

By TERRY BUCHEN

Metsker's recollections weave a book helpful to all superintendents

Stan Metsker has accomplished what most superintendents only dream about. He has written a book featuring some of his favorite golf course stories, with an inside look at what it takes to make and maintain the playing surface for the game of golf.

Since he graduated from Colorado State University in 1958 with a degree in agriculture,

Metsker chronicles almost 40 years of accomplishments, views, philosophies, opinions, teamwork, poor weather, friendships, experience, club officials, committee meetings, club managers, and long work days. It is an entertaining and thought-provok-

ing book about what makes a golf course superintendent tick—and how the more things change, the more they stay the same.

The preface was joyfully written by Dennis D. Lyon, past GCSAA president, who was struck by a passage in the book

where Metsker said, "As a superintendent, you should not fall in love with your golf course. This is a business, not a marriage."

This sets the tone for the fun things to come. Lyon goes on to say that, "Metsker has done this industry a huge favor in writing

this book. He has helped to preserve our heritage in a very human way. Metsker's simple statements demonstrate his profound insight into himself and our profession."

As the chapters roll by, readers soon get the warm feeling they are sitting in Metsker's living room, listening to him talk and reminisce about everything a super goes through during his daily appointed rounds. Some interesting "Stanisms" include:

- "I started working as a college graduate for \$1.25 per hour. I was already married and we were expecting our first child."

- "I think that most superintendents know how to do a better job than they are allowed to do."

- "The struggle for power between pros, managers and superintendents continues to this day."

- "For many years we did not have enough well-qualified people entering our field; now we have too many."

- "The competition is fierce."

- "Pete Dye communicated with his hands, not with paper. Pete said I am as crazy as he is."

- "When a club is up, the superintendent must press for new equipment and improvements he needs for the golf course because when the club is down, he must survive."

- "To be successful in this business, a superintendent needs to surround himself with good people and listen to what they say."

- "A golf course is too big for anyone to be everywhere and see everything."

- "It pays to listen, even if it hurts a little."

- "If you want to survive, you have to avoid burnout."

- "All of us should have a life beyond our work... Do whatever it takes, but get a life."

While Metsker was the foreman at Cherry Hills Country Club near Denver, he helped prepare the 1960 U.S. Open at which Arnold Palmer made \$12,000 in winnings. The grounds maintenance budget at Cherry Hills was \$77,615 that year, with \$7,100 for expense items and \$10,500 for capital improvements.

The book also offers insight into the Pete Dye organization during construction of The Country Club of Colorado.

For the seasoned superintendent, one new to the business, or even a turf student, this is a fun and interesting read — as Stan the Man knows our business as well as anyone.

"On the Course" is available for \$10 through Metsker Press, 2301 Afton Way, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80909. Send an additional \$2 for shipping. The telephone number is 719-576-5491.

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