing profession of professionals. Perhaps a more appropriate word would be artists. What other profession allows us to use our vast talents, creativity and imagination to literally paint a picture. I guess an architect would experience somewhat of the same feelings. Seeing a structure from a blueprint they drew. But architects deal in absolutes. Concrete and steel changes very little over the course of a buildings life. The golf Course Superintendent on the other hand deals with a living organism. Nurtured through

its infancy, it becomes subjected to all the abuses from man and mother nature. And yet through our talents and dedication it survives.

We're also members of a growing and prosperous Association. One that has become so through tireless efforts of not only its superintendents but also its affiliates. As I stated before no Association can survive without their efforts. Their generosity and support has afforded us the ability to branch out into new areas whereby our growth and strength benefits our membership as a whole.

These are things which are often taken for granted, but should never be forgotten when we are giving thanks for what we have or what we are.

On behalf of your Board of Directors and myself we'd like to wish you a happy and holiday season and the coming of a prosperous New Year.

Mike

TO ALL FRIENDS IN THE GCSANC FAMILY...

A belated and heart-felt thank you for your incredible outpouring of notes and calls of sympathy since the recent firestorm, at which I lost my house. Generic "thank you's" don't seem adequate, but so many of you expressed so much affection, and my life is so hectic right now, that I am resorting to one in spite of my finer responsibilities. One of the very positive lessons I have learned from the fire is that the creeping cynicism about human nature that I, at least, was prone to, was unjustified. I am

extremely grateful to be part of the GCSANC community. You have proven what I always knew: it is the people, not the things, around one that really counts. Many thanks for your thoughtfulness.

Ali Harivandi



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IRRIGATION SYSTEM CONTROL AND ZONING

All golf courses are similar in that they are designed to be a series of "holes" made up of a teeing ground where play is started, and a putting surface with a hole marking the final destination of the player's ball. The layout of earth between tee and green is what makes every golf course unique. Every golf hole in the world has a unique set of circumstances separating it from the rest by the way that it relates to the earth's natural topography, weather patterns, sun exposure, and plant environment. Each hole is constructed to be a series of "zones of play" for the ball, and the player is either rewarded or penalized depending on which zone of play his ball comes to rest within. Often these separate zones of play provide ideal guidelines for separation of irrigation control on the golf course.

Most contemporary golf course irrigation systems use sprinkler heads that are equipped with an electrically activated control valve as part of the head. The main advantage to this of "valve-in-head" sprinkler is that each sprinkler can be wired to a controller station for individual control of starting time and length of operation. This enables individual control of each sprinkler to provide the amount of water needed by the turf in its specific water zone radius. If the golf course has large areas that have very similar irrigation requirements, several adjacent valve-in-head sprinklers are wired to a single control station, it is important that the piping system is designed to provide the hydraulic flow required by all of the sprinklers that will be operating at one time; and that the controller is able to provide the electrical output required to activate all of the sprinklers at once.

It is important to consider the following control zone parameters when establishing the zones of irrigation control on a golf course:

***Determine zones with similar water requirements.** Try to group the course into high water use areas, moderate water use areas, and low water use areas. Do not wire sprinkler heads together that are in different water use areas. Separate turf areas of the course from non-turf areas that are irrigated.

***Determine zones that have similar use patterns.** Try to group the course into high, moderate, and low traffic areas. Separate greens, tees, fairways, and rough areas wherever possible. It is always advisable to wire each head around the greens and tees to their own controller terminal to allow for individual sprinkler head control at these two critical types of use zones on the golf course. Many golf courses with sand based turf greens are designed to use a "back-up" row of sprinklers around the greens in order to provide separate control for the green surface and its surrounding terrain.

***Group zones along similar slope gradients and elevations.** Sprinklers on steep slopes may need to run frequently and for shorter durations to avoid unnecessary run-off, while sprinklers in relatively flat areas may not require such restrictive programming to be effective. Turf areas on top of berms will tend to dry out more quickly than flat areas or swales, each type of zone should be grouped together with similar conditions. Elevation changes can effect operating pressure at the sprinkler nozzle which may create a difference in sprinkler performance. In addition, water tends to run downhill so lower areas on the same zone with higher areas may receive too much water and

create drainage problems on the course. Sprinklers should be grouped into zones along similar elevations rather than up or down slopes.

***Be aware of typical weather patterns and sun/shade zones on the course.** Determine prevailing wind direction and try to zone areas in a crosswind direction rather than with the wind to avoid excessive water in "down-wind" zones. Areas receiving direct sunlight will require more water than areas that are typically in the shade. Try to group these areas into separate control zones.

Total control and management of the sprinkler heads is necessary if a golf course is expected to survive. Currently in California, many superintendents don't have enough water or available funds to irrigate their entire course as it was originally designed. Many are faced with the challenge of selecting areas or zones that will not be irrigated in order to have enough water for their primary zones of play; the tees, greens and fairways. If the irrigation system has proper control zoning, the superintendent can be very effective in managing the system's water use when economic cut-backs or drought restrictions are imposed.

Doug Macdonald is an associate design consultant with Russell D. Mitchell & Associates, Inc., an irrigation system design and consultation firm in Walnut Creek,

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MANAGEMENT SKILLS THAT LEAD TO SUCCESS

In any profession, there is the vast majority that does okay, there is a small group that just gets by, and there is a very small group that does extremely well. Why? Why do these differences exist? What separates the very best from the rest?

There are many opinions and many ideas that offer explanations and all of them, to some degree, make sense. But the ones that provide the greatest degree of accuracy and the greatest degree of assistance to anyone wanting to attain membership in the "best society" all seem to have two things in common:

1) They focus on the traits or characteristics of leaders, because that is what truly distinguishes the small group that excels in any profession from all others.

2) They emphasize the skills that accompany leadership because these are what contribute to those traits and characteristics. And, like all skills, they are learnable, which makes achieving leadership a possibility for everyone.

This is where the answers lie for anyone interested in moving up the ladder of success. This is what truly separates the best from the rest.

*Leadership- The ability to make decisions, and give directions.

*Leadership- The ability to bet others to follow your directions and to implement your decisions.

*Leadership- The ability to focus on the right things, to get them done the right way, and to have them done in the right amount of time.

*Leadership- The ability to manage human resources for maximum performance because, after all is said and done, people are the heart of any and all business.

It is all within the realm of possibility for all of us. We are all potential leaders. All we need to do is to learn a few simple concepts, a few simple techniques and a few simple but effective support skills and leadership becomes a possibility for all of us.

First, we need to accept the concept that leadership is acquired through learning. People are not born leaders. They learn how to lead. They learn how to make decisions and how to give directions. They learn it then they earn it.

Second, we need to recognize that information, more than anything else, contributes to leadership, and in particular, effective leadership. Knowledge, awareness and insight make decision-making possible and direction-giving acceptable. The ability to accumulate knowledge, to acquire the awareness and to gain true insight into the thoughts, feelings and desires of those we depend on for success are the keys to effective management. And, while leadership involves the application of knowledge, there are additional, learnable skills that can help us master the art of accumulating knowledge, verifying it, explaining it and communicating it. Any and all knowledge gained should be put to use quickly and effectively.

And finally, we need to recognize that leaders only lead as long as they have followers. And the surest way to lose one's following is failing to have: respect for their opinions; appreciation for their knowledge and experience; and a willingness to reach compromises with them

when there is disagreement and misunderstanding. Compromises, more than anything else, earns one the right of leadership. And once again, the art of compromise, like all other skills, is learnable.

Many times we are guilty of complication the business we are in, when in fact, like all businesses, it really is quite simple. It all has to do with people. It is difficult, if not impossible, to even imagine any business functioning on its own without people. As I said earlier, people are the heart of any business. They make things happen. They solve problems. They create new solutions. They originate new ideas. They accomplish the goals and objectives that keep businesses running. And, the key to success in any business is managing—getting things done through people.

People react to good management. They respect it when it is demonstrated through good leadership. They appreciate it when it is there, and they seek it elsewhere when it is not. And the few special people in any profession who recognize this, learn to be leaders, demonstrate and put to use what they learn and become the very best at it.

Article by: Gary Seda, Scotts-Hyponex Company, Marysville, Ohio.

Credit: 1991 GCSAA Conference Proceedings

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June 19	U.S. Open-Pebble Beach
July 13	Lake Merced-Supt/Pro
August	open
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November 11,12	CGCSANC /UC Cooperative Extension Golf Course Institute
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Special thanks to the staff at Rancho Canada for the delightful dinner and to Jeff Hardy, superintendent at Laguna Seca and crew for a challenging golf course.



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LOOKING FOR A "FAST FOOD" VERSION OF THE USGA SPEC GREEN

ITS COME TO THIS: After listening to golf course architects, builders, superintendents, and others complain endlessly about USGA specifications for green construction, and watching them modify the specs a hundred different ways to meet their own desires and beliefs, I've decided that what these people must really want is a "fast food" version of the specs!

What constitutes my definition of "fast food" specs, you ask? It's simple. Green construction according to the "fast food" method must be all of the following:

- *EASY
- *FAST
- *CHEAP
- *FOOLPROOF

Unfortunately, building greens is not the same as flipping burgers. If you look long enough and set your taste standards low enough, it's possible to find restaurants that serve food that meets all four performance characteristics. If anyone tells you he can build greens that meet all four standards, though, my advice would be to look elsewhere.

It's not hard to find greens built with the first three characteristics in mind -EASY, FAST, and CHEAP. They're the ones that often fail and must be rebuilt, or else cost many times their original expense in terms of extra maintenance costs, poor quality turf, aggravation, and unhappy golfers.

The fourth characteristic -FOOLPROOF - is the standard the smart money goes with. It means building a green according to the method most likely to succeed, a method that ensures good drainage, resistance to compaction, and, with judicious maintenance, decades of good performance. It means a method of construction

based upon good scientific principles and years of proven field experience; in other words, the USGA recommended method of green construction.

Why wouldn't everyone build FOOLPROOF greens? Some critics say that USGA greens are too difficult, time consuming, and costly to build. But are these criticisms justified? Let's take a look comparing USGA specs to other methods of green construction.

EASY - USGA greens are fully described in a 24 page booklet and a 25 minute videotape. Laboratory personnel and Green Section agronomists are available to answer questions and provide other assistance. Sure, it takes some planning and coordination to build USGA greens, and it takes more steps than the alternative fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants method. But which method is actually easier? With USGA greens, all you have to do is follow the directions. One point in favor of the USGA specs.

FAST - It's true, building a USGA green is not the same as deciding to get your bulldozer, pushing up some "native soil", planting some grass seed, and calling it a green. It requires seeking out the best material, allowing time for laboratory testing, mixing the components carefully, and following through with all the details to ensure success. One point in favor of the critics, but nothing that some planning couldn't change.

CHEAP - Okay, Okay, the best materials sometimes cost more (but often not), and it could cost a few hundred dollars for laboratory testing and a few thousand dollars more for the time needed to put down the intermediate coarse sand layer. And let's really go first class and hire a quality-control person for \$40,000 on a \$500,000 (or more) green construction project.

The extra cost for doing it the right way to ensure long-term success is usually less than 10% of the total. Another point in favor of the specs.

FOOLPROOF - Admittedly, there is little that is foolproof in the world, but USGA greens are by far the safest bet when it comes to green construction. For all of the criticism, no one has come forth with a scientifically based, time-tested method that's better, or even comparable.

During the past year, we've heard from every imaginable corner of the game about how the USGA ought to change its specs to make them easier, faster, and cheaper. Not surprisingly, most recommendations best served an individual's needs rather than the needs of golf courses for top-quality greens. Rest assured, however, that the USGA is not going to put its name on construction methods designed primarily to make green construction cheap, without including the foolproof. If we ever endorse "fast food" green construction techniques, it only will be after extensive scientific investigation and extended field testing, and after the fat and cholesterol have been removed, too.

Credit: USGA Green Section



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