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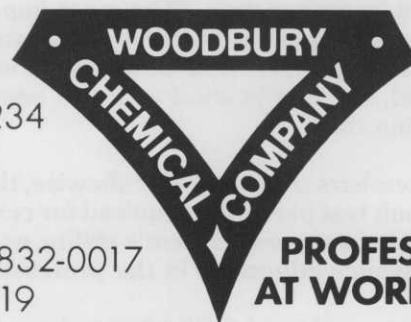
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Putting more "beef" in CGCS title:

Certification for Superintendents: Ego Trip or Educational Milestone?

Members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America have been kicking certification around since 1971 when the Association began the voluntary testing program. The question appears to be coming to a head.

Most members contacted by Weeds Trees & Turf are glad that it is.

Several years ago the GCSAA, reacting to criticism of its certification procedures began an ambitious program (apologies to Wendy's) to put more "beef" into the designation "CGCS" (Certified Golf Course Superintendent). Much of the criticism aimed at certification has been directed at its most basic purpose — education. A sizable number of superintendents do not feel the present certification process appreciably advances the primary goal of the GCSAA which is after all, the continued education of its members in the profession.

"In the past certification just hasn't been any big deal," a veteran superintendent at an Illinois course notes. "I think it has been kind of an ego thing because at the average 18-hole course it just isn't going to make any difference to the green's chairman right now."

Another in Pennsylvania adds that the ultimate test of a superintendent's value is his performance on the job. "Let others judge you on the merits of your performance. It can be readily seen in your course rather than a title."

REAL VALUE

Other superintendents have wondered aloud about the value of the CGCS designation. "The certification is really just a label," another says. "The most important thing of this whole process is starting young superintendents off in the right direction, and, I don't want to sound too critical, but certification as it has been, just isn't accomplishing that."

Many GCSAA members obviously feel likewise, that the six-hour open book test presently required for certification isn't a fair test of a superintendent's ability, nor does it appreciably advance education in the profession.

While a significant number of GCSAA members (about 517 at this writing) feel it worthwhile to carry the CGCS designation, a large number of superintendents do not. The GCSAA currently numbers about 5,800 members, maybe 3,000 of them Class A members and eligible for certification.

"Some people feel that if we have 20 or 25 percent of our eligible members certified that that number isn't so good," Donald Hearn, chairman of the GCSAA Education Committee, says. "I'm not so certain that 20 is the right number or 70 percent. The only thing I'm fairly certain is that it shouldn't be 100 percent."

Also fairly certain, becoming certified in the near future is going to be more difficult, hopefully, more valuable.

After several years of study the GCSAA Certification Committee came up with a long range renovation of the certification process. In a nutshell, it calls for the implementation of closed-book examinations in 1988, and the additional requirements of one-year of college or the completion of an equivalent GCSAA continuing education program by 1989, and a minimum of a two-year associate's level degree or completion of the GCSAA continuing education program by 1994. There are other provisions, including the requirement of a 12 month internship under a qualified CGCS member. This could become mandatory for certification beginning in 1997.

Those GCSAA members who are certified prior to the changes will be exempt from the new requirements. The committee purposely set changes far enough into the future to allow all present superintendents time to become certified prior to the changes.

PLAN APPROVED

For the most part, efforts of the GCSAA Certification Committee are being applauded by association members.

"I think what the committee is doing is worthwhile and I think it will add to the profession if they upgrade the standards," Bob Senseman, the 33 year old superintendent of Ripling River Resort, Welches, Or, says "I think a lot of people really haven't bothered with it because they didn't think it was valuable, but the nature of being a superintendent is changing and more and more guys are coming into this profession with bachelors and masters degrees."

Bill Peel at Lake Charles, La, holds a degree in agronomy from Texas A&M and becoming certified is part of his career plans. "It certainly could enhance a superintendent's prestige with their club," he feels.

"Certification may be the most important program GCSAA has to offer the membership," says Michael T.

(continued on page 44)

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(continued from page 42)

Saffel in Sheridan, Wy. "The plan of the certification committee has my general support. They are aware of the needs of the present membership and have addressed our future needs. Educational requirements, exemption, performance verification and internship are important if we are to advance our profession."

Dave Duren at Palmetto Dunes Resort, Hilton Head Island, SC, feels efforts to upgrade certification "should have been started a long time ago."

I think what they're doing is right and I think it's going to weigh heavily in hiring decisions in the future.

Prospective employers will know that you've put in a lot of study and work to be certified," he adds.

But serious work remains to be done with the GCSAA certification renovation. Superintendents should let GCSAA management or the certification committee know their ideas.

OPEN BOOK

Jon Scott of the Grand Traverse Resort Village in Michigan feels the GCSAA committee is on the right track but should study the 1988 closed-book requirement more thoroughly. "There isn't a superintendent alive that shouldn't be able to calibrate a spray rig or fertilizer spreader without looking in a book," he notes. "You've got to know how to do these things. But sections like the GCSAA history and by-laws, maybe that should be open book." Scott also notes the requirement calling for an oncourse inspection by a fellow superintendent (this requirement went into effect late in 1984) might become "a real touchy issue." although he doesn't see a better way to measure a superintendent's performance.

"It is difficult to perform an evaluation of another superintendent's work without some prejudice, usually positive. However, if CGCS is to be a realistic measure of one's performance and potential as a golf course superintendent, then past and present job quality must be recognized as a weighing factor," Scott says.

Education Committee Chairman Hearn is aware the new

certification program is going to need some tinkering with and he insists his committee is open to suggestions.

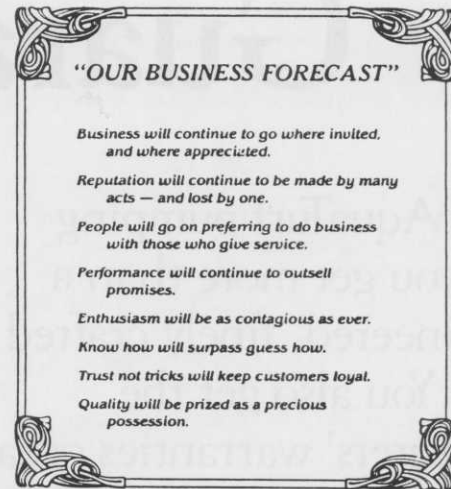
"We've gone ahead with what we've felt comfortable with but we're willing to make changes," he says. "We were involved with four or five drafts before we came up with the final draft and we've already had changes in the final draft. My suspicion is that there will be some more changes."

Even so Hearn doesn't expect the issue of certification to be enthusiastically embraced by all superintendents.

"No matter what kind of a program we set up there is going to be some people who feel like they don't need it and there will be some people who don't," he says. "But I don't think we should exclude the others who want certification."

In a related footnote, a GCSAA sponsored survey shows that a majority of superintendents prefer the title golf course manager to golf course superintendent. One thing is clear — superintendents are very aware of an increasing need to be viewed as the professionals they are — from the agronomic methods they use to the titles they use. ■

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By **EDDIE SNIPES**
Selva Marina Country Club



Time Better Spent

Supervising people and running back and forth between the clubhouse, maintenance facility and golf pro shop can become a real headache. Satisfying questions with personal appearances can put excessive mileage on your truck and yourself in the course of a day. If your job is giving you the feeling that to be everywhere at once is the only way to get things done, then relax!

Two-way radios on the golf course are proving themselves as the ultimate time saver. Time spent running back to the maintenance building to get a project underway or some detail taken care of can be solved by the push of a radio mike. Although radio systems on the golf course can be very expensive, depending on size and number of portable units in the field, their value is more than paid for in a relatively short time.

Here are a few ways that radios can effectively be used in day to day golf course operation:

1. Save down time on equipment by letting service manager know what is wrong with a piece of equipment and where it is located.
2. Can monitor irrigation repairs more efficiently.

3. Improvement of overall security of club, golf, etc.
4. Faster and more accurate delegation of crew duties.
5. Able to be aware of total club operations for the day by listening to other departments.
6. Emergency situations — initiate calling of ambulance rescue team from field, etc.
7. Aid to stranded golfers with broken carts.

Two-way radios must be used as a time saving tool for your job and not as a play thing. Proper etiquette with your radios is a must. Be selective in giving out your portable radios and make sure your personnel know how to use them correctly. The amount of time that is saved by some form of radio system was the overwhelming *positive* response from superintendents that had two-way radios in North Florida.

Whether you are at a big resort course or a small private facility, look into radio communications for your operation needs. It will enable you to have time saved and time better spent. ■

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Electronic Communication

By: Todd Miller
Tequesta Country Club

The use of extensive electronic communication systems are rapidly increasing in popularity in golf course maintenance operations. These systems can vary from one way telephone activated beepers, to large UHF and VHF base stations linked with hand held portable radios and beepers.

The extensiveness of a system varies on the size, scope and terrain of a particular operation. Mariner Sands Country Club is an example of where an extensive communication system is essential. They have a 36 hole golf facility, where few holes are visible from one another, a large landscape maintenance operation, an in house security staff and a construction department. Supervision of an operation this expansive would be extremely difficult without electronic communication. Mariner Sand's system consists of two separate VHF base stations, one servicing golf and landscape maintenance and the other for security and construction departments. Hand held portables are carried by department heads and key personnel in each department. Each portable radio and base station is equipped with two frequencies allowing interdepartment communication without radio chatter from other departments or by pushing a switch, cross department communication is allowed.

Electronic communication can be an effective tool on most any golf course, regardless of size. A small 18 hole facility with many holes visible from one another may not need electronic communication for supervision's sake, but any club can use it for irrigation repair work, summoning a mechanic to repair broken equipment on the course and contacting the superintendent for instructions or for emergencies. The size of the communication system will vary by the size of the facility and what the club can afford. Modern VHF and UHF systems can vary in price from several hundred dollars for portables, to several thousand dollars for base stations, portables and beepers.

Radio technology has advanced tremendously in the last decade. The days of walkie talkies on citizen's band frequencies with voice distortion and constant interference by others are gone. Today's "portables" have excellent voice quality and work on UHF and VHF frequencies, which virtually eliminates interference from other radio users. Technology is also reducing the size of portables, there are sets on the market now roughly the

size of a cigarette pack with the same range and features of much larger hand held units. Most modern systems are available in both UHF and VHF. While some clubs in our area are using UHF systems, VHF is by far the most popular. Statistically UHF systems have superior range over VHF but UHF has difficulty working through pine trees.

Pine needles are approximately the same length as the UHF wave length and tend to absorb the signal. This generally makes UHF a poor choice in this part of Florida. Clubs in our area using VHF systems report an effective range of 2 to 4 miles, depending on weather.

The need and effectiveness of an electronic communication system is highly dependent on interpersonal or "face to face" communication. The more effective a manager is in giving instructions before a job begins reduces the need for radio communication during the operation. Radios can become a poor substitute for face to face communication. Radio messages are too easily misunderstood, not to mention that hand gestures, drawings and other visual aids cannot be used on radio.

A golf course superintendent is generally a very difficult person to get in touch with, either in person or on the telephone. When calling a superintendent you usually get the same message, "he's out on the golf course. I don't know when he will be back in," or possibly no answer at all. Other superintendents know why this occurs but most professional business people consider this lack of communication intolerable.

Radio communication systems are most assuredly something that is on the increase in the golf course market. In years to come many superintendents may look back and wonder how they ever managed without them. ■

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GOLF TURF NEWS

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Warm Season Grasses in the Fall

Fall weather usually means people put behind them the landscape maintenance tasks of spring and summer. But now is not the time to neglect turf care. When a grass goes dormant, the leaf tissue dies but the crown, root, rhizome, and stolon tissues are alive. The cells in these tissues have a reduced respiration rate and still require water and nutrients.

When a turfgrass is dormant it is easy to neglect it, but some care is needed if the turf is to survive the winter. A few suggestions that may aid turf are:

1) Dormant turf still requires water to prevent desiccation of the tissues. Periodic irrigation during prolonged dry periods will help prevent desiccation

injury.

2) Dormant turf does not withstand as much wear from traffic as does an actively growing grass. Thus, concentrated traffic will cause considerable injury on dormant turf. Of particular concern would be golf course tees, football fields, baseball fields, soccer fields, or any other heavy traffic site. The turf manager should try to spread traffic out—move tee markers, use several practice fields, do not concentrate football practice on one spot, etc.

Fall care can be the difference in mediocre and optimal performance of the turf the following spring. Don't neglect the turf during the fall period. ■

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Palm Beach Trade Winds

By: Mike Bailey Boca Green Country Club



I Hate Answering machines But ...

I hate answering machines. They are too impersonal. I refuse to talk into one of those boxes. I usually just hang up, unless I really have to leave a very important message. These are the typical comments by one who has not objectively evaluated answering machines, or one who has not reaped the benefits of such a device.

The fact is, whether we want to admit it or not, answering machines are a valuable tool for our industry. Two way communications begins by you picking up the telephone, however, no one being in the office can frustrate your callers very quickly. Our demand of responsibilities takes us out of the office more often than in. (This would also hold true for commercial salesmen who must call upon their clients.) If we are to still allow a receptive ear to begin this interaction, there are a few means of receiving calls. The ultimate, of course, is to have a secretary. Very few golf course maintenance budgets can justify this expense unless the person is connected via a switchboard to the other departments, or the maintenance department operates on a larger scale of 36 holes or more where the secretary would be involved with other office services. Another avenue to consider is an answering service. They can provide adequate service with a "personal touch," however you still have not reached the desired person and this service is more expensive than an answering machine.

Now let us begin to objectively evaluate the advantages of an answering machine. Most normal golf course operations generally have a phone with a bell or a wall phone somewhere in the shop. Hopefully a staff worker will pick up the phone or perhaps the mechanic is the designated operator. The drawbacks of this style are inefficiency of labor time and quite often a sense of unprofessionalism. The mechanic, busy working on a machine, is constantly being interrupted to answer the darn phone. (If you had to get up from underneath a machine with greasy hands to walk over and pick up the phone where usually they hang up before you get there, you too would answer the phone in a disgruntled attitude.) Or, how often have you had a worker pick up the phone and simply say, "Guf Curse." You then ask if Mr. John Q. Supt. is in and he says, "Nope." You then say "Can you take a message," he says, "Yea, wait a minute, I gotta go get a piece of paper," then when he finally gets back, the pen doesn't work or

the pencil broke. After giving a slow description and spelling each word letter by letter, the worker becomes busy and forgets to give your message to John Q. Supt., and the next time you see John at the chapter meeting he says, "No, I didn't know you called — I never got your message." Just a few sour instances like these quickly dictates an answering machine to be a must.

Let us evaluate the cost effectiveness of these so called "great devices." Just like everything else, one can purchase the most basic answering machines for around \$50 or let us examine the Rolls Royce of machines for around \$200 — a super deluxe with every feature to ever consider. After a review of the features, definitely buy the most elaborate, because yes, those features really pay for themselves. After complaints from our golf pro about not getting thru to me on the phone, I said, "I think you're right, I should purchase an answering machine like yours at home." The first comment he made was "don't get the cheapest, instead go get the fanciest one on the market." I thought, sure, that's easy for you to say, but the club will never go for it. To me, a box is a box — right? WRONG! After hearing the sales pitch, the following is a list of features that should be standard equipment:

1. COUNT INDICATOR (for the number of incoming calls)
2. LENGTH COUNTER, (determine the length of message)
3. RING ADJUSTMENT (picks up on first ring or more)
4. VOICE ACTIVATED (messages will be recorded until caller hangs up or the tape could be dictated as a message up to 30 minutes)
5. VOLUME ADJUSTMENT (ability to screen incoming calls)
6. REMOTE RECEIVED (a beeper activates your messages from a remote location)
7. REMOTE MESSAGES (ability to change recorded message from a remote location)

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(continued from page 48)

After enjoying all these features, I would actually go buy the very best again. Even if it were my money. A \$200 expenditure can pay for itself so quickly, not to mention the added convenience to the employees in the shop. The saving in labor efficiency is so staggering, the recorder can actually pay for itself in just 16 weeks. Consider this: a mechanic at a pay rate of \$10.00/hr. consumes an average down time of 15 minutes a day answering the phone at a club expense of \$2.50/day or \$12.50/week. Within a matter of only 16 weeks, consider the recorder paid off. In my situation, in regards to management of project common grounds, homeowners, members, developer, golf course, and not to mention, The Green Sheet and other association work, I can spend over an hour a day on the phone or in other words, a labor cost of \$50/week. In just one month, the machine pays for itself.

In country club communities, where members tend to call quite often because of common grounds maintenance, the recorder becomes a valuable buffer. The need of spending ten or twenty minutes talking about a problem that could probably be resolved by your laborers in less than that time, the recorder can receive the valuable message needed to cure that person's complaint, whereby you can spend your management time more valuably.

The incoming recording tape messages can be kept on file for verification of complaints and your work completed to resolve those complaints.

Now that we have analyzed the benefits of a recorder there is one last topic to analyze — the negative attitude of your incoming callers' distaste for recorders and one's general tendency to just hang up. There are a few psychological factors to combat. To initiate an interaction on a one way avenue, you and the recorder must catch your incoming caller off guard — by asking them a question such as "Hello, are you trying to call the golf course maintenance department?" The clincher here is for you to ask a question so the caller realizes what department they have called. All too often wrong numbers are dialed, so by you declaring who you represent, all incorrect incoming callers should then hang up. I receive many wrong numbers wanting either the construction or sales department, pro shop, club house and whatever else. My message starts off by asking this question. I then go on to say, "I am Mike Bailey, the golf course superintendent." By stating my name and job title I have clarified myself to incoming callers. Here again the caller realizes they have placed a correct call.

I then ask the caller to state the nature of their business and say that I will return their call. This allows me to understand specifically their needs so when I return their call, hopefully the situation has already been addressed. Nothing can be more satisfying than to call a person back, especially when that person generally tends to stereotype answering machines as being an inconvenience and to give the message, "I have already resolved the problem thanks to your advising me via my answering machine." ■



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The Ninth Annual Crowfoot Open

The 1985 Crowfoot Open weekend took place Sunday, August 4th and Monday, August 5th at the Indigo Lakes Resort at Daytona Beach, Florida. Bob Williams, C.G.C.S. was the host Superintendent.

A lively and provocative seminar on Florida's new "Right to Know" law was presented by Mr. Whit Collins, consultant, and Mr. John Creech, attorney. The seminar was held Sunday morning from 8:00 a.m. til 12:00 p.m. Those attending will receive CEU credits. Sunday afternoon saw many players taking advantage of a beautiful day to get in a practice round for the upcoming tournament.

On Sunday evening, superintendents, sponsors, wives, and guests gathered at the conference center for a delicious buffet dinner and socialized and danced to the sounds of the Wilcox Connection.

115 players teed it up on Monday, August 5th to compete for individual and team honors. After battling rains all week with only Sunday's non-rain day reprieve, Bob Williams and his staff had the course in fine shape for the

event. Central Florida's Buddy Blandford won low gross with a sizzling 68. Gary Smithers from the Suncoast Chapter took 2nd place with a 71, and South Florida's David Oliver was 3rd with a 76. Buddy's 68 also led a sweep of the team low gross and low net honors. The low gross team was Buddy Blandford, Ed Burns, Joe Ondo, and Rick Walker. The low net team was made up of Buddy Blandford, David Johnston, Ed Burns, and Dick Hahne.

Winners of the special events were: Putting Contest - Fred Dickson; Long Drive - Buddy Blandford; Closest to the pin# - David Johnston, #8 - Crash Hall, #13 - Bernie Smith, and #16 - Buddy Blandford.

The Crowfoot Committee: Larry Kamphaus, Chairman; Vilma Kamphaus, Secretary; Jim Ellison, Joel Jackson, Joe Ondo, Bob Williams, and Steve Wright would like to thank all the Sponsors who made this event possible, and we extend a special thanks to the volunteers who assisted in operating the event.

Kissimmee Real Crowfoot Winner

DAYTONA BEACH

Palm Beach County has the most golf courses — and golf course superintendents — in Florida and it's probably the state's wealthiest county per capita ... but for 1985, Florida's superintendents will have to consider the town of Kissimmee in Osceola County as the golf capital of the state.

And after a pair of Kissimmee supers lugged all their prizes from the 1985 Crowfoot Open at Indigo Lakes Resort back to Osceola County, its rank in per capita wealth probably jumped up a few notches.

Between them, Buddy Blandford of Buenaventura Lakes CC and David Johnston of Crystal Brook GC reeled in a pair of watches, two color televisions, a submersible pump, a lawnmower and a 35 mm camera.

And all they did to win that hardware was take low gross, low net, longest drive, two closest-to-the-pin prizes and lead the Central Florida Chapter to the team title.

It was a massacre. The rest of the field got bushwhacked.

Blandford, a large, friendly athlete headed to the National Long Drive contest at Firestone CC in Akron, Ohio right before the NEC World Series of Golf, almost took a grand slam.

He won long drive with a belt of "about 295," put his ball within two feet of the cup on number 16 and won the tournament over the challenging 7117-yard course with a solid 68. His net 65 would have given him those honors as well, if Johnston, a 27-handicapper, hadn't shot 89-62.

Johnston also was closest to the pin on number 5.

"I had a good time," Blandford said. "The Crowfoot was the first big tournament win for the 10-year veteran superintendent who has been playing golf "since I was 14."

Low Gross: Buddy Blandford 68, Gary Smither 71, Dave Oliver 76.

Low Net: Dave Johnston 89-27-62; Ed Burns 75-9-66; Paul Crawford 92-24-68.

South Florida: Bill Entwistle, Sr. 82-10-72; Fred Klauk 77-3-74; Dave Oliver 76-2-74; Max Brown 88-11-77; Bill Entwistle, Jr. 86-9-77.

Palm Beach: Paul Crawford 92-24-68; Doug Jorgensen 89-16-73; Mike Henderson 77-4-73; Stan Clark 89-14-75; Peter Brooks 83-8-75; David Court 83-6-77; Dick Lemmel 90-12-78; Steve Pearson 88-10-78; Glen Klauk 85-5-80.

West Coast: Dan Alywin 77-2-75; Don Delaney 87-10-77; Reed LeFebvre 90-12-78; Dan Myers 88-2-86.

Sun Coast: Gary Smither 71-3-68; Randy Vaughn 83-7-76; Bob Shaffer 85-8-77.

Treasure Coast: Kevin Downing 81-9-72; Tom Burrows 83-10-73; Newton Kraages 85-18-77; Tim Heirs 87-8-79; Scott Bell 100-21-79; Joe Snook 116-36-80.

North Florida: Bob Houser 87-18-69; Tom Prescott 81-6-75; Tom Cowan 12-76; Ron Hill 80-3-77; Crash Hall 86-9-77; Gary Ellison 89-12-77; Don Kooyer 99-22-77; Dick Johnson 91-12-79; John Hayden 97-18-79; Eddie Snipes 110-30-80.

Everglades: David Noote 87-14-73; Robert Shevin 89-15-74; Jack Faulk 80-5-75; Bob Sanderson 80; Ben Drolet 90-10-80; Robert Bittner 105-19-86; Rick Cook 105-13-92.

Central Florida: David Johnston 89-27-62; Buddy Blandford 68-3-65; Ed Burns 75-6-66; Dick Hahne 81-11-70; Len Mergenov 87-16-71; Karn Anken 80-9-71; Pat Partlow 77-5-72; Ted Daum 84-10-74; Charles Blankenship 90-16-74; Rick Walker 80-6-74; Jim Ellison 81-6-75; Howard Anderson 82-16-76; Ron Andrews 95-19-76; Fred Dickson 88-12-76; Joe Ondo 80-2-78; Joel Jackson 97-18-79; Gary Morgan 98-18-80; Steve Wright 90-10-80; Matt Shook 112-32-80; Sid Salomon 87-6-81; Dennis Parker 92-9-83; Bill Watson 104-18-86; John Yancey 95-8-97; Larry Kamphaus 116-28-88.

Ridge: Bob Ellis 84-10-74.

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