

THE BULL SHEET, official publication of the MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS.

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**PRESIDENT' MESSAGE**

As I approached the golf course Sunday morning I noticed something was wrong, but could not put my finger on it until I got closer. Then it was plain to see, no flags. A quick tour and the totals were six flags, and poles, and three sets of tee markers. Yes, I was lucky no damage to the tees, greens or fairways, but this type of vandalism costs the club just the same. What do we do, call the police? There isn't much they can do unless they catch the people red handed, and I don't think they realize just how expensive flags, poles, and tee markers are. That little adventure cost Butler National about 150 dollars, and it doesn't take long before the totals get out of hand.

What do we do? What can we do? I know some of the clubs have security people on the golf course wandering around and some of those have a dog with them. Others have members of their crew wandering around for a time, but that can be dangerous for those crew members.

I would like our association to take some kind of action. Maybe some of our fellow Superintendents would write an article for the newspapers explaining our plight. It's hard to believe that parents would condone the action of their teenagers out on the golf course, drinking beer, stealing flags and tee markers, breaking the ball washers or seeing how many times they can get their cars to spin around on the greens. Maybe we have to go to the local police and ask that they pay a little more attention to our courses. I don't have the answers, but I know that this could be a bad year. With summer jobs being scarce there will be more time to look for ways to get into trouble, and there will be our courses, wide open and inviting.

In talking with our local police, they made some suggestions. Report all incidents to the police, no matter how small you might think it is. If someone is caught, prosecute; don't say that he won't do it again and let it go at that.

I still would like to get the press interested, even if it is at the local level. Don't be shy - let's inform the public about the problem. Maybe, just maybe, it will help.

**Ed Fischer**

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## LETTERS TO DAVID A. MEYER

Dear David,

Just a word of special appreciation to the Midwest Association for your continued honoring me through a membership. It's a joy to be included. I appreciate getting the **Bull Sheet**, your meeting notices, and in keeping abreast of the progress being made.

I would make a plea: You have a young man, Dr. Wehner, taking the turf research position at the University of Illinois. During his early years I hope the Midwest Association will give him the strongest possible support so that Illinois will continue to develop a strong turf program.

**W. H. Daniel, Turf Specialist  
Midwest Regional Turf Foundation**

Dear Dave:

I want to express a sincere thanks to you and the Board of Directors of the M.A.G.C.S for again providing me with an honorary membership in your fine Association.

My trip back to the Medinah Clinic in December was most enjoyable. In fact, it was a welcomed chance to visit with many of my valued friends (the old timers, if you will) from the past. I miss close contact with these professionals, and only wish that I could get to know the "new" members equally as well.

Again, thank you.

**Jack D. Butler, Professor**

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## A TEST OF FRIENDSHIP

Once a rich man said he would divide his fortune among his friends, if only he knew who they were.

Years passed, and at last the man died—in a midwinter blizzard. His last request was that the funeral be held at 4 o'clock in the morning.

Although scores had boasted of being his intimate friends, only three men and one poor woman turned out, to stand red-eyed and sad beside his grave.

When the will was read, it directed that his estate be divided equally among those who attended his funeral.

Friends are much scarcer than we think!



Jay Sigel

## MAINTENANCE PRACTICES TO MAKE THE GAME MORE ENJOYABLE - A PLAYER'S VIEW

"I'd like to begin by commenting that TV has changed attitudes toward golf courses. Now they must be lush and green, even if dyed, and the ball must sit up so that even bad shots will hold a green. So much water is used that 6600 yard courses are playing at 7600. Beauty, design, bunker positioning, trees make golf courses, not color and not flowers.

While I'm certainly no expert in growing grass I believe that as maintenance budgets have gone up playability has gone down. That's the topic I'd like to touch on and I'd like to compare British and American golf courses based upon some of the experiences I've had.

At my club I hear the same comments I'm sure you hear - we have wet conditions many times, no carts available, sad faces because some of the older players or the high handicap golfers can reach only one par 4, no roll on the ball, embedded ball rule all the time, the golf shop is selling mostly rain shoes and members are carrying 5, 6 and 7 woods.

Many years ago when I started playing junior golf I remember the brownout effects on the golf courses, whether it was the budget or the unsophisticated maintenance practices at that time I don't know but there was always a six to eight week period of brown-out BUT, the course was playable and I can remember smiling faces at that time. The older players were getting more roll and the overall pace of play was better because people were scoring better and taking fewer shots. They could control their shots better. Carts could be used most of the time. Conditions weren't wet. I think a reduction in watering would strengthen the grass and would speed up play because players would take fewer shots and we all need to speed up play.

I'd like to compare what I've seen of British golf to our game here. They have no carts there. They pull their carts, or trolleys as they call them. The trolleys are very light and have very wide wheels so as not to injure the grass and they can go out any time.

I had an opportunity to play four golf courses, St. Andrews, Muirfield, Hillside and Royal Birkdale. The color of these golf courses is very drab. I've been told I shouldn't say 'brown' so I'll say drab. The grass height is of great interest. Approach fringes are very, very short enabling us during the Walker Cup matches to putt from as far out as 50 yards. How can we in Chicago or Philadelphia practice a 50 yard putt? It was a difficult adjustment and it's really a different game. The game over there is played on the ground, not in the air and a lot of people think there's more skill involved in playing the game on the ground and not, in effect, throwing darts like we do here.

I know I hit only two or three good shots in a round and I hit a number of shots that in no way should stay on the green. Here in America they may stop and back up; they may roll two or three feet. I'm wondering if we really need to do that. Roughs in Britain are very rough, contoured. A lie in the rough in Britain or Scotland requires either an enormous amount of strength or an enormous amount of intelligence to go sideways. In the Walker Cup matches the rough was so deep we had to ask the gallery to line up and hold hands, walking, in order to find the ball. I'm not suggesting we do that here, we'd never get finished!

The sand in the bunkers is firm and the bunkers are very deep and they're layered. It's an interesting concept that keeps the sand in the bunkers.

The only automated watering system that I know of in the British Isles is at Hillside. The greens are very firm. At Muirfield, which is one of the finest golf courses I've ever played, the greens aren't watered and I'm not sure they fertilize. If they fertilize, it's very little. The fairway mowers look like 19th century vintage and I'm sure their budget is very low. The greens are grainy in addition to being firm but because of their firmness they're consistent...not concrete but very firm.

Tony Jacklin made a comment recently that the reason American players are better players is because they're better putters. And the reason we're better putters is because we're brought up on better greens. There's really no comparison.

In Britain they don't play winter rules. In fact, they don't like the word. They don't know what Mulligans are either. On some of their golf courses, they don't even allow a practice swing on the first tee. I'm wondering what that would do for maintenance costs and speed of play.

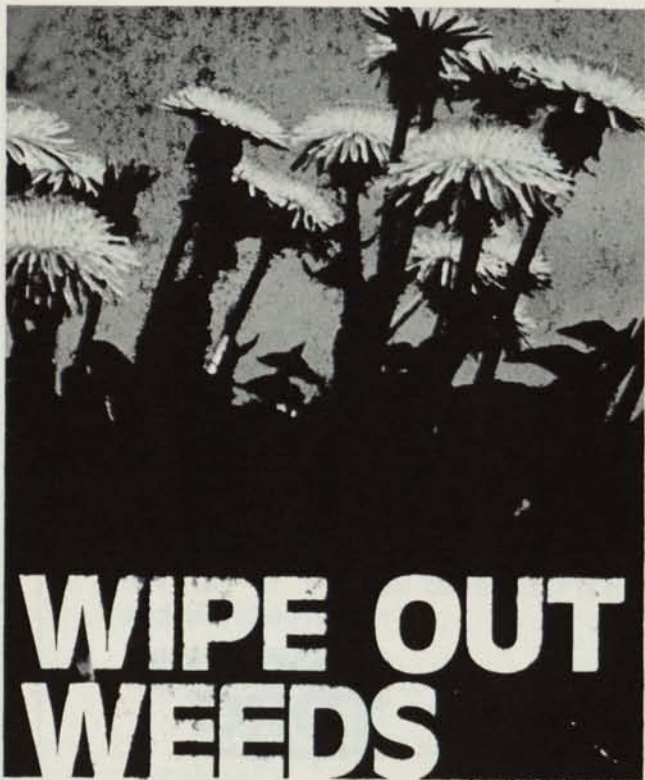
I've begun to ask myself some questions about why we've gotten so far away from the conditioning of the courses where the game originated and away from an emphasis on good playability. I think we've been trying to improve turf conditions by increased fertilization, chemical programs and water usage, certainly increasing our budgets. There's been more mowing. I believe water increases the poa annua population and then we try to eradicate it. Our maintenance problems are compounded by these increased requirements. Additional water also causes problems with disease.

In 1977 in Monterey they had a terrible drought and were permitted to water the greens only five minutes a day and the tees a very short time. The condition of the golf course remained marvelous. I'm not suggesting we cut off all the water, but let's cut off some of it. We do have a dwindling supply and we'll be without water one of these days.

I don't think players have any objection to poa annua. It may not stay green but we all realize in Britain and Scotland golf is played on grass, not on color. I don't think the average player really knows the benefits of playing on a firm surface. Shouldn't we try to give this playability back to the game and at the same time, conserve our dwindling water supply? Wouldn't that help reduce some of our enormous maintenance costs, thereby saving many dollars for many of our clubs that are in troubled times?

I pose these questions but I certainly don't have answers. I thank you all for helping me learn and better understand some of your problems. I've learned a lot and I've enjoyed the regrettably brief association I've had with all of you."

Jay Sigel, Aronomink Golf Club  
1979 British Amateur Champion  
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### Comments on Mr. Sigel's talk:

**Robert A. Van Nest**, CDGA Course Rating Chairman, "I think we're getting too sophisticated. The superintendents here are trying to give us what we want and I think that possible the green chairmen and the presidents who are here should start a program of re-educating our members. Possibly everything we see on the golf course today is not exactly what we need. I think our Arab friends, whether we like it or not, are going to change our lifestyle and I think one of the changes will be not to have our golf courses quite as lush.

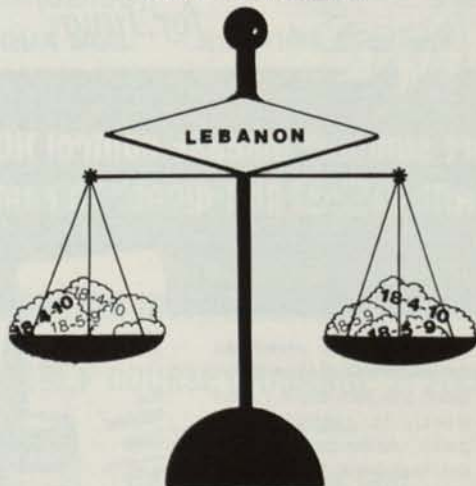
I've been on the Course Rating Committees for twelve years and in that time I've played just about every course in the District and I never buy golf shoes anymore that are not rain shoes. I wear rain shoes all the time because a good bit of the time I feel like I'm playing in a swamp and I think we have to go through a period of re-education to tell people we don't need quite as lush conditions as we've had."

**Dr. Bill Daniel**, Purdue University, "We are in the same position as the car manufacturers have been. They had to get rid of the gas guzzlers and build smaller, more efficient cars. It was difficult for the public to move away from big cars and it will be difficult for the public to move away from well-groomed golf courses."

**Dr. James Watson**, The Toro Company, "I share the opinion that color telecasting has been a detriment to good golf courses as well as good athletic fields. Because the general public judges the quality of turf by 'how green is it?'"

A superintendent commented that their costs have gone up proportionately to how short they cut. The shorter the cut the higher the costs.

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## “THE GREENBUG” [an aphid]

Aphids are plant-sucking insects commonly called plant lice. There is probably a species of aphid for virtually every species of plant. Aphids are usually greenish in color but they may be pink, black or brown. They are fragile looking creatures, somewhat pear-like in shape. Look for two horn-like protruberances on their rear ends and strong, slender beaks. Once these beaks are inserted into the plant, aphids can suck out large amounts of the plant juices. Aphids are the “Draculas” of the insect world .. Dahling ...

Much of the damage they cause is due to the fact that they reproduce rapidly and congregate in great numbers. It has been estimated that one aphid can reproduce 1521<sup>21</sup> offspring in a single season.

The Greenbug *Shizaphis graminum* is a very well known pest in the United States. It attacks all kinds of grain crops throughout the Midwest. In the early 70's, the greenbug turned its attention to Kentucky bluegrass and was found in central and eastern Illinois in epidemic proportions.

Large circular, slightly irregular patches of dead grass ranging in size from 3 to 15 feet are typical symptoms of greenbug damage. Much of the damage occurs underneath the canopy of a shade tree. The specific migration habits of greenbug feeding on turf have not been identified.

Malathion or Orthene are presently the only insecticides specifically labeled for greenbug control, on grasses. In general, spot treating greenbug damaged areas is sufficient to keep the problem under control.

**Stanley Rachesky, Entomologist**

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The end of March many golf course superintendents were pleased to see an old friend come back on the scene. **Jim Burdett** whose family has had ties with the Chicago area golf course distributing business for over 50 years appeared at the Butterfield clinic. Jim is now representing Builders Plumbing Supply of Addison, Illinois, the irrigation products division. Jim, up to the end of 1976, had Burdett's, Inc. which he had purchased from his parents, Paul and Ruth Burdett in 1972. Jim's brother, Paul W. was an active salesperson until his passing in 1965. Paul's son, Paul H. works for Bob Breen of Arrowhead Golf, past president of the MAGCS.

Jim has joined an energetic team at Builders including many people known to the local superintendents: Virginia Gutierrez, formerly of SISCO, Bill Richards, Rick Jones and Roy Anderson.

## THE MOLE

How can a car be hit at 35 mph -- not get a scratch and yet the occupant claim injuries? You shouldn't test this out, but Mike Doron did. His new car was hit at an intersection and Mike is wearing a neck brace. Hope you can get out on the course soon, Mike.

Debbie Burdett, Jim's oldest, will be in Iceland this summer. Deb was picked by the Glenbard West High School Chapter of AFS (foreign student exchange) as one of their three finalists to exchange with other countries throughout the world. She should have quite an adventure if she learns Icelandic.

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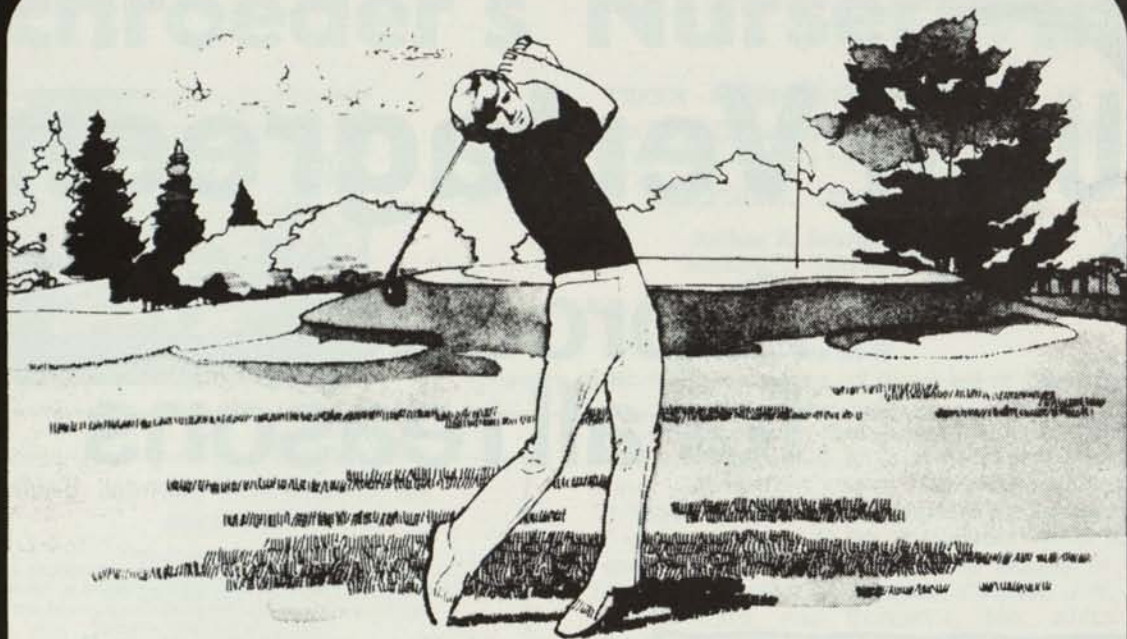


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