



From left to right: Don Boes, Superintendent St. Boniface Golf Club; Dr. Houston B. Couch, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Paul Voykin, Superintendent of Briarwood Country Club; Mike Bavier, Superintendent of Inverness Golf Club. Picture was taken at the Royal Canadian Golf Conference at Winnipeg.

THE CONFERENCE TOUR ENDED IN SPLENDID STYLE by Mike R. Bavier

Attending seven conferences the past six months gives me a feeling of being a conference "carpetbagger". The last conference I attended was with Paul Voykin—the Royal Canadian Turfgrass Conference and Exposition, March 19th - 21st, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Paul was on the program and I had the honor of gathering material for an article to be used in the **Golf Course Superintendent** magazine.

We arrived in Winnipeg along with an early spring snow and cold spell. The weather bureau recorded a record cold of **minus 20** degrees and wind up to 30 m.p.h. one day during our stay. Our friends across the border tried to tell us that last year at the same time they were playing golf in Winnipeg!

The weather may have been cold but the warm feeling of friendship that was extended to us seemed to warm up the "cool" outdoors. The Royal Canadian hospitality room was open Monday and Tuesday evenings for conference attendees, and they had plenty of firewater to warm up the people that may have ventured out into the cold Can-nuck night. John Steele Sr., along with many other local superintendents, greeted the people as they arrived. Any of you who have had the good fortune of meeting John

GOLF COURSE DRAINAGE

By

GEORGE'S LUMBER COMPANY

Downers Grove, Illinois 60515
312-968-4071 or 312-969-4937

knows the evening seemed to pass quickly and the next morning sessions seemed only a few hours away.

The sessions were well attended and the program was excellent with many outstanding speakers. Paul Voykin was the highlight speaker the first day. He gave his "Overgrooming is Overspending" talk, which was well received and was the coffeehouse and pub room conversation for the remainder of the meeting. As much snow as there was, one wondered if they would ever play golf this summer let alone be able to groom their courses!

The second day Dr. Houston B. Couch gave an interesting and informative talk on systemic fungicides. He spoke of the "Golden Era" of the early sixties when we had a panacea of fungicides. Then we came into the systemic era of the late sixties. We are presently in that era but by far not in an era of cure-alls. We must use systemic fungicides, Dr. Couch explained, as just another one of the many "tools" we have for maintaining our turf today.

The last day of the conference was a day for many of the Canadian superintendents to speak, as well as GCSAA President Charlie Baskin. Charlie gave a detailed talk on his home course upkeep and his daily routine. The Canadian super Gordon Wittveen and superintendent manager Don Campbell gave interesting talks on their golf course operations. The conference came to an end with the Royal Canadian Golf Association reception and dinner. Sid Puddicombe officially assumed the duties of the new president of RCGA from the outgoing president David S. Gourlay.

The final day of the conference passed and we were scheduled to fly home the next day. However, to our surprise, we were unable to make airline connections. We had told Paul's sportswriter friend, Dallas Beck, we could not stay to see the Winnipeg Jets and Houston Aeros play hockey. Guess who was on the phone looking for tickets Friday morning! We were fortunate to get two tickets next to a couple of pigeons in the rafters. To a couple of guys that don't attend too many hockey games, the location of our seats didn't matter. We were happy to see the game and be able to watch Bobby Hull and Gordie Howe play hockey. After the game, Mr. Beck arranged for us to attend a small 1976 Winter Olympic promotional party put on by Postmaster General Andre Ouelett with special guests Bobby Hull and Gordie Howe. Well, to say the least, I was impressed, especially at having them autograph a special commemorative stamped envelope given out by the Postmaster General. Paul had played softball with Gordie and Andy Voykin had played hockey with Bobby, so, needless to say, Paul was not quite as exuberant over our good fortune. One would imagine that we would have talked hockey. Actually, Gordie wanted to know what grass to plant on his yard in Texas and Bobby was worried about his grass and cattle on his farm north of Winnipeg. To close the evening out, Paul convinced both Bobby and Gordie they should read his book, **The Perfect Lawn the Easy Way** and, of course, Gordie Howe insisted Paul autograph the book before mailing.

What was left but to pack our bags the next morning and leave for good ol' Chicago. Along with our bags, we had an extra package under our arms—smoked Winnipeg goldeye, which to you fish-loving Chicagoans is a gourmet's delight. All in all—a splendid conference not soon to be forgotten.