

Dear Old Ray,

Damn if you're not a versatile genius. In addition to making grass grow and putting up with members you do a grand job of editing the Midwest **Bull Sheet**, which over the years I have found more aptly named than the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times -Mirror and the Chicago Tribune and the hallowed Chicago Sun-Times which has been an admirable contributor to my old age security.

We seem to have bright minds coming up in the neighborhood where we joined in rocking the cradle of liberty for greenkeepers.

That feature you printed on "Extras on the Course - A Nice Touch" by Peter Leuzinger of the St. Charles Country Club indicates the imagination amounting to genius of an artist who is looking ahead. Here is a guy with the sensitivity, the perception and the savvy of a great master in the exceedingly fine and important art of golf course making and management.

Here is one of our kind who sees in the golf course the protection, the escape and the therapy of the golf course in saving the troubled human from becoming stir-crazy from the imprisonment of concrete, steel, glass and asphalt.

I am in an area about 20 miles wide and 90 miles long where U.S. and Canadian capital to the extent of half a billion dollars is being spent in golf-real estate developments. As an old man who has been around a lot I have been engaged in conversation with people who have plenty of fiscal action in this game. In plenty of places, Ray, I have discussed in previews exactly what your writer Leuzinger refers to as "The Extras on the Course". One of them is bound to be a modernization of the Donald Ross innovation of the lesson-practice tee which too long and in too private, daily fee, public and resort courses has been sadly neglected although it is the American invention which revolutionized the game and gave it tremendous impetus by replacing the old method of the playing lesson.

I have sent Al Radko of the Green Section some observations on the potentials of the neglected Ross tee which by supplying the need and function of a convenient golfing area that will be pleasantly useful to those who haven't time for 9 or 18 holes and may not have the land available still will make golf available to them and provide what golf needs in these changing times; something of a golf garden or a golf park that will blend happily the charm, convenience, exercise and delights of the old time beer garden and the ever new possibilities and fascination of golf.

If I have to spell this out for a golf architect I am afraid the man (or woman) who does not see what is happening to golfers and golf in designing courses will give the clients an obsolete and costly job of just another golf course in ten years.

In a way the opportunities afforded by modern application of the Ross tee in supplying An Extra on the Course may be somewhat in the class of the Green Section's own marvelous public service. You and I can remember that before the Green Section grass was regarded mainly as food for beasts instead of something for the health, happiness and esthetics of humans.

I think the USGA is doing a job of updating itself in a change of life much better than organizations in other sports are doing and is recognizing what wonders the Green Section hath wrought and perhaps even trying to coyly acquaint the public with this service.

But I do know how right your man is in his word to his colleagues, the landsmen Joe and I had. He deserves gratitude for his brain-stirring suggestion of Extras on

the Course and every golfer in the Chicago and Midwest District will delight more in golf because of this suggestion in the **Bull Sheet**.

"The Nice Touch" ... Ray, you know I have played golf on many courses in many countries and I have seen "the nice touch" of some greenkeeper or superintendent or whatever he was called speak the universal language of beauty and friendliness. In Japan, France, and Italy there have been Extras on the Course that charmed me and some guys with whom I didn't share a language and I felt the companionship of what some man of the course had done to say something extra in the beauty of golf. You know what an ordinary golfer I am and certainly no authority in golf architecture (a field in which damn near every other golfer is) but when I have been asked what is the best golf hole I ever saw I say it is one on a Madison, WI course where there were lilacs in bloom around a tee. It was a golf hole with beauty of fun and love in bloom and music by Strauss, Lehar, Friml and Romberg. I think it was a par 4 hole on a hill. The course was Maple Bluff, I think.

But who cares? I am not one of the 350 journeymen, boys and wandering girls who works at playing golf courses for which they don't pay maintenance expenses so really I don't suppose I am entitled to an Extras on the Golf Course. But as one of the 17 million Americans who pay to play golf and delight in enjoying that "Extra" today and tomorrow I rejoice that in these days of agonizing budgets there are men in golf who want to give golfers "Extras on the Course".

I laughed when I saw your man was at St. Charles. Many times I played there, loved the course and with those playmates in the lockerroom there was always the part of golf I played with enthusiasm and proficiency. The next morning I enjoyed the Extras. They were aspirin tablets. Ray, think of what hangovers I have survived. Blessings upon you and yours, always.

Herb Graffis

GCSAA SELECTS SAN FRANCISCO FOR 1985 CONVENTION SITE

San Francisco's soon to be completed George R. Moscone Convention Center will be the site of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's 56th International Turfgrass Conference and Show Jan. 30-Feb. 5, 1985, GCSAA President Michael R. Bavier, CGCS, announced today.

"Besides its excellent convention facilities, San Francisco offers a wide variety of activities for the entire family. We're confident that San Francisco will be one of our most popular conference destinations," Bavier said.

Since its beginning in 1927, GCSAA's Turfgrass Trade Show has grown so large that relatively few convention centers in the U.S. can house its more than 200 annual exhibitors, Bavier noted. The Moscone Convention Center, scheduled for completion this fall, is the largest column-free exhibit hall in the United States, with 275,000 square feet of unobstructed exhibit space. It is unique in that its main facilities, including the exhibit hall and the 30,000 square foot ballroom, are 30 feet underground.

The San Francisco conference schedule also includes a golf tournament, seminars, education sessions and the association's annual membership meeting. It will mark the association's first return to the West Coast since its 1981 conference in Anaheim, which had a record week's attendance of 17,946.