

On November 16, 1989, Oscar started work at The Merit Club. His first task, which took two months, was to write the budget and specifications for the project. Next, Oscar began to hire a staff to do grassing, grow-in and maintenance over the next two years.

“At that time, it was unusual for a golf course maintenance staff to do all this,” reflects Oscar. “Developers usually waited until a course was grassed, then they would hire a superintendent and say, now put a team together to take care of it. But with us doing it hole by hole—we’d plant it, landscape it, grow it in and then get it ready for play—that’s a tremendous advantage.”

By fall of 1990, only four holes had been shaped, leaving 17 (the balance of the championship 18, plus three practice holes) for completion during 1991. In fall of '91, nine holes and the three practice holes opened for play. July 4, 1992, marked the grand opening of the entire course and its warm, intimate clubhouse.

“By being involved from the beginning, I had the opportunity to take 28 years of experience and education and apply it in a practical way,” Oscar remarks. “I used the latest scientific information to plant the proper grasses, the correct trees, choose the right sand for the bunkers, keep the proper distance between bunkers, confine the fairways and create nice rolling contours so the course is aesthetically pleasing. The staff that did the grassing here became the maintenance staff. Now with the 10 years of experience we have with this course, we are ready to bring it into condition for the U.S. Women’s Open.”



Hole #6 at The Merit Club.

Ed couldn’t be more pleased that events transpired as they did. “In hiring Oscar Miles, who is acknowledged as one of the best in his profession, the golf course right now is as good a quality of golf course as you can find in the industry. We’re very proud of the condition of the golf course and we think it’s because we started doing it on the high end from day one.”



Next: The Merit Club as a showcase for golf coexisting with nature, and a look at Oscar’s top-notch staff.

“Ed [Oldfield, president of The Merit Club] felt it was very important to bring a golf course superintendent in on the ground floor.

The person who would be taking care of the golf course should develop the specifications and oversee the construction to ensure it was done properly. That interested me quite a bit.”

—Oscar Miles

GCSAA

Taps Our Own Bob Maibusch For One-Year Term as Director

In early March, GCSAA President Scott Woodhead called MAGCS President Emeritus Bob Maibusch with a compelling request: serve a one-year term as member of GCSAA's Board of Directors.

"I'm very happy to be serving. I do feel a commitment to the profession and the game, and I do feel it's important if you have an opportunity to serve to do that. If you can give something back to the association, you should."

—Bob Maibusch

"Scott indicated he needed to make an appointment, and based on my past experience with committees and service record, they wanted to see if I was interested," Bob recalls.


Bob did not—indeed, could not—accept the invitation before discussing the offer with two key contingents: his employer, Hinsdale Golf Club, and his family. Serving a one-year appointment would mean, for instance, some 30 days of travel during his term.

"The course came back to me with an answer within a day, and they were very encouraging," says Bob. "My wife and kids were also supportive. It would have been hard to say no at that point."

Since accepting the directorship, Bob has undergone extensive computer training in the use of GCSAA's intranet and made a couple trips to Lawrence, KS; he will make a third for the GCSAA's May board meeting, at which time his appointment should be confirmed. Bob has also been charged with chairing two GCSAA committees: the Publications Committee and the Limited Budget Resource Group.

This latter group, explains Bob, is an ad hoc committee formed to look at the challenges faced by superintendents working at limited budget facilities. "GCSAA felt this group might be falling through the cracks, and this committee focuses on them—to see what we can do to


(continued on page 34)



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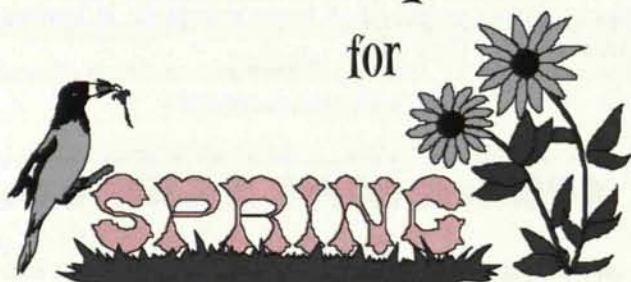
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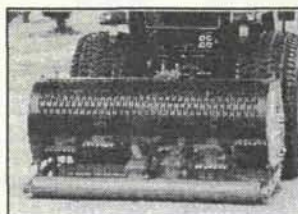
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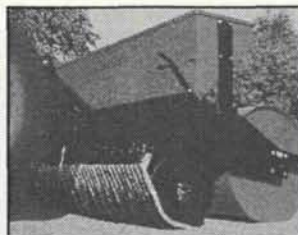
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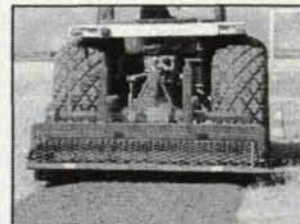
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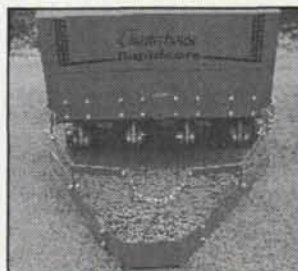
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Bob Maibusch . . . (continued from page 32)

support them," says Bob. "The lower-end courses really grow the game of golf—you're not going to take your eight-year-old who's just starting to play out for a \$90 or \$100 round. This reflects GCSAA's commitment to help golf thrive in the future."

By year's end, Bob will have a decision to make: whether to run for reelection in February 2001.

"My priorities are always going to be family, employer and then GCSAA," Bob notes.

Still, "it's been fun so far," says Bob. "I'm very happy to be serving. I do feel a commitment to the profession and the game, and I do feel it's important if you have an opportunity to serve to do that. If you can give something back to the association, you should."

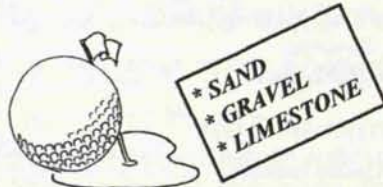
On Course With the President (continued from page 15)

would be very happy to share my information with anybody needing a template for creating his or her own plan. Lightning can strike twice in the same place, so be prepared. I hope everyone is having a great spring. God bless.



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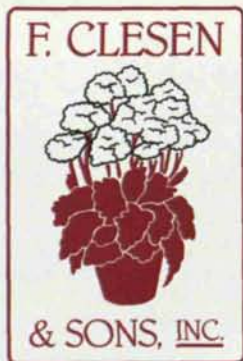
So what happens next? The MSRSG will continue to make presentations throughout the country through May. They will be collecting information from these presentations as well as from individuals on the Web. Then, in June, they will meet to make their final recommendations. These recommendations will be distributed to all members early in August, prior to the chapter delegates meeting in September, and more than six months before any bylaws vote is scheduled in February of 2001. If adopted, the requirements would go into effect the following year, July 2002.

There are many unanswered questions that relate to the PDI, but the MSRSG is working to keep members well informed about this proposal, through constant communication in *Newsline* and with chapters. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to send them by e-mail to pdi@gcsaa.org or by regular postal mail to PDI, 1421 Research Park Drive, Lawrence, Kansas 66049.



mysteriously disappeared somewhere along the line. It wound up in the possession of Bob Williams, who gave it to Ed Fischer a few years ago. Ed was kind enough to donate it to the Midwest, and we will start presenting it to the champion of the senior gross division. The winner's name will be engraved on the trophy and it will remain in his possession for a year. I feel this is a great way to honor our past.

I look forward to a great golfing year and want to thank all of those who have volunteered their time to the Golf Committee.



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the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS
Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 15 — ITF Combined Golf Day at Silver Lake Country Club—**Dudley Smith** host.

June 19 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Winnetka Golf Course—**Henry Michna, CGCS**, host.

July 18 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Redtail Golf Club—**Pat McDonagh** host.

July 20 - 23 — U.S. Women's Open at Merit Club—**Oscar Miles, CGCS** host.

September 14-16 — 2000 LaSalle Bank Chicago Open at Beverly Country Club—**Les Rutan** host.

Check out the March/April issue of *Chicago District Golfer*. Not only is there a nice write-up on the Midwest Golf House Complex at Cog Hill, but an excellent look at Stonewall Orchard Golf Club in Grayslake. We look forward to playing host **Larry Flament's** course this September.

Dr. Randy Kane is currently conducting tests on Chicagoland-area golf courses for *Poa annua* seedhead control. Several different products are being applied side-by-side and evaluated for their usefulness in this yearly battle. Look for those results in the upcoming months.

In keeping with the theme, the University of Illinois triumvirate of turf titans (a little much?)—**Drs. Bruce Branham, Tom Fermanian and Tom Voigt**—has begun working on the divot

repair study that recently received matching funds from MAGCS and GCSAA. This study will examine the different aspects of divot repair (e.g., soil mixes, species and cultivars, fertilizers and other amendments) for tees, driving range tees and fairways with the objective of identifying efficient divot repair methods. An incoming graduate student, Sam Schmitz, has been hired for this project, and a survey has been mailed to a number of MAGCS superintendents to gather information to guide research activities during 2000 and 2001. The U of I researchers thank the MAGCS membership for their support in this endeavor.

More MAGCS folks on the move: **Bob Kohlstedt**, formerly of Wedgewood Golf Course, is the new superintendent at Fox Bend Golf Course. **Todd Schmitz**, formerly of Prairie Landing Golf Club, is the new assistant superintendent at Aurora Country Club. **Tony Frandria**, formerly of Midlothian Country Club, is the new assistant superintendent at Glen View Club.

(continued on page 40)



John Gurke, CGCS with Aurora Country Club PGA professional Pete Latkiewicz in front of the grand clubhouse.



"GQ" Jesper tees off on #18 at the National.

Been there, done that: In a follow-up to **Fred Behnke's** "Go There, Do That" article on the Masters that appeared in the June 1999 issue of *On Course*, I did just that. There is just no reason not to get away for a few days to visit the hallowed grounds of The National—it is spectacular! Admission is free with GCSAA credentials, and walking (no running allowed) the historic golf course is truly moving. Make your hotel reservations at least 600 years in advance, though, as space is definitely limited.

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Shane Kissack, former assistant superintendent at Naperville Country Club, is the new superintendent at Riverside Country Club. Congratulations and best of luck to all these MAGCS members. Expect to see more news of this ilk in the near future, as MANY courses are seeking assistants and grounds employees.

Hopefully it is not May 8 when you read this: On May 7 at 9 a.m., J. W. Turf in Hampshire, IL is having a consignment auction that will feature numerous pieces of pre-owned golf and turf and lawn-care equipment. Contact J. W. Turf for details.

While on the subject of commercial members, can there be a better group of folks who truly care about their customers anywhere in the world? I cannot state emphatically enough how much we appreciate the "going beyond normal service" attitude that our commercial members take—you guys are simply the best in the business!

Let's do it again: Congratulations to—guess who—**Dan Dinelli** of North Shore Country Club for being recognized on national television by the O. M. Scott Company as recipient of their Tradition of Excellence Award during the final round of the Tradition tournament.

Also, congratulations to **Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG**, of Hinsdale Country Club on his appointment to the GCSAA Board of Directors. President Woodhead hand-picked Bob to serve a one-year term. Thankfully, Mr. Woodhead did NOT learn the art of choosing talent from the Bears' front office . . .

(continued on page 42)

A Note From Fred Opperman

I received these pictures from Bob Hammerschmidt, a friend and owner of Lost Nation G.C. in Dixon, IL. I thought that the membership would like to see what the club is doing with trees that have died on the course. Everyone knows that it is proper to recycle; well, Lost Nation is taking it a step further. At the present, they have about seven to eight wood carvings on the trunks of trees that normally are cut down. The two pictures here are of an American eagle and a Native American. There are others of a beaver, old man, tee and ball, golf bag and an eagle in flight. All of this work was done with a chain-saw. Give Todd Rosquist, superintendent, a call at 815-652-4212 for more information.

As for myself, it has been almost a year since I left Illinois and moved to the Montana mountains. It has been a great time and very enjoyable. I have been spending one to two days per week working for Habitat for Humanity and have worked on four different houses to date. I am building a woodworking shop and stocking it with the different tools, and that takes up many pleasurable hours. This coming spring, I will be landscaping our new home, and of course, I need to spend time on the local trout streams. Just about every Saturday this past winter, I was snowshoeing with the local club. Most days we went into Yellowstone Park to find the deeper snow and to see more wildlife, which we did.

My best to all, and may you all have a successful year.

