

# Budget Bonuses

By MEL WEINSTEIN

Several years ago, while doing some consulting work, I came across a very experienced Superintendent. He was one of the most knowledgeable men in the "Greenkeeping Art" that I had ever encountered. After a review of his golf course we compiled a list of deficiencies and a list of improvements that were necessary to bring the course into top condition. I left the list with him, and when I returned several days later, we reviewed the entire project. He advised me that he had analyzed every thing and the total cost of both the deficiencies and improvements would come to fifty thousand dollars. Most of the cost consisted of labor. When we got through that season, 75% of the work was done. The total additional cost of labor was zero and the material cost was only \$1,500. How it was done is a "BUDGET BONUS."

We all work on budgets. For most courses the budget is very tight, but even in the tightest budget there is room for extra work and improvements for the course. This outline will show how any one of us can do it.

The first step is for the Superintendent and the Chairman to go out onto the course; going from hole to hole, they should compile a written list of the various jobs that are to be done. This generally will not take too much time, no more than several hours. The list is then organized and analyzed. A sample of the type of listing would be as follows: Hole #1

- a) Tee needs extra top dressing & aerification
- b) There is puddling near first mound on left
- c) Sprinkler does not reach far enough (near 150 yd. marker)
- d) Left front green trap has large rock
- e) Small depression, left rear of green
- f) Woods back of green need thinning out

The Superintendent and Chairman then review the list to determine which items have first priority, second, etc. A

period of time is then set to accomplish the work. I recommend the shortest time to be three months and the longest to be six months.

The Superintendent then agrees, or contracts, to complete the work within that period. This is a give and take situation whereby some of the jobs are postponed to a subsequent period. Once the contract is made it is entirely up to the Superintendent to produce the desired results.

The list is now in front of him for this particular period. He knows what materials are needed and he should bring them on the premises to be used on a moment's notice. What is that moment's notice? We all know that there are plenty of times when the cutting is all caught up. Time when the grass is not growing. Times when golf play is low or very busy. Times when weather conditions discourage normal maintenance. These and many other circumstances are the time and moment to make your move. You now know what is expected. You have made the contract. There is no more thinking what is my crew going to do today?

I personally feel that if 75% of the contract is fulfilled, then a good job was done. All we would do with the leftovers is add them to the next period.

A program of this type over a period of years will accomplish tremendous results. Results in improving the condition and appearance of your golf course. Results in proving to management what a great job you can do. Results in saving your club thousands of dollars. It is these results that all add up to your course always being in fine condition. After a period of time you'll be working on those little niceties that all golfers appreciate. They'll be even more appreciative when they learn it's not costing them anything extra. ■



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