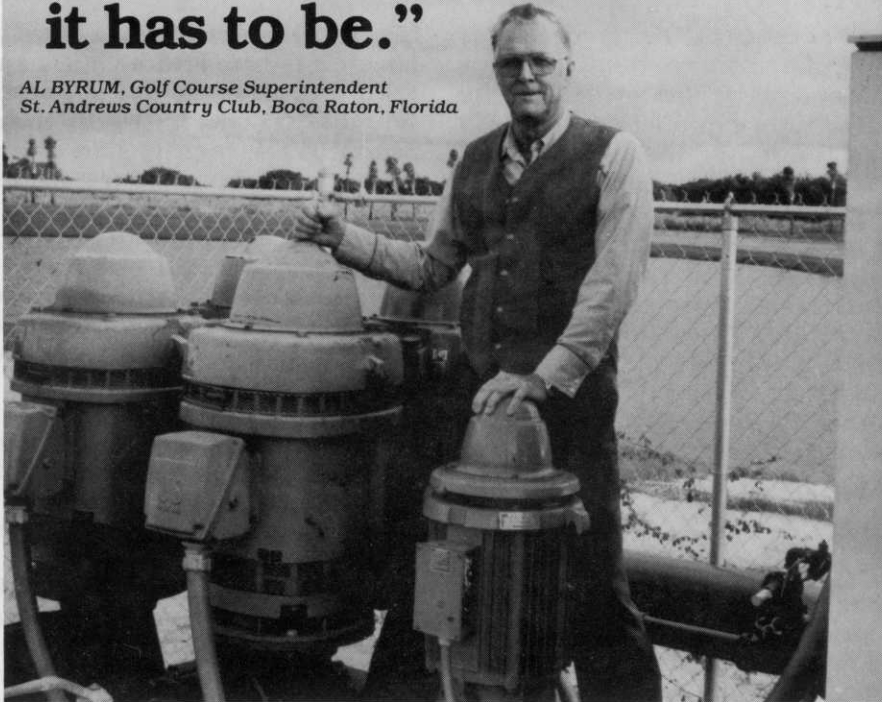


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West Coast Buccaneers



By JOHN LUPER
Countryside Country Club

Super Successful . . .

A definition of the word success is "the favorable or prosperous termination of goals or endeavors." For a golf course superintendent to be successful he must have short and long range goals and the skills to accomplish them. Identifying these goals and taking the right approach to solving them can be the difference between success and failure.

Experience is one of the main denominators to help a superintendent be successful. Through experience they learn the best approach to reach their goals and the goals of their employers. Mistakes are minimized and calculated risks are completely thought through before attempting to solve a problem. From their experiences the successful superintendent knows his most important quality will be his ability to communicate with all those around him.

The first group he has to communicate with are those who work for him. His talent for explaining exactly what needs to be accomplished and in what order gives his crew confidence in themselves and a chance to be an integral part of the total picture. Their participation in a well run organization will accomplish more work in less time and with less manpower. The superintendent who can mold this type of group will be best prepared to approach the next most important group — his superiors.

The successful superintendent realizes how important his involvement is at his club. He knows that

his decisions can have a total effect on how smooth his club is run, and he must approach his superiors with well thought out suggestions. For example, a budget that was hurriedly prepared will not tell the needs of the facility like one prepared well in advance with many hours devoted to it. A superintendent cannot just ask for a new piece of equipment. He has to justify its purchase and what it will do for the over-all quality of the club. Most successful superintendents have the respect and confidence of their employers. Gaining that confidence can insure proper consideration for all requests.

The successful superintendent also realizes the importance of his peers and their success. He knows his active participation to help the image of his profession will help them and himself.

As the turf management business becomes more sophisticated, superintendents will have to keep abreast by continuing their education through local, state, and national educational seminars. Not keeping current will eventually cause a failure of the goal to have the best maintained facility with the most efficient use of funds.

The goal of the Florida West Coast Golf Course Superintendents Association is to make available the talents of successful people, whether in the realm of education, management, or personal experience and to help all of its members reach their goals and reach the level of success they desire. ■



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Suncoast Sails

By ALLEN HANCHEY
The Meadows Country Club

The position of Golf Course Superintendent is one of responsibility, as the expectations of the Golfing continues. The pressure applied from management is for tighter and tighter spending controls, as the position of Golf Course Superintendent changes complexion from that of a grower of grass to that of a true business manager. It is now taken for granted that we can grow grass and we are being judged more on efficiency, budget controls, personnel management, and playing conditions close to perfection.

From a survey of local superintendents I have compiled a list of items which they consider to be of major importance for fulfilling their job of superintendent.

These include:

- 1) The Maintenance Crew — According to Phil Phalen the superintendent is only as good as the crew.
- 2) Adaptability — This is a job of changing conditions and we must be able to make the best of any situation.
- 3) Member Education — If the membership has an understanding of the maintenance program they can work with you for improvement.
- 4) Efficient Planning — Setting goals and expected achievements leads to greater accomplishments.

- 5) Achieving Most From Budgeted Dollar — The list of items which need attention is endless, what can we afford with resources available to make the greatest impact.
- 6) Continuing Education — New tools, ideas, and procedures surface each day and we must stay abreast to stay ahead.
- 7) Individual Personality — How do we appear to others, first impressions are important as this often sets the stage for working relationships. A good personality often paves the road for crew respect or management credibility.
- 8) A Good Knowledge Of The Game — We are evaluated in the end on the playability of the golf course.

It is easy to understand that all of these topics are of major importance. To fail completely on any one item would certainly make you less than an effective superintendent. The greater your proficiency on each of these topics make us more valuable as a superintendent.

With an understanding of what is involved to become a truly good superintendent we can really evaluate ourselves. Often times, confronted with day to day situations, we tend to concentrate on one portion of our job and thus slack another portion to be the most effective superintendent possible. Perhaps we should evaluate ourselves more often instead of waiting for someone else to do it for us. ■

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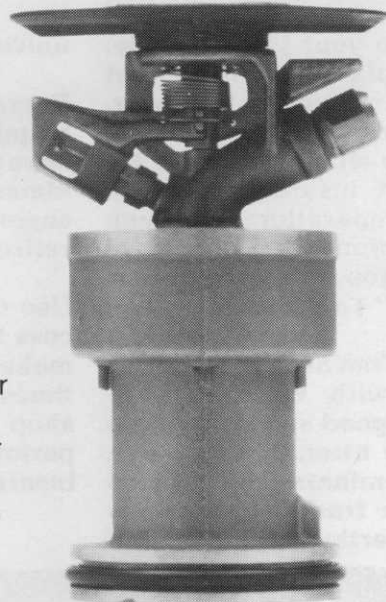
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Treasure Coast "Tide"ings

By JAMES P. CALLAGHAN
Rio Mar Country Club

An Interview With a "Good Superintendent"

Progress in the golf-turf industry over the past two decades has been phenomenal. Tom Burrows, Golf Course Superintendent of the Turtle Creek Club in Tequesta, has endeavored to make the best of his 22 years as a superintendent and is considered one of the finest by his peers. He has witnessed the transition from greenkeeper to total manager first hand and has graciously agreed to share his comments on what makes a good golf superintendent with the "Florida Green" readers.

Basically, Tom's approach to becoming a successful golf course superintendent has been achieved by utilizing the SEP (Serious, Enthusiastic and Prepared) method. He commented, "To be a good superintendent, you must take your job seriously. The golfers out there might be playing a game — but we're not!" Tom continued, "Enthusiasm is a must. There are times when this job can really get to you, but one must keep his chin up with a smile on his face. Enthusiasm is the best insurance for job security." With respect to preparation, "through careful and complete preparation in all phases of golf course management, a good superintendent will rarely be caught off guard," Tom stated.

Through the SEP approach, Tom always strives to become a better manager with constant self-improvement. He stated that a good superintendent will continue his education by attending turf conferences, night schools, and seminars. He will also keep his nose in the various trade publications available to keep abreast of pertinent information

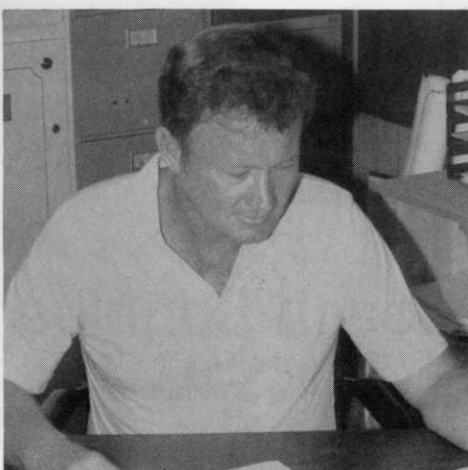
and developments. He further emphasized, "A successful superintendent is active in local, regional and national associations. He must share ideas with his fellow supers — an ostrich-like convergence rarely cuts it today." Tom added, "At many meetings there is an opportunity to play golf on other courses which is certainly a valuable avenue for discovering new ideas."

Tom, who holds an A.S. degree in Turfgrass Management from Penn State, also emphasizes confidence in yourself but don't be afraid to seek help when needed. He commented that if you come across a problem (who doesn't!) that you can always turn to a fellow superintendent, U.S.G.A., or university personnel for advice.

Burrows is a strong advocate for delegating responsibilities. He said, "If a superintendent is always running around trying to get the work done himself, he won't have the time to become a good superintendent and will never get to enjoy retirement — because he won't be around."

Use of public relations is another pathway to success for today's superintendent. Tom states that he makes himself presentable and available at all times to his membership. He often visits the pro shop and clubhouse, especially during busy periods. Lunch in the dining room is scheduled to insure his access to the membership.

(Continued on page 27)



A good superintendent is serious. . . prepared . . .

and enthusiastic!

(Continued from page 26)

He keeps his employer informed of his overall progress and attends greens committee and board meetings — PREPARED. He tries to play golf at his course at least once a week in order to gain the same perspective of the golf course as the members have.

Having trained over 60 apprentice superintendents, Tom is keen with his employees for they are a reflection on him. He stresses pride and neatness at all times. This is also carried over into the appearance and operation at the maintenance facility. Tom stated, "Take care of anything which will reflect on you and your management abilities. Organization doesn't stop on the 18th green!"

Tom's abilities and success are definitely of high caliber. Before coming to Florida, he was Property Manager and Golf Course Superintendent for the Playboy Club Hotels in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin and Great Gorge, New Jersey. Prior to taking over at Turtle Creek eight years ago, he was Golf Course Superintendent at Mariner Sands. Tom has served on the Executive Committee of the Midwest, South Florida, Palm Beach, Treasure Coast and Florida Golf Course Superintendents Associations. Recently he was nominated for Vice President of the Florida G.C.S.A.

In closing, having the right attitude plays the most important part in becoming a good superintendent. Tom Burrows' SEP approach relies on two basic attitudes — seriousness and enthusiasm. Add preparation to the right attitude and you can't miss!

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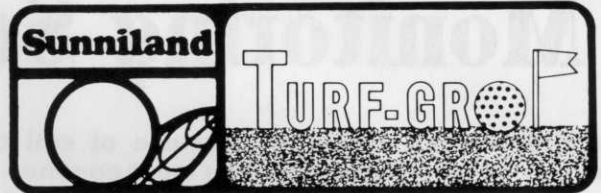
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Watching Your Tees & Q's

By STEVE BATTEN AND BUD WHITE
United States Golf Association-Green Section
Southeastern Region



Monitoring Soil Temperatures

New interest has begun for the use of soil temperatures as turfgrass tools. The most common use of soil temperatures is the estimation of shoot growth rates of bermudagrass and overseeded grasses. Several superintendents in Florida are discovering the relationship of turfgrass physiological events as well as a year-to-year pattern-to-soil temperatures in their areas.

There are two periods of the year when soil temperatures become important. These are fall soil temperature decline and late spring fluctuation of temperatures from intermittent cycles of cool to warm. In North Florida decline of soil temperatures in late fall and early winter is a predictable pattern from year to year. In South Florida, late spring and early summer soil temperatures can vary yearly which could explain phenomena such as the retention of overseeded heat tolerant turfgrasses.

In 1983, late spring transition of overseeded perennial ryegrass and creeping bentgrass was common throughout Florida. The bermudagrass was not actively growing as early as previous years, and the overseeded grasses did not decline in vigor as soon as usual. There are several reasons for this. One is the unusual high amount of late spring rainfall. Another is the increased heat tolerance of the new commercial cultivars of overseeded perennial ryegrass. But cooler soil temperatures had the greatest direct impact on the spring transition.

The greatest variance in soil temperatures is in the spring each year. In contrast, they become stable and very predictable during late summer and mid-winter. One of the first golf course superintendents in South Florida to recognize this was Bill Whitaker of Seminole Golf Club in North Palm Beach. Bill has recorded daily readings of 4 inch soil temperatures at dawn for over four years. He has observed that temperatures were exactly the same for January 1982 and 1983. However, in May, June, and July, the soil temperatures were from 1-4 degrees cooler for 1983 than for 1982. He also observed that the Penncross overseeded bentgrass has a much slower rate of late spring/early summer transition this year under the same cultural practices and overseeding rates.

Bill Whitaker also noted that it was August 1983 before average soil temperatures caught up with the average of previous years. Bill's observations could explain the late active spring shoot growth of the Tifdwarf bermudagrass reported on several coastal golf courses in his area.

Ron Hill of Amelia Island Plantation near Jacksonville is another golf course superintendent who records daily soil temperatures. Ron's observations of soil temperatures from 1981 to 1983 in northwestern Florida are different than Bill Whitaker's. Ron observed the lowest average soil temperatures in May of 1982 instead of 1983. Very little difference was noted between the average May soil temperatures of 1981 and 1983. June soil temperatures were the same in 1982 as in 1983.

Both Bill Whitaker and Ron Hill have long term objectives in recording soil temperatures. They are reviewing soil temperature patterns and relating them to their cultural practices, such as fall overseeding and spring transition. Bill Whitaker has also monitored the amount of bentgrass mower clippings by baskets that are removed from the greens. He has found a direct correlation between soil temperatures and the rate of shoot growth. Likewise, he has observed a similar response to the bermudagrass by observing when it starts late spring active growth and when it is recessed in the fall.

Amelia Island Plantation and Seminole Golf Club are seaside golf courses. Soil temperature patterns could vary inland as close as 5 miles on other golf courses. However, the range of temperatures in which certain physiological plant responses occur will be the same at any location. Therefore, more superintendents should consider recording soil temperatures. There could be a wealth of information gathered at different locations that could correlate soil temperatures to common turfgrass practices.

Predictions could be made for the optimal time for overseeding, the results of spring transition, the best date for the first annual aeration, and even the need for nitrogen fertilization prior to a golf event.

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If soil temperature information is to be recorded, then there are several factors to consider. First, they should be recorded at the same time every day. Bill and Ron each record theirs at dawn each day. At dawn the soil temperature at 3-4 inches is at a daily low point. Soil temperatures have approximately a one hour lag time for response from surface soil temperatures. Recording of air temperatures and rainfall should also be considered.

If daily highs are desired, then mid-afternoon around 3-4 o'clock, would be preferable. Daily averages could be estimated by recording both at dawn and in the afternoon. Keep notes on mower clippings, disease and other information in a log form. After three years, a pattern will begin to be apparent for soil temperatures on your golf course.

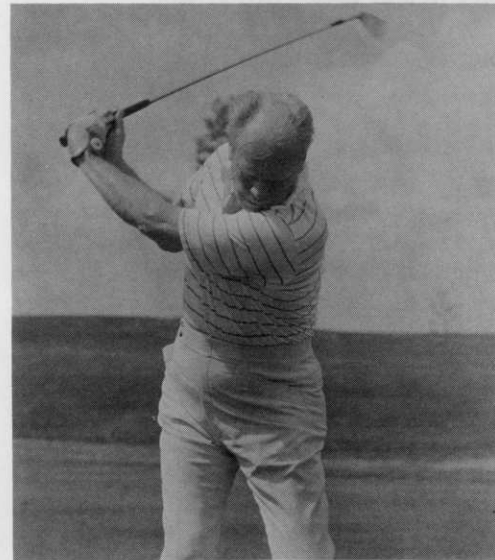
Soil temperatures are just one more way to observe the cycle of turfgrass events on the golf course.

**AVERAGE 3 INCH SOIL TEMPERATURES
AT AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION
IN DEGREES FAHRENHEIT**

	1981	1982	1983
JANUARY			
first	45	57	53
middle	37	38	39
last	46	46	48
average	42.5	47.0	45.5
MAY			
first	65	61	64
middle	70	60	70
last	75	71	74
average	68.4	66.5	69.0
JUNE			
first	77	72	73
middle	79	75	74
last	76	76	75
average	77.5	73.5	74.0

**AVERAGE 4 INCH SOIL TEMPERATURES
AT SEMINOLE GOLF CLUB
IN DEGREES FAHRENHEIT**

	1982	1983
JANUARY		
first	66	66
middle	64	64
last	55	55
MAY		
first	68	68
middle	70	65
last	70	70
JUNE		
first	77	72
middle	76	74
last	78	73
JULY		
first	79	77
middle	81	75
last	81	73



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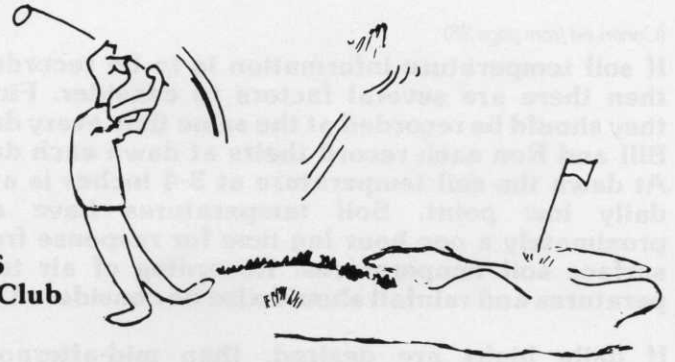
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“Superintendent: Take a Good Look At Yourself”

At some point in time we have stood in front of a mirror or a reflective body of water and looking at our own image answered questions about ourselves. Successful professionals have the ability to do just that and understand fully what has brought them to their present success. North Florida Golf Course Superintendents were asked to take a look at themselves and answer these questions.

I. What do you see as your strength in your profession?

1. paying close attention to detail
2. problem solving - quickly and efficiently “Jack of All Trades”

3. handling people, working with people, personnel
4. planning and observation
5. knowing your golf course and hard work
6. surrounding self with competent staff - right people for right job, working together as a team
7. dedication to job

II. What area of your profession do you feel you need to improve upon?

1. hiring of qualified crew members and trying to keep them
2. be more aware of up-to-date research and maintenance practices - continue education
3. understanding labor laws as apply to minors, state and federal regulations
4. better communications, taking too much for granted, expecting crew to know and think as I do
5. better understanding of budget alignment
6. keeping job interesting, overcoming boredom of daily routine

III. What was the most difficult task to overcome as a first time superintendent?


1. management having confidence in my abilities
2. lack of “how to actually get it done” experience
3. money - just to basically operate with
4. superintendent before me syndrome - Trying to “Let it blow over”
5. lack of personal confidence, second questioning myself
6. relying or feeling the need to rely on former boss too much - searching past experiences
7. education of club members to different style of maintenance practices
8. uncertainty of ability to handle mechanical problems - machinery, equipment

The profession of being a golf course superintendent is without a doubt unique. Looking at and being able to evaluate our personal performances within our profession will enable us to keep the integrity of our profession. ■

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