

“A Rebuttal”

Dear Mr. Carney:

As President of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents of the Greater Chicago Metropolitan Area, I have been elected by our membership (totaling 470) to write you a letter. This letter is in rebuttal to your recent article that appeared in the January 1987 issue of **Golf Digest** entitled, “MY SHOT — A case for banning temporary greens.” Let’s say that Robert Carney is granted one wish: All superintendents are going to ban temporary winter greens. In so doing, you remove one of the superintendents alternatives for winter golf play, and leaves him with just two choices: 1.) The golf course, including the greens, would be open and played the same in winter as in summer and, 2.) the golf course would be closed during the winter and reopened only when the greens were fit to play.

In **some** cases, the superintendent has no choice, the powers to be force him to keep the greens open at all times. This is the type of golf course you need to locate, join, and become a life-time member, because they cater to people like you. They are concerned mainly with optimizing revenues, and have little regard for course conditions. In **most** cases, the superintendent will decide when people can or cannot play greens in the winter. This decision should be made by the expert, the one who knows the golf course and it’s conditions better than anyone, and that person is the golf course superintendent.

Your lack of knowledge about golf-green construction and maintenance is quite obvious. I’ll guarantee you there are no two golf greens alike anywhere. How can you possibly compare one course to another with the numerous variables involved? Remember, putting greens consist of millions of small turf-grass plants that are living tissue, anchored and growing in a living soil medium. These plants continue to live throughout the year. In this region of the country, bentgrass becomes dormant during late November and breaks dormancy in mid-April. When mechanical or physiological damage occurs to the plant during dormancy, no recovery can occur until late April or May when temperatures are favorable for regrowth. Most of the damage is superficial, but when the crown or growing point of the plant is damaged, recovery will be slow or non-existent. The damaged areas provide a place for weak annual weed grasses, such as **Poa annua**, to germinate and develop, thus reducing turfgrass quality.

It’s not that we don’t want to be bothered with winter golfers, the turfgrass plants and the putting surface cannot afford to be damaged by winter golfers. The price for restoring the greens to tournament quality is prohibitive when considering the small number of people who cause the damage and benefit from winter play. If everyone had 45 holes similar to Gordon Witteveen, or even 27 holes, you would see a few superintendents allow winter play on 9 holes. However, this is not the norm, it is an exceptionally rare case. How can you possibly take one example and make a case for everyone to ban temporary winter greens? Each club has different policies and procedures. The superintendents are striving to do what is best for the good of the club, the golf course, and the great majority of it’s members by providing temporary greens. If you ban temporary winter greens, then we basically have just one choice, and that is to close the putting greens and the golf course until further notice.

James E. Evans, President, MAGCS



Turf
PRODUCTS, LTD.

2 N 255 County Farm Rd. West Chicago, IL 60185
Phone: (312) 668-5537

PEERLESS FENCE CO.
3N381 Powis Rd.
West Chicago, IL

- Chain-Link Fencing
- Wood Fencing
- Special Gates
- Driving Range Fencing
- Tee Protection Fencing
- Wood & Steel Guard-Rails
- Golf Course Work Our Specialty

312/584-7710 **Hal Laman**

“Golf Course Work a Specialty”
LEMONT PAVING CO.
Lemont, IL 60439

Jim, Tracy, Ray Murphy 257-6701

WHOLESALE SUPPLIER for  **LAKE COOK FARM SUPPLY**

Landscapers • Nurserymen • Golf Courses

- Turf and Agricultural Chemicals
- Common and Elite Turf Grass Seed
- Union Fork Tools
- Peat Moss — Bark — Mulches
- Root Lowell Sprayers
- Shaws and F.S. Fertilizers

CUSTOM BLENDING OF BULK FERTILIZERS OUR SPECIALTY
*Pickup or Delivered from our Bulk Fertilizer Plant
Custom Fertilizer Spreading Available*

DISTRIBUTORS OF F.S. PETROLEUM PRODUCTS
GASOLINE • LUBE OIL • DIESEL FUEL

FS LAKE COOK FARM SUPPLY

PETROLEUM DIVISION 101 E. MAIN ST. LAKE ZURICH, IL 60047 540-0100	TURF DIVISION 1214W NORTHWEST HWY. PALATINE, IL 60067 991-4800	BULK FERTILIZER PLANT 170 CEDAR AVE. LAKE VILLA, IL 60046 356-9600
---	--	--