

Now, a Time to Rest

by Dudley Smith

On December 28, 1993 Theodore "Ted" Wiersema, 84, passed away. He was the victim of a cerebral hemorrhage. Ted was a Class AA member of M.A.G.C.S.



Back in the 1940's Ted succeeded Leonard "Brownie" De Broyne as superintendent of Ridge Country Club. Ted resided in a bungalow on the club grounds which had a large victory garden that he grew and maintained. Ted was able to avoid the draft by working for his green chairman; who owned a factory that vulcanized and retreaded truck tires, an essential wartime industry. Meanwhile, he kept the golf course playable. Ted was at the "Ridge" for seventeen years and can remember mowing fairways with a team of horses, and later on with Model A Fords with steel drum wheels. The pay scale at Ridge C.C. at that time was 35 cents an hour. Head Golf Pro Elmer Schacht told me "Ted had the finest golf greens on Chicago's southside." Ken Zanzig, our poet laureate, and Tom Di Guido were members of Ted's grounds staff.

From 1956-58 Ted was employed by Tom Walsh, then President of the P.G.A., to develop and "grow-in" eighteen additional holes at Westgate Valley C.C. in Palos Heights.

In the Spring of 1959, John Coghill Sr. contracted Ted to be the full-time, mechanic-foreman at Silver Lake C.C. Ted held that position until he suffered a stroke in May 1993. Ted never ordered parts using part numbers. He would tell Smitty (George A. Davis), "I need some sprockets and chains, some reel bearings, and some graphite packing for the spray rig." It was amazing to watch him operate. My assistants were in awe watching Ted fix a recoil starter, a faulty clutch, or a loose bedknife, all with one swift blow from his trusty plastic hammer.

Ted witnessed the whole gamut: From walking push green-mowers, to tractor pulled Worthington and Roseman nine-gangs, to the self propelled diesel hydraulic mowers of today. What would O.S.H.A. say if they saw Ted sitting inside a 300 gallon cyprus spray tank replacing the stainless steel shaft and agitator paddles? Or better yet ... mixing lead arsenate and Milorganite on the barn floor with a "time-out" now and then to gargle Canadian Club, to get the chalk residue off his teeth. Indeed, those were the days!

Years ago, before the influx of Mexican labor, Ted encouraged me to hire women on the grounds crew. The "Hollander" had a flair for the ladies. Former employees, all the salesmen, even visitors who came to Silver Lake never left without chatting and reminiscing with Ted Weirsema.

I will especially miss Ted this Spring when it's time to set out his pride and joy — the Red Canna Lilies.

Ted, for over 34 years you have been my father, my advisor, my confidant. For over 65 years you have sprayed dandelions, cleaned carburetors, spread topdressing, and patched sod. It's time for a long, peaceful rest. God bless you Ted.

Full season, full course disease control.



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