

**THE BULL SHEET, official publication of the
MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE
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Bull Sheet printed by Ever-Redi Printing, 5100 East Ave., Countryside, IL 60525.

The **Bull Sheet** is published once a month. All articles are required by the 10th of the month to make the next issue. Advertising is sold by the column inch, by the quarter page, half page, and by the full page. All artwork to be finished and in black and white. Circulation is over 500 issues per month.



President's Message

Continuing education is important to us throughout the year, particularly during the winter months when we have more available time to participate. Whether it is simply in the form of perusing magazine articles, or attending an International Turfgrass Conference, both contribute to the learning process. In the profession of golf course management, the necessity for continuing education is increasing at a rapid rate. One needs not to look far to see all the educational opportunities that are available to us. The M.A.G.C.S./G.C.S.A.A. regional seminars held recently at Pheasant Run Resort are a good example. A total of 80 people attended, with 58 in "Basic Turfgrass Botany and Physiology", and 22 in "Irrigation II: Systems Design and Management". The botany and physiology seminar presented by Dr. James Beard and Dr. Jeffrey Krans continued a good review of basic botany principles, and covered current data that is on the leading edge of turfgrass research technology. I felt the quality of information presented during those two days could not be attained anywhere else. To actually be present, one on one, with the most reknown turfgrass researchers in the world, was truly a learning experience that I will remember for sometime. I'm sure many superintendents, including myself, will be modifying their programs in some fashion, according to the new research data and recommendations.

We must take advantage of the various educational opportunities that surround us, first by attending, and then by getting involved in the program. A general discussion, or question and answer session, is vital to the learning process, and stimulates thought that would not occur by simply reading a book. Taking notes during the seminar is helpful. Upon returning to work, write a brief summary report highlighting the most important points of interest and keep them in a file for later use. Not all of the learning is accomplished in the classroom either. The social gathering and conversation that occurs during break or over lunch can lead to a variety of interesting topics that can be quite beneficial.

Reviewing the educational programs in the area, one starts to realize the potential. The N.C.T.E. provides a wide variety of programs and topics which become bigger and better each year. Purdue University and M.R.T.F. have presented a comprehensive two day turf conference for many years. In fact, many universities with turf programs, such as Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio State, Michigan State, Penn State, etc., have annual turf conferences. The Chicago District Golf Association presents a half-day seminar on timely turf topics each spring.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont'd from page 2)

The Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents presented an excellent one day forum entitled "Computers in Golf Course Management" during November of 1986. The M.A.G.C.S., Inc. monthly meetings also provide good educational speakers and timely topics. The list goes on.

The number of conferences, seminars, and meetings held during recent years, in my opinion, have steadily increased both in quantity and quality. This trend indicates that our industry is rapidly changing, and has resulted in an increased demand for pertinent information. There is valid concern that we may be unable to keep step with the pace. The deeper we delve into the subject of turfgrass science utilizing basic research as the spearhead, the less it seems we actually know for fact. Many of the basic principles of turfgrass science that we accepted as fact twenty years ago, do not stand true today. For example, look at how our management practices have changed regarding fairway maintenance just in the last three years. We are on the threshold of major research break throughs and subsequent modification of our management practices and theories. We have made many advances in recent years, but we cannot afford to rest on our laurels.

Make an effort to get involved with all that is happening in this industry. Demonstrate to your club officials and members that you are exerting an effort to try and keep up with the ever-changing world of golf course management. It will not only benefit you personally, but it is going to benefit the entire club and the turfgrass industry. The next time someone asks you, "What do you do in the winter?", you'll be better prepared to answer them.

James E. Evans

Ray Schmitz Biography

Ray Schmitz has been the Golf Course Superintendent at Flossmoor Country Club since 1978 and has worked on golf courses since 1964. His experience goes back to Hickory Hills Country Club where he worked for 6 years as the Golf Course Superintendent after graduating from the University of Wisconsin with a B.S. Degree in Agronomy and Soils. During the time he was at Hickory Hills he oversaw the construction of Green Garden Country Club in Frankfort. When Green Garden was finished the owners of Hickory Hills Country Club sold that operation and devoted their energies to running Green Garden Country Club.

Part of that deal was that Ray Schmitz would go to Green Garden as the new Golf Course Superintendent. He stayed there for another 6 years until 1978 when he moved to Flossmoor Country Club. Ray is currently in the second year of a two-year term as an MAGCS Director and is the official **Bull Sheet** photographer.

Ray is married and has 3 sons, all of which have either worked for Ray at Flossmoor or are currently working there for him now. His hobbies include computer science and he is currently involved in a bowling league and a golf league.

MAGCS Directors Column Golf Handicaps

In recent years the MAGCS has required a current golf handicap in order to participate in our monthly golf outings. Handicaps are designed to be a great equalizer among golfers allowing the less skilled to play on equal terms with the very skilled. A players golf handicap can be obtained in two ways. One way is through the service offered at ones home club or through the MAGCS golf chairman. The Golf Chairman enters all scores turned into him and sends them to a computer service called GHIN (Golf Handicap Information Network) located in New Jersey. They in turn compute the handicaps and provide a weekly printout for subscribing MAGCS members.

To determine a handicap a golfer must play a minimum of 5 rounds. Ideally the best 10 scores of the 20 most recent scores are averaged and compared with the USGA course rating. Course rating — how is it figured? Simply by the number of strokes a 0 handicap player registers during a round of golf on a given course. This figure is the course rating in simple terms.

Let's put the facts to work to determine a handicap. Course rating is 72. A players average for 10 rounds is 90. In 10 rounds the player averages 18 strokes over the course rating ($90-72=18$). The USGA Handicap rules now tell us to take the 18 (crude handicap) and multiply by 10, $=180$. Now the rules say to take 96% of this figure, $180 \times 96\% = 172.8$ or 17.2 for each round. Handicaps do not deal in fractions so we round off this figure to 17. The players handicap is 17. The handicaps strokes are deducted from the gross score at the end of the round to provide the net score. The national handicap average for a serious amateur is 17 for men and 31 for women.

Sound confusing? It is much easier just to tell the MAGCS golf chairman that you want a golf handicap. He will enter your score into the GHIN Handicap System and let a computer do all the work. Your only responsibility is to provide all scores so the handicap is kept current or one is defeating the purpose for which it is intended. This is just one of the services provided by YOUR MAGCS.

**Ray Schmitz, CGCS
Flossmoor C.C.**

