

## "SOUND" PROBLEM SOLVING

The April meeting of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents, held April 5th at the Woodridge Golf Club, Lisle, Illinois, saw and heard a new type presentation designed to make the audience doubly aware of the importance of sound in the study of preventive maintenance.

Presented by Roger J. Thomas, commercial products manager of the Jacobsen Manufacturing Co., the course consisted of a combination of tape sounds, a slide presentation and oral instruction. Pointing out that the recognition of trouble-warning sounds applied to all mechanized maintenance equipment, including power lawn mowers, Thomas showed some turf-grass management men how recognizing these sounds and doing something about them could give "thousands of dollars of relief to the budget."

Introducing his subject by explaining that even a new born babe has an innate fear of noises, Thomas said that man goes through a noise evolution during which recognition of sounds becomes a normal part of calm, everyday life. "However," he said, "through the slightest squeak or rattle in a car will cause the owner to head straight for the auto mechanic, yet we seem to feel that noises in lawn mowers will eventually disappear."

"Recognizing a singing bearing noise in time," he said, "would result in a \$4.50 replacement cost. Failure to recognize it, or not doing anything about it could result in more than \$75.00 damage to an engine and mower."

Thomas punctuated his talk with actual sounds from troublesome machinery . . . asking the audience if anyone recognized the danger signals. This was done through the medium of a tape recorder.

The slide portion of the program consisted of photos showing the results of not paying attention to sound. They depicted bearing and gear failures, reel wear and general equipment deterioration.

It was pointed out that the purpose of the recorded sounds was not to teach the audience actual recognition of exact problems, but to realize the importance of noticing and doing something about any warning signals. "Too often," he emphasized, "maintenance men, as well as the average consumer, wait until equipment refuses to operate before they investigate."

Some of the actual sounds heard were intermittent sparking, noisy cutting unit, "singing" bearing, engine knock and mower operation at excessive speed. The tape recorded also played back (in contrast) the sound of normal operating units.

Dr. Eliot C. Roberts of Iowa State's Department of Horticulture, remarked at a recent meeting that "this was an entirely new type of presentation which I am sure gave the audience a completely different viewpoint on helping to solve maintenance problems . . . especially budgetwise. In reality, it was a course in the language of machinery. I'm sure that those attending will be 'tuned in' to their maintenance problems more now than ever before."

The entire presentation took just 45 minutes, yet it contained audience participation plus the variety of slides, recorded sounds and personal comments.

Thomas plans to capture more "sound" problems via the medium of the tape recorded. His company representatives will then tour the country and present this "sound" advice to groups of golf course superintendents, park and highway commissioners and other large acreage mowing equipment men.

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### "SPRING IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER."

Perhaps this is an old, worn-out saying but it certainly applies to golf course management at this time of year. Now is the time for superintendents to "back off" and thoroughly look over this situation. If all facets of management are properly organized now, the job will be easier and will run more smoothly later on, when the going gets rough. To confirm that you are properly organized we suggest that you ask yourself the following questions:

1. Has all my equipment been thoroughly and properly cleaned and repaired and is it now ready for the coming season?

2. Do I have the proper and sufficient equipment for the coming season? (If certain pieces of equipment break down during the rush season, will I still be able to maintain the course in good condition while awaiting replacement or repairs?)

3. Has my budget been properly prepared? Do I understand it thoroughly and am I prepared for normal operation within its limits? Does the green committee chairman and his committee thoroughly understand and approve the budget?

4. Are the pumps and the rest of the watering system in good working order? Can I repair any possible breaks quickly? Have the sprinklers been checked? Are they known to be in good working order or has replacement of worn out sprinkler heads been delayed because of expense?

5. Have I studied the turf areas which suffered last season because of improper watering? If so, what can be done to correct this situation?

6. Have I located a reliable and economical source of fertilizer? If sufficient space is available is the fertilizer stored and ready for use? If sufficient storage space exists, can I get deliveries promptly when the material is needed? Have I properly timed fertilizer applications to coincide with turf and labor demands?

7. Have I ascertained when certain specific diseases are likely to be troublesome? Will I have the fungicides available to treat these diseases, immediately when detected? Do I have personnel properly trained to perform this important operation or must I do it myself?

8. Do I plan to follow a preventive fungicide schedule this year? If so, when will I start, what will be the frequency of application, and which chemical or chemicals will I apply?

9. Will it be necessary to control weeds on a large scale this year? If so, what will I apply and when should it be applied? Are the chemicals to be used readily available or do I have them on hand?

10. Is my labor force completely planned? Are my key employees familiar with their duties? Will some of the part time men I have had in the past return this year? Where will I look for others? How many men will be needed on June 1, July 1, August 1, etc. How much of my time will be required to train new employees?

11. Have I organized and planned flowers and plantings for the club house grounds and other areas? Is there an employee I can trust to be responsible for this important duty?

12. Have I kept abreast of long range operations such as tree plantings, tee repairs, green rebuilding,