

(cont. from page 60)

Contributing to this attitude is the naked truth that superintendents are more often the victims of unethical business practices than the perpetrators. It is currently believed by many that 80% or more of the superintendents who have been fired in the last few years have been fired for "political" reasons — that catch-all phrase for someone terminated for reasons other than his ability to maintain a satisfactory golf course. It seems that superintendents are treated less fairly than the \$5 an hour laborers who work under them.

So what is the solution?

I suggest that the only way to affect change is by setting an example. As Albert Schweitzer put it many years ago, "Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing".

Our Association has made great strides in the last few years emphasizing the professionalism of the golf course superintendent. I think it is time to emphasize the integrity of the superintendent.

To start with, we need to revise our present Code of Ethics to eliminate any and all gray areas.

Second, we need to educate and emphasize the importance of adhering to the Code to our membership; keep hammering it home at chapter meetings and frequent publication.

Third, we should implement a stronger system of review and enforcement of violations.

Finally, screen applicants more closely; make membership mean more than having a check that doesn't bounce. Perhaps new members should be made to publicly pledge to adhere to the Code at chapter meetings.

If we do these things and develop a reputation as a highly principled Association, *then* we may begin to see changes in the ways we are dealt with by club officials. It can only help our Association. Many clubs view our Association as a protective society, almost like a union, whose sole purpose is to selfishly serve the needs of superintendents. In how many recent job changes have clubs requested applicants who were not actively involved in Superintendent Associations? If this is a trend, then we must reverse it. Club officials need to perceive us as dedicated to serving the best interests of our clubs and the golf industry.

Club officials do have valid fears for utilizing the "Hand over your keys — clean out your desk — you're fired" method of termination. They have one hell of an investment to protect, which overrides any concern for ethical hiring practices. Though few and far between, we have all heard stories of the "lameduck" superintendent who robbed the place blind or damaged the course upon hearing of his impending termination, or the distraught superintendent who leaves immediately, before the club has made arrangements for a qualified replacement.

Addressing these concerns and allaying these fears will be very difficult task, but one we should attack head on if we

are to affect change. Again, the reputation and integrity of our Association may be the most important factor. If a club has employed a member of our Association, they should feel secure that their superintendent will continue to do his job conscientiously everyday he is on the job, even if he is to be terminated. It only makes sense; it is in his best interest while trying to secure a new job. They should feel secure that they will get proper and reasonable notice if the superintendent decides to leave them. They should know that if they hire a member of our Association, his personal and professional integrity has been judged by his peers; it is to everyone's advantage to eliminate the crooks in our business.

In other words, the club has to see an advantage in operating this way, as well as a disadvantage in operating the other way. I do not think a club would like to develop a reputation which would discourage most of the qualified superintendents from considering employment with them.

Many of you reading this article may feel that some of these points should be handled through legal contracts drawn up between the individual superintendent and his club, I agree. However, few superintendents presently have a contract. Awareness is the first step in facilitating change, and I feel that the discussion and publication of guidelines concerning hiring and firing practices, termination notice, severance pay, and other business practices will help bring these changes about.

I would like to see the day when the first question a greens committee asks a prospective superintendent is, "Are you a member of the Florida GCSA?". ■



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# Scotts Debuts First Turf Growth Regulators for Quality, Hybrid Bermudagrass Fairway Turf

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — In a historical breakthrough, The O.M. Scott & Sons Company has registered two turf growth regulator (TGR) products for quality turf. The new products, ProTurf® Turf Growth Regulator Plus Fertilizer for Loam and Clay Soils and Turf Growth Regulator Plus Fertilizer for Sandy Soils, are formulated for use on well-maintained, established hybrid bermudagrass fairways and St. Augustinegrass to reduce mowings and improve turfgrass quality.

“These products slow the growth of the turf for up to 8 weeks and promote prolonged, enhanced greening for up to 12 weeks, through an exciting, new technology developed by Scotts,” said Dr. Milt Kageyama, manager of Scotts chemical product research and development.

Dr. Larry Widell, project leader of Scotts TGR research and development, explained the unique advantages these new ProTurf products offer for hybrid bermudagrass fairways.

“They reduce frequency by up to 2/3 for up to an 8-week period; they reduce the potential for scalping hybrid bermudagrass fairway turf; and they deliver better ball playability due to increased density and tighter-knit turf<sup>1</sup>.

“Another advantage is that if Scotts® Turf Growth Regu-

lator Plus Fertilizer products are applied to hybrid bermudagrass at the height of the growing season, up to 75 percent fewer clippings will be cut and left on the fairways after mowing, compared to fertilizer-only program<sup>2</sup>.”

Suggested application time is from early June to mid-August. One repeat application can be made after the effects of the first application have dissipated to help control growth throughout the period of greatest growth.

According to James T. Fetter, senior marketing manager for ProTurf, these new products will be available in limited markets this year, and expanded more broadly throughout the South in the spring of 1987.

## NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT

Before Scotts introduced these products, TGRs had been available for use only on low-quality or hard-to-mow turf areas like roadsides, parks, highway median strips, steep slopes along roads or for *Poa Annua* seedhead control.

These original TGR products allowed for some labor/time/fuel savings, since they did reduce mowing frequency. But none of them were recommended for growth regulation of fine quality turf because they actually stopped growth for a period of time.

When these products were used, the turf looked satisfactory the first few weeks, but as the blades began to age and turn brown, the turf turned an unacceptable color because no new growth had been generated to replace the older leaves. Another problem was that when the TGR wore off, the turf tended to go through a period of surge growth.

The Scotts TGR products address each of these problems. First, because they contain ProTurf Fairway Fertilizer plus a unique active ingredient, the turf continues to grow but at a greatly reduced rate, resulting in a darker green, more dense turf. Once the growth regulator wears off, there is little tendency for turf surge growth — just a gradual increase in growth at a normal rate.

## FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

The development of new TGR products is just in its beginning stages. Scotts new technology research is presently identifying other potential uses of TGR formulations, such as a combination preemergent herbicide and fertilizer with TGR, for use on golf courses and other highly maintained areas throughout the United States. ■

<sup>1</sup> Results may vary according to weather conditions, soil types, grass varieties and turf management practices.

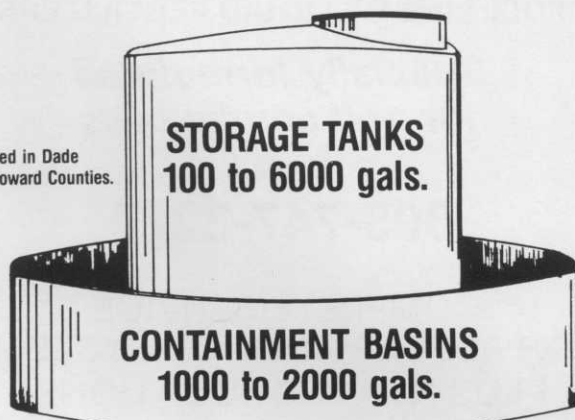
<sup>2</sup> Slightly different results will occur when TGR product is used on St. Augustinegrass turf.

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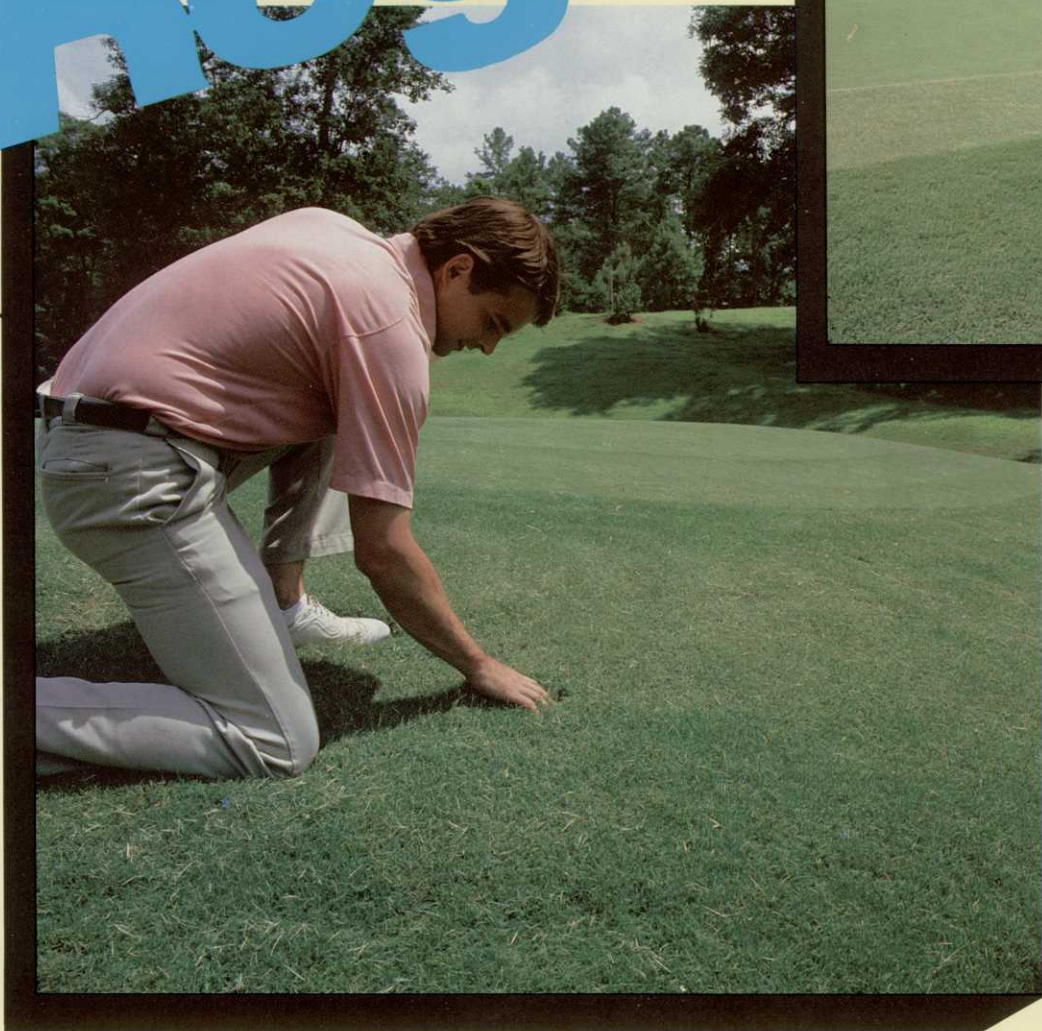
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# Guideline for Improved Personal Performance

For many years now I have been asked such questions as, "What is the secret to managerial success?" or, "What is your advice to enable me to do my job better?" My answers have been pretty much the same throughout this period, because I think that sticking to some simple basic principles makes good sense. I call these my "guidelines for improved personal performance," and I'd like to share them with you.

1. *The first is to suggest that you really take the time to understand exactly what your job is and how your performance is going to be measured.*

Now that may seem pretty basic. But, you'd be amazed if you'd go around, and talk to people, and I say, "What are you supposed to do?" and the person won't respond for a little while, and then they'll say, "You know, I'm not really sure about all the things I'm supposed to do." Well, I'll submit to you that if you are not really sure what your job is, you really ought to take the steps to find out. And, if your boss can't tell you and his boss can't tell you, somebody should. It is extremely important in business that we know what we are supposed to do and what's expected of us. How in the world can we be expected to do a good job if that doesn't exist?

I used to tell a story in some talks that I gave years ago that was told to me by a management consultant about this particular concept. He told it in a rather humorous way about how he had been called to consult at a particular company. The president of the company had five different division heads and said, "You know, while most of my divisions are going pretty good, I've got this one...the guy just doesn't seem to understand. When I want him to go right, he goes left. When I want him to go up, he goes down. When I want him to stand, he sits. When I want him to sit, he stands. I think the guy's got an IQ of 70. Unbelievable. Maybe you can help him."

The consultant asked the president, "What is the guy supposed to do?" And the president replied, "Well, hell, he's supposed to do his job. I've got it all down. I keep it right here in my desk. I've got ten things I want him to do and he doesn't even seem to know how to do any of them."

The consultant said, "Maybe if I could see that list it would help me to visit him and figure out what's wrong." The president said, "Here, you can have it."

So he gave him the list, and the consultant went down to see this manager number five, and as the consultant described him, he seemed aggressive, hard working, energetic, intelligent.

But, he was confused. And the consultant asked him, "What's troubling you." and he replied, "I don't know; I guess it's my boss. I never seem to be able to do what he wants. I go right and he wants me to go left, etc. I'm really getting discouraged.

So, the consultant said, "You know, I was talking to your boss about that and he gave me a sheet of paper that had ten things down on it that he wanted you to do." The manager said, "Really? Have you got that piece of paper with you?" The consultant replied, "Oh, yes I do. It's right here in my pocket." The manager said, "You think I could see it?" And the consultant replied, "Well, now, I'm a man of great integrity and I couldn't do a thing like that." And the manager said, "Do you drink coffee?" And the consultant said, "Yes." And the manager said, "Well, perhaps if you just kind of left it here...I'll give you a dime for the cup of coffee if you'd go down the hall and get it. I've got a copy machine around the corner, so maybe I'll..."

So he did. The consultant went and got a cup of coffee, came back, and he thought, "The paper is kind of hot; it probably went through the copy machine."

About six months later, the president of the company called the consultant and said, "Look, I don't really have too big a budget, but if you could come back here and do for my other four managers what you did for number five, I'd be forever pleased. It's unbelievable what has happened. The guy goes right when I want him to go right, he goes left when I want him to go left. I think his IQ has gone up 150 percent. It's incredible! You're a genius!" The consultant replied to the president, "Well, sir, I'm happy to hear that you are happy but I've got a confession to make. Remember that piece of paper that you gave me that had those ten things down on it that you wanted him to do?" The president said, "Yes?" The consultant said, "Well, sir, I gave it to number five."

There was a long pause...and the president came back on the line and said, "I knew it, that son of a gun cheated!"

There is a real message here, because, in fact, I don't think any business can run very long unless people know what their job is and know what's expected of them. Many of you are both subordinates and bosses, and I think that in your role as a boss, it is incumbent upon you to make sure that, with the people that work for you, you have that kind

(cont. on page 65)

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of understanding. Beyond that, there should be clear communication as to how you are going to be evaluated. Otherwise, it's a big guessing game.

As a subordinate, you should ensure that your boss is doing that for you by showing him or her that this is how you are going to be able to deliver to the company the superior performance it desires. And I encourage each and every one of you to keep that in mind as you go about your jobs, whatever you are going, because without it, we are simply running around in the dark like ships passing in the night. Occasionally, we'll respond to each other very, very well, but otherwise we'll be playing a guessing game.

2. *The second thing that I would encourage each of you to do is to establish some specific performance goals and, more importantly, develop a work plan of some sort to achieve them.*

Do not try to do your jobs by playing it by ear or adlibbing it on a day-to-day basis. The problem with this approach is that you never have a reference point to gauge your progress, and I defy anybody, over a period of time, to measure how they are going without a good reference point.

A good work plan, and this is something that I am trying to encourage everyone throughout this company to use, whether it is a budget or a plan of action, or an evaluation technique or whatever it might be, is a fundamental management tool that I don't think we can do without. And, I would encourage each and every one of you to not only develop that work plan in conjunction with the goals

that you both want to achieve personally and with the performance of your job, but then learn to measure yourself effectively and efficiently on a continuing basis against it.

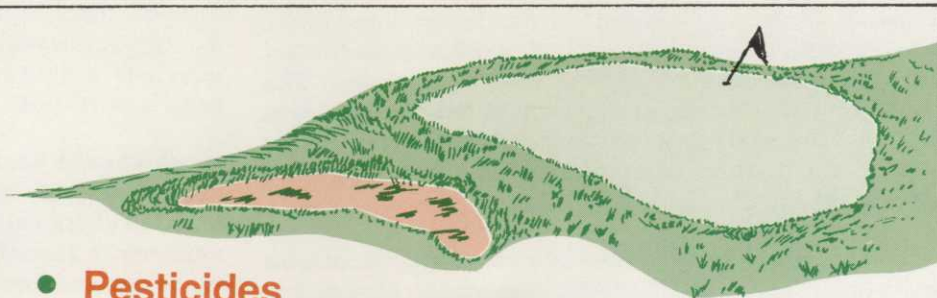
Those of you who achieve more senior management responsibilities will realize that increasingly, as time goes by, it's going to be incumbent upon you to measure yourself rather than depend upon someone else to measure you. And, I think that if you want to be an outstanding performer and take advantage of the opportunities that are truly going to be available for you - you need to acquire that skill.

3. *The third thing is a more practical bit of advice: that is, if you are not comfortable with them, or if you don't think you know too much about them, learn to know how to work with numbers.*

Numbers are the fundamental measuring tool of any business. We have all kinds of subjective things we try to measure ourselves with: how well our customers feel about us, and so forth and so on; but, fundamentally, all business is financially based and the way that you evaluate it financially is with numbers.

Numbers aren't a big scary thing but, some people, unfortunately, become frightened with them. Learn how to work with numbers. Learn how to make them work for you. Develop yourself in at least that particular skill so that you don't find yourself falling behind because of an

(cont. on page 66)



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inability or inhibition about dealing with numbers. Just a bit of practical advice that I really encourage you to follow.

**4. Be honest, always. You cannot assume that you will always be right.**

The fact is, that if the basis upon which you go about your day-to-day activities is one in which you are being honest with yourself, honest with your co-workers, and honest with your customers, you can make mistakes, you can be off on the wrong track or tangent, and you don't really have to worry too much about it because, I think, you will ultimately find your way back to the right place and the right direction, and you will not have sacrificed anything in the process.

I really feel that the most important characteristic that I have seen over the years in Mr. Turf is his extraordinary level of integrity. I have never met such a fair man in my entire life. And I honestly feel that, in large measure, honesty is characterized by our management team. In order to reinforce that, however, I would like to encourage each and every one of you to promulgate that feeling as you go about your jobs.

Besides the obvious business value of this approach, it should be important to you personally as well. You should not be in business to fool people. You should not be in business to be clever. You should not be trying to accomplish schemes. You should simply be a person who has a job to do and who is trying to go out and do it in the best way you can, and then let the results be evaluated as they may.

I think it is vitally, vitally important that honesty and integrity must be the foundation of all our work efforts. I do not want gamesmanship to appear in this company. The potential for that exists, particularly as the business gets larger. But, if we all focus on it and work on it as hard as we possibly can, it either won't exist, or it will be kept to an absolute minimum.

**5. Treat everyone with whom you come in contact with dignity and respect, be they fellow employees, customers, clients, suppliers, or your personal friends.**

The thing that hurts me the most is when, for one reason or another, we become aggravated by something and take out that aggravation on someone else, even if that person is the one that is the cause of it all, I would rather have them live with the guilt of not having treated me or us with dignity and respect, than us have to carry that burden. Sometimes you have to bite your tongue awfully hard, or grit your teeth, or dig your nails into the palm of your hand, but I submit to you that if you can maintain that posture with people with whom you come in contact, you will feel really superior for having done so, and you will have commanded a degree of respect that will carry you a long, long way in whatever difficulties you might be having.

I've often counseled people who have to dismiss someone from our employment. If you do it right, that per-

son will thank you for having done it. Because, if you have dealt with them, and treated them with dignity and respect, they will recognize that what you are trying to do is in their best interest.

I truly encourage you to keep dignity and respect for others, and dedication to respect and honesty uppermost in your mind as you go about your daily job and your daily life.

**6. Finally, I want to make sure that you take time from your working life for your personal life.**

This is a high-powered business; we move fast, we move hard. Some harder than others. This business will make demands upon you. For the most part, I think that the trait that characterizes our employee group and our management team is conscientiousness. I look for that almost more than any other thing in seeking to employ people. I want individuals who care, who want to work hard, who have a high standard, and want to live up to it.

The drawback to these traits is that frequently those individuals begin to make sacrifices that they shouldn't make for their jobs. I'm not suggesting that you go to work tomorrow and dog it, or take the day off, but I am suggesting that you not allow your work to become so totally consuming that you do not take the necessary time out for your personal life.

You should take time to diversify your interests, you should take time for others who are very close to you. Don't make the mistake of overlooking this, because you will really live to regret it. We really only go through this process once, and I would encourage you to try as much as you can to make it a balanced process, so that as you conclude it, you feel good about all of the elements that were a part of it.

Work should be, and can be a lot of fun. Your personal lives should be and can be a lot of fun, and the proper blend of all that is really a superior level of satisfaction and enjoyment. I would encourage you to work very hard to try to accomplish that.

There is a lot of other advice one might provide in this vein, but I think these six points provide the necessary practical, philosophical, and psychological basis for seeking career success. I hope they are of value to you and to those with whom you live and work.■

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## GET THE MOST OUT OF CONFERENCES

Conference and trade shows, such as GCSAA's International Turfgrass Conference and Show, offer an important opportunity for you to invest a small amount of time and money for a large return. Most professionals believe that occasional opportunities to educate themselves are central to their ability to provide continuing good service to their employers. This is especially applicable to golf course superintendents, whose responsibilities are expanding rapidly.

Learning opportunities come in several forms at a meeting such as GCSAA's. There is the chance to benefit from the knowledge of experts; the more concrete learning afforded by the chance to examine new equipment and products; and the benefit derived from associating with other superintendents.

Attending intensive education sessions can make conferees feel as if they're trying to drink from a fire hose--so much is coming so fast that it's difficult to absorb anything. The best way to overcome this problem is to plan ahead. Select your program of educational sessions carefully, considering the value that each topic has for your problems and situation.

Take plenty of notes--they help you keep organized--but be sure you're not so busy writing things down that you forget to listen. If conference proceedings or recordings of the sessions are available, take advantage of them.

Trade shows offer an opportunity to observe a wide variety of equipment and supplies in a relatively short

period of time. It's possible to "comparison shop" among many equipment manufacturers. Whether you have a specific need to fill or are "just looking," you will benefit from the time you spend on the exhibit hall floor.

If you own or can borrow a camera, consider taking one along to photograph items that you are interested in. Photographs of informative posters can save you time by keeping you from copying down information. Don't be hesitant to discuss your requirements with the sales representatives on the floor--they are there to inform you. They may also have descriptive brochures you can take home with you.

Meeting strangers at a conference need not be difficult. All you have to do is be willing to introduce yourself to those around you at a meeting or in an elevator, for example. Have a ready supply of small talk about the weather or sports ready to ease the first few minutes of conversation. There is a rapport that develops quickly in these kinds of encounters which can lead to valuable exchanges of information.

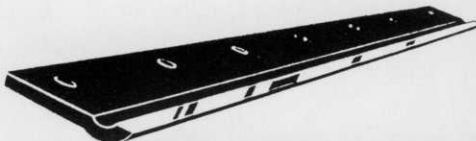
Look for the new attendee and pay special attention to him. If he feels lonely or isolated, chances are he won't return next year. If that happens, he loses and so do you.

Education, exhibits, exchanges with fellow conferees--they are three important aspects of attending a conference. Each is a valuable, and each is part of the investment you make of your time and money when you attend a conference.

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# Editorial

Professional. To engage in a profession. We, as golf course managers have come a long way during the 1980's. Budgets of \$500,000. + and salaries of \$60,000. + are very common. Florida Golf Courses have never been in better condition and communication between most golf course managers is excellent. The quality and depth of continuing education in Florida is the finest in the nation and the Florida GCSA is being looked at as the prototype by all the other states.

Sounds great doesn't it. All Florida Golf Course Managers can be proud of where we came from and where we are going. But — we cannot afford to rest on past accomplishments. We do have two serious problems in our state.

One is the alarming trend of golf course managers being hired by a club before the resident golf course manager is terminated. The other is golf course managers sending their resumes to clubs seeking the position of golf course manager. This is very disturbing and must be dealt with in a positive manner.

I believe ignorance of the services available from the Florida G.C.S.A. is what causes greens chairmen and/or owners to seek out new golf course managers before discussing dissatisfaction with their present manager. The Florida G.C.S.A. has available consulting services and job placement services for all golf courses in the state of Florida. We will do everything in our power to help you and your golf course stay in top condition. In return it will help us to remain the number one association in the U.S.

The practice of golf course managers sending their resumes to golf clubs seeking employment is inexcusable. Any manager using these tactics should be reported to our board of directors for appropriate action. We have available to our members, a job referral service through our local chapters and state office.

We need to heed our presidents message. We have come a long way in the 70's and 80's. We now need to prepare ourselves for the 90's. As greens chairmen, owners and golf course managers we can only accomplish this by cooperating and working together to keep Florida the golfing capital of the world. ■



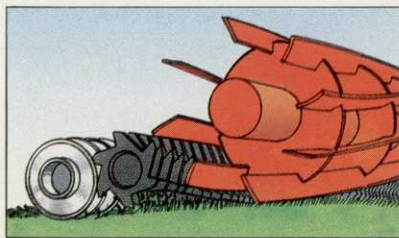


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