

Conclusion

What steps then should be taken by golf course superintendents to prevent winter injury? The first and most important rule is not to play on turf when it is not actively growing, especially greens. Temporary greens should be played from the time the ground begins to freeze in late fall until completion of heaving and thawing in early spring. Excerpts from "The Case For Temporary Greens," January, 1966 USGA Green Section Record, document the importance of remaining off turf during this stress period:

"So many more golfers play each course now in regular season that injury due to the increased traffic is mounting and off-season play can only add to the total traffic injury problems.

"In late fall or early winter when frost enters the ground, turf becomes frozen and the upper fraction of soil becomes moistened with frost. Traffic at these times will break or crack the stiff and frozen blades of grass, weaken them, and *Poa annua* or other weeds could subsequently encroach, and so the turf is generally weakened. Traffic imposed upon moistened soil results in a cementing of the soil due to the lubricating action of the moisture. This undoubtedly adds to compaction.

"In winter when the ground is frozen solid, turf blades would suffer only if play were allowed while the grass, too, was frozen. The danger here is that during the day while players are on the course, sufficient thawing could occur in the upper fraction of soil to cause footprints and a cementing action of the soil. This occurs when air temperatures are higher than normal and, of course, these are the very days when golfers prefer to play.

"The most difficult time for turf is in late winter and early spring, from mid-February through March when the top one inch of soil (or less) is thawing but the soil beneath is frozen. Traffic on greens at this time will result in severe compaction.

"Any time water stands on a green in winter, no play should be allowed. This results in extreme softness of the upper fraction of soil and turf.

"All told, any amount of play in winter generally means more rigid management during the growing season, especially more aeration and more topdressing to true and level greens. If play is allowed on regular greens, we cannot stress too vigorously that the days must be very carefully chosen; that someone must make these day-to-day decisions; and that your course must be treated as an individual problem. It should not be kept open or closed simply because a nearby course is open or closed.

"The only way to insure against possible trouble is to have temporary greens. It has often been suggested that the word 'alternate' be used in place of 'temporary,' because the latter bears a negative connotation."

Second, drainage conditions must be at an optimum if sound turf programs are to be carried out and followed to prevent winter injury. And, third, an adequate budget, good source of labor and communication between the golf course superintendent and his immediate superior must become a reality when facing the winter injury problem in the cool temperate zone of the United States.

USGA Green Section

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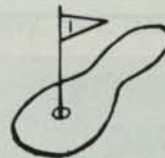
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WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, as they sometimes will,
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When the funds are low and the debts are high,
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When care is pressing you down a bit,
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Richard Valentine, Golf Course Superintendent at Merion Golf Club has some interesting ideas about turf management. Here are some experiences he has shared with us.



"I don't believe in heavy feeding, and that seems to suit Baron just fine. I never use more than three pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet per annum. Baron doesn't seem to need those high nitrogen applications that some people are using on bluegrass. And, less fertilizer means less fungus and thatch. . . I like that."



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"Merion has lots of hillsides and slopes . . . here's where Baron really stands out. We use a Jacobsen Seeder and cut seed into the soil. You have to plant grass seed . . . you can't just throw it on the ground. The only place I don't use Baron is on the tees and greens, which are bentgrass."

Richard Valentine, Golf Course Superintendent at Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, Pa. is the second superintendent in Merion's famous 79-year history, succeeding his father, Joseph, who held the position for 34 years.



"We cut our fairways to one inch all year long. During our regular Fall renovation program on approaches and drive areas, we use a mixture of five bluegrasses . . . 75% of that mixture has been Baron. We'll use the same mixture next Fall."



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To: The Editor of the **Bull Sheet**

The Survey Committee has recommended to the Board of Directors that the **Bull Sheet** be mailed to the Green Chairman or Owners. The reason this recommendation was made is that it would enlighten and expose more "prospective employers" to the facts that:

1. There is a local organization of Superintendents,
2. This Organization meets regularly in a professional manner,
3. It shares its information openly and will assist with problems of any kind,
4. It pursues professional standards to protect itself and prospective employers,
5. And that its newly formed Employment Referral Committee will assist and encourage the hiring of local Superintendents and Assistant-Superintendents.

The action taken by the Board was to have extra copies available at the meeting, so that a Superintendent could hand carry a copy to his Chairman or Owner. Gentlemen, we will never be a Professional Organization at this Rate! It is our responsibility to the Clubs to:

1. Give them as much information about our Organization, as possible,
2. Make them aware of what and who we are,
3. Provide any assistance or service that we can,
4. And to let them know that we are truly Professionals.

The argument against sending them to Chairman or Owners's home was, primarily, the cost of the mailing and that "Some will just throw them away, anyway". To this the Committee says, "So What". If a dues increase is necessary to subsidize the extra cost - raise the dues!

The only way we can make any headway as Professionals is through Communication. This would start us on that road!

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1. How many times is a Superintendent fired unjustly?
2. How many Superintendents don't even attend Green Committee meetings?
3. How many Superintendents have no say in the direction the Course or Club should be taking?
4. How many Superintendents have absolutely no communication between themselves and Chairman or Owners?

I, also, feel that Ray Gerber wouldn't have to beg month after month for articles to put in the **Bull Sheet**. A Superintendent knowing that his article might be read by his employer and, possibly, "Prospective Employer" has a little more encouragement to write!

This is not only a tool we are wasting, but it is one of our only tools . . .

Would advertisement in the Bull Sheet decrease? I hardly think so! I think the Company's that buy space might actually increase advertisements knowing that the circulation is taking in the money end of the purchasing team of Superintendent and Chairman (or Owner). It might increase to the point where a dues increase would not be necessary at all!?!

When we speak of cost's, I know of no other Organization that can play Golf six times a year for \$12.50. And at the same time spend nothing on the Public Relations and communication to the most important group of all - Their Bosses! Gentlemen, we have blown it too long!! The fact that a Superintendent's job was run in the Help Wanted Section of the Chicago Tribune is an **insult!!** Especially, when this Club has handled a Western Open!

To the argument that it will be thrown away - again the Committee says, "So What". Even if only 10% read the **Bull Sheet**, it is that many more "prospective employers" that are aware of our Association, and might utilize our Interview Committee to Hire You! If they don't know there is such a service - How can they utilize it?

The **Bull Sheet** at present only reaches people in our Field, who are aware of our professionalism. I'm proposing that we approach the people who aren't aware of our professionalism, and who pay us for just that!

My only additional thought is that this should have been instituted a long time ago.

Jerry Mach
Survey Committee

P.S. To prove that the pen is mightier than the sword you just wasted five minutes reading this article Or did you?

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A TRIP TO THE PENN STATE TURF CONFERENCE

by Mike Bavier

Penn State ranked number one in football! Not this year. Number one in turf — that's a different story. Penn State surely is ranked high in their turfgrass education and turf programs and just might be number one.

A car full of turf men from the Chicago area left one snowy January morning for Penn State. We arrived that night at our alma mater (for three of us, anyway, and hopefully for the fourth in the not too distant future). We spent the first half hour getting acquainted with the new look — not the girls, but the increase in the size of the campus. We were indeed awed. The school that was home for a couple of years or so for each of us had now grown to an enrollment of some 48,000 students just on the home campus.

We made the normal pub spots and, to our delight, they had changed little. Unfortunately, we quickly realized we had aged some. We drank a few Rolling Rocks (beers, to the Westerners) with our comrades from the East and discussed turf (part of the time, anyway).

For us Chicagoans, the conference would start the next morning. I was the first speaker and wondered if those loyal pub patrons would be able to arrive for the early morning session. A little to my surprise, an attendance of some magnitude was achieved before the opening remarks. "Good Grooming is Good Spending" is a little hard to discuss at an early hour of the morning, but the hospitality of the Easterners never ceases to amaze me, and they did accept my comments graciously. Next on the program was our own Mr. Western Open, Ed Fischer. Ed did a fine job of talking about Butler National and showing slides to the audience from the course's conception right up to date, including the two Western Opens in 1974 and 1975. The tremendous amount of effort put forth in preparing the course was quite evident. Many a fellow greenkeeper questioned Ed on the different operations and course preparations. Eddie fielded questions the rest of the conference on this unique and super golf course.

The speakers for the remainder of the conference were professors and PhD's — a little heavy at times but necessary for those conference goers interested in the Pennsylvania Pesticide Examination to be given the final day.

The conference banquet was quite impressive to say the least. The turf grants and scholarships were numerous and of substantial value, a goal that might be possible in Illinois but would take many a man's best foot forward.

Our mission nearly completed, we were ready to head West. Before leaving, our young traveling companion from Silver Lake G.C., David Behrman, submitted his turf application with an added sense of pride, hoping to return later this fall. Dudley Smith was his own quiet self, remembering so well his many hours spent in the ivy halls of P.S.U. and the countless memories of yesteryear.

We heartily agreed as we left Penn State on a snowy wintery morning (the same as we had left home a few short days ago!) that a return trip would be just as enlightening and enjoyable as this one was. Hopefully, we can make it again in the not too distant future.

January, 1976

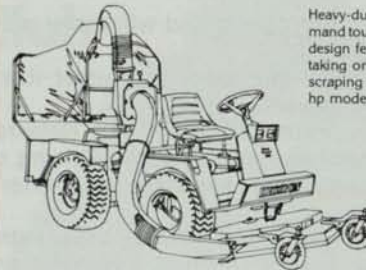


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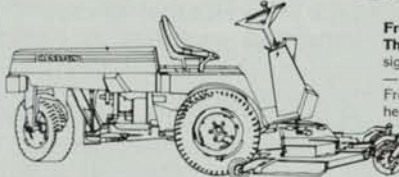
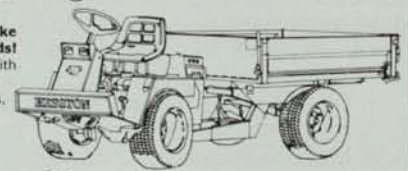
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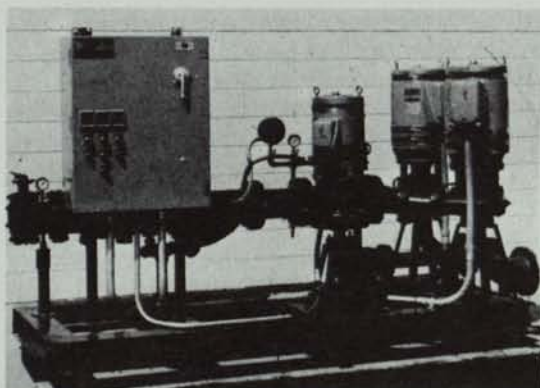
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