

Past GCSAA presidents speak out

By PETER BLAIS

ORLANDO, Fla. — This is the second installment of a story that first ran last month checking in on the whereabouts of past presidents of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and asking them two questions:

- What is the biggest change you've observed in the golf industry during your career?
- What single piece of advice would you give to incoming GCSAA President David Fearis?

Following are the responses of those who were available:

Theodore Woehrle — 1977 — Golf course superintendent, The Orchards Golf Club, Washington, Mich.

Biggest change: The chemicals, fertilizers and equipment have come a long way. The industry has supplied us with the latest and best methods of maintaining a golf course. The biggest change is the education and professionalism of the superintendent. Back when I graduated from Purdue in 1954, I was the first graduate of the turf school.

Advice for Dave: He's also a Purdue graduate. He should continue to expose the superintendent to the golfing public so we will eventually get recognized as the head of the leaders of the most important part of the golf course operation.

Richard Malpass — 1976 — Deceased.

Palmer Maples — 1975 — Retired. Living in Lawrenceville, Ga.

Biggest change: The certification program started in 1971 and the seminar program was just starting to grow when I became president in 1975. It has expanded to 80 to 100 courses now at the conference. It's a great means of fostering continuing education.

Advice for Dave: Don't get too big-headed. We came from the ground up. We've grown tremendously as a profession — the amount of information, be it agronomic, employee, environment, government, computers, technology. But our basic job is still to keep grass on the course for the golfer's enjoyment.

Charles Baskin — 1974 — Retired and living in Barnstable, Mass. Doing turfgrass consulting on golf courses and providing technical advice/expert testimony for attorneys.

Biggest change: The introduction of improved grasses that can withstand insects, disease, drought.

Advice for Dave: Step boldly. Don't be tentative. There are a

lot of challenges facing the profession. Act in counsel with the board of directors.

Clifford Wagoner — 1973 — Retired in 1985 from Del Rio CC in Modesto, Calif.

Biggest change: The biggest changes have been in the modernization of chemicals and equipment and the demand by

golfers for better courses. *Advice for Dave:* The association is heading in the right direction. Just keep it on course.

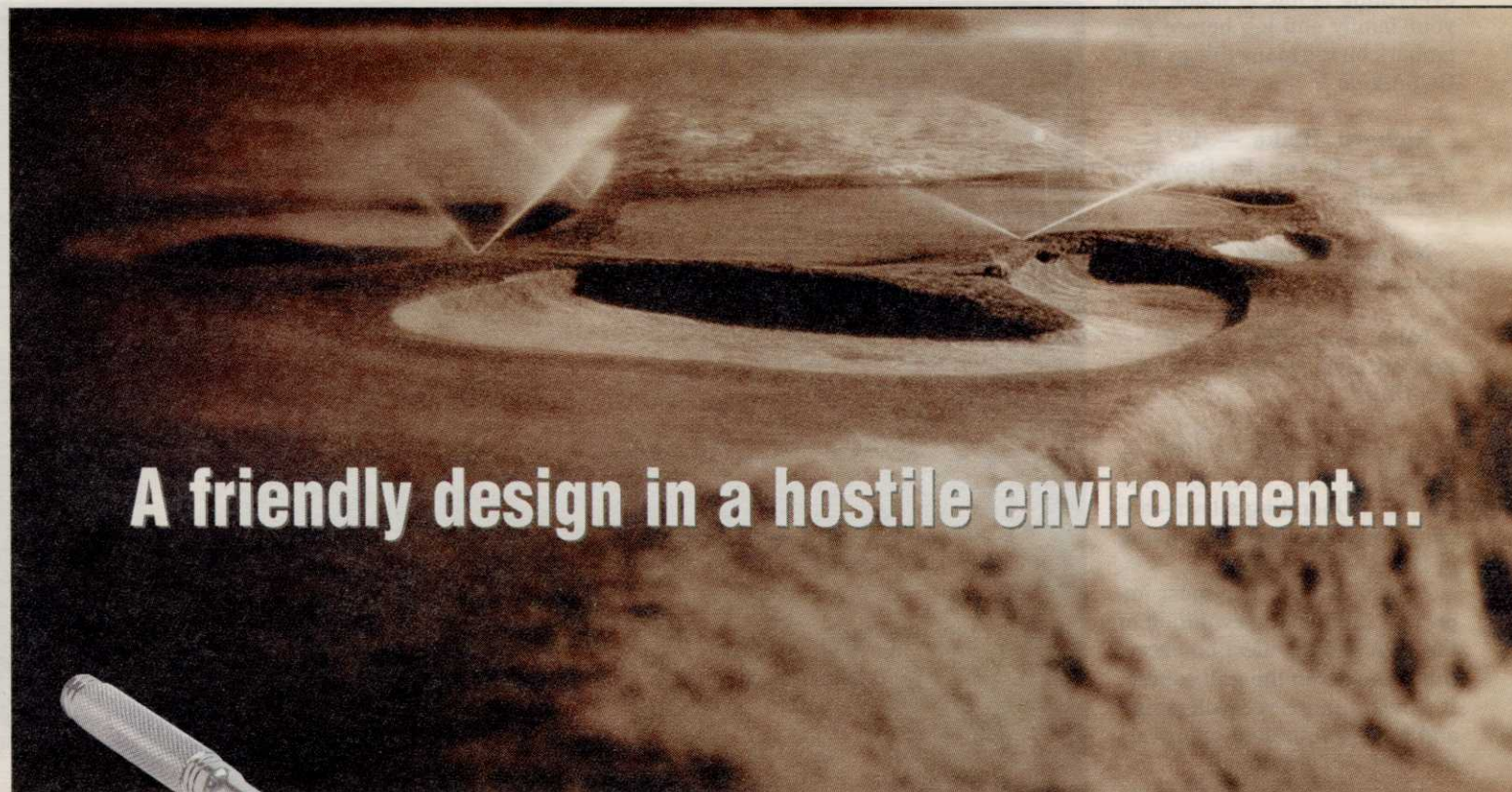
Robert Mitchell — 1972 — Retired. Living in Lewisburg, W.Va. and consulting under the business name RVM Enterprises.

Biggest change: Grasses, the height of cut and the adaptability

Continued on page 32



Bob Mitchell (left) and Palmer Maples.



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Past presidents

Continued from page 31

ity of turf are phenomenal today. Our research and grant work over the years has really paid off. They are fantastic the way they can hang in there in spite of bad weather, disease and close mowing. Trying to convert golf courses to the new grasses will be the big trick.

Advice for Dave. Make certain everything is fine at home with your family and job before you embark on too many things with GCSAA.

Richard Blake — 1971 — Retired. Living in Boynton Beach, Fla.

Norman Kramer — 1970 — Deceased.

John Spodnik — 1969 — Retired. Living in Westfield Center, Ohio.

James Brandt — 1968 — Retired in 1988 from Danville (Ill.) CC. Operating a lawn-care consulting business and living in Danville.

Biggest change. The most important thing is the evolution of the EPA and its effect on everything you do on the golf course. It's meant more recordkeeping and having to obtain approvals for what you are doing.

Advice for Dave. Do the best you can for all the members regardless of the type of club they are at. Some of the people at lesser clubs are not being served as well as those at higher-echelon clubs. Concentrate on bringing the lower-income groups up.

Walter Boysen — 1967 — Retired in 1970 from Sequoyah CC in Oakland, Calif. Living in San Ramon, Calif.



Walter Boysen

Biggest change. Equipment, seeds, fertilizers are all much better. We now have parks out there instead of golf courses, with all the flowers and waterfalls.

You never used to see that sort of thing. We just had plain golf courses back then. The association has changed markedly since I was president. There were 5,000 members back then, now there are something like 18,000. The job of president is more complicated than it used to be.

Advice for Dave. Emphasize the certification program. When you have golf courses that are multimillion-dollar facilities, you need to have someone in charge who knows what the score is. It's becoming more important that

the superintendent is certified. More money should also be spent on research.

Edward Roberts — 1966 — Retired from Kingsmill CC in Williamsburg, Va., in 1988. Living in Williamsburg.

Biggest change. The equipment is the biggest change, along with the design of the newer courses. The courses are a lot more challenging today.

Advice for Dave. The climate has changed such that I'm really not in a position to give advice.

L.R. Shields Jr. — 1965 — Deceased.

David Moote — 1964 — Retired. Living in Sarasota, Fla.

Roy Nelson — 1963 — Deceased.

Sherwood Moore — 1962 — Retired. Living in Brewster, Mass., and working with the Executive Service Corps.

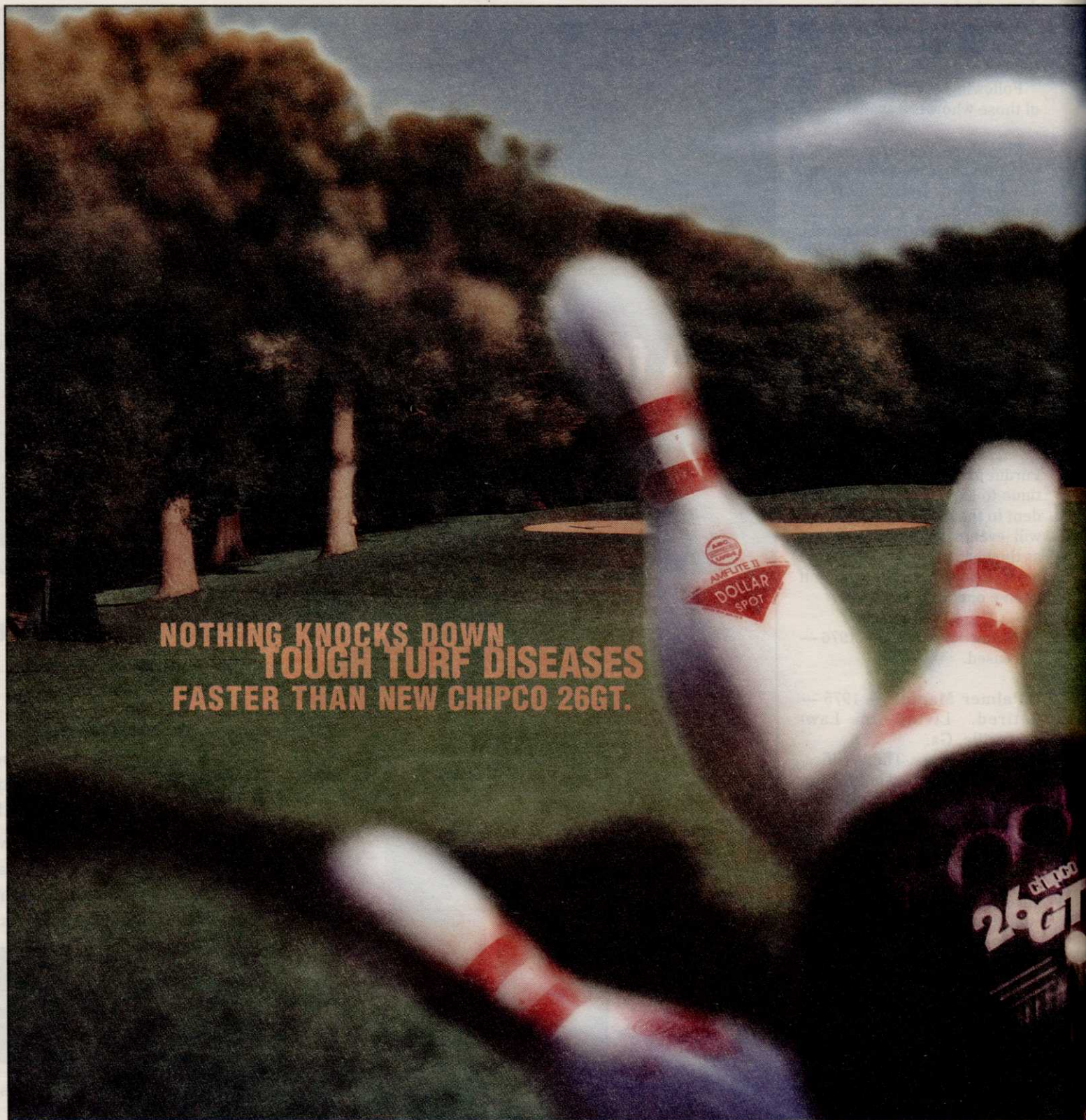


Sherwood Moore

Biggest change. Superintendents are more educated today. Superintendents

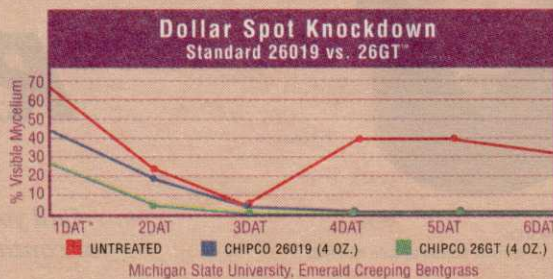
have so much more to work with in terms of equipment, but they have more environmental issues to contend with because of the chemicals they have to work with. And the budgets individual superintendents have to work with are much bigger. When I went to Winged Foot, my budget was \$125,000 and when I left it was \$600,000. Who knows what it is now.

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Witt elected GCSAA sec'y/treasurer

ORLANDO, Fla. — Longtime board member Tommy Witt of StillWaters Resort in Dadeville, Ala., was elected secretary-treasurer of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, joining President David Fearis and Vice President Scott Woodhead as officers of the national organization, which

held its elections during the Annual International Conference and Show here in early February.

Witt, a 20-year GCSAA member who has served on the GCSAA board of directors since 1994, bested Michael Wallace of Hop Meadow Country Club (CC) for the secretary-treasurer post,

meaning Witt will likely be elected president in 2001.

Fearis of Blue Hills CC in Kansas City, Mo. and Woodhead of Valley View Golf Club (GC) in Bozeman, Mont., ran unopposed.

Wallace, who has served on the GCSAA board since 1995, was renominated as a director from the floor. Also

elected directors were incumbent Samuel Snyder VII of Hercules CC in Nottingham, Pa., and new board member Mark Woodward of Dobson Ranch and Riverview golf courses in Mesa, Ariz.



Tommy Witt

In the race for the board of directors, Snyder and Woodward outpolled Joseph Emanuel of Hurst-

bourne CC in Lexington, Ky.; James Nicol of Hazeltine National GC in Chaska, Minn.; and Timothy O'Neill of the CC of Darien (Conn.).

Rounding out the 1999-2000 board of directors will be Immediate Past President George Renault of Eagles Creek CC in Naples, Fla.; Ken Mangum of Atlanta Athletic Club; and Jon Maddern of Elk Ridge GC in Gaylord, Mich.

Past presidents

Continued from previous page

Advice for Dave. Remain devoted to your work. You've got to like what you are doing to be a superintendent.

L.E. Lambert — 1961 — Deceased.

James Thomas — 1960 — Deceased.

Elmer Border — 1959 — Deceased.

Robert Williams — 1958 — Retired. Living in Illinois.

Biggest change. Construction costs for an 18-hole course have gone from perhaps \$50,000 in the early 1900s up to several million dollars today.

Advice for Dave. Appropriate your time involvement with due consideration for your family, your job at the club and responsibility to GCSAA.

Paul Weiss — 1957 — Deceased.

A. Ward Cornwell — 1956 — Deceased.

William Beresford — 1955 — Deceased.

Norman Johnson — 1954 — Deceased.

Leonard Strong — 1953 — Deceased.

Malcolm McLaren — 1952 — Deceased.

William Johnson — 1951 — Deceased.

Ray Gerber — 1950 — Deceased.

Carl Bretzlaff — 1949 — Deceased.

Chester Mendenhall — 1948 — Deceased.

Marshall Farnham — 1946-47 — Deceased.

Harold Stodola — 1941-45 — Deceased.

John Gray — 1940 — Deceased.

Frank Ermer — 1939 — Deceased.

Joseph Ryan — 1938 — Deceased.

John Quail — 1937 — Deceased.

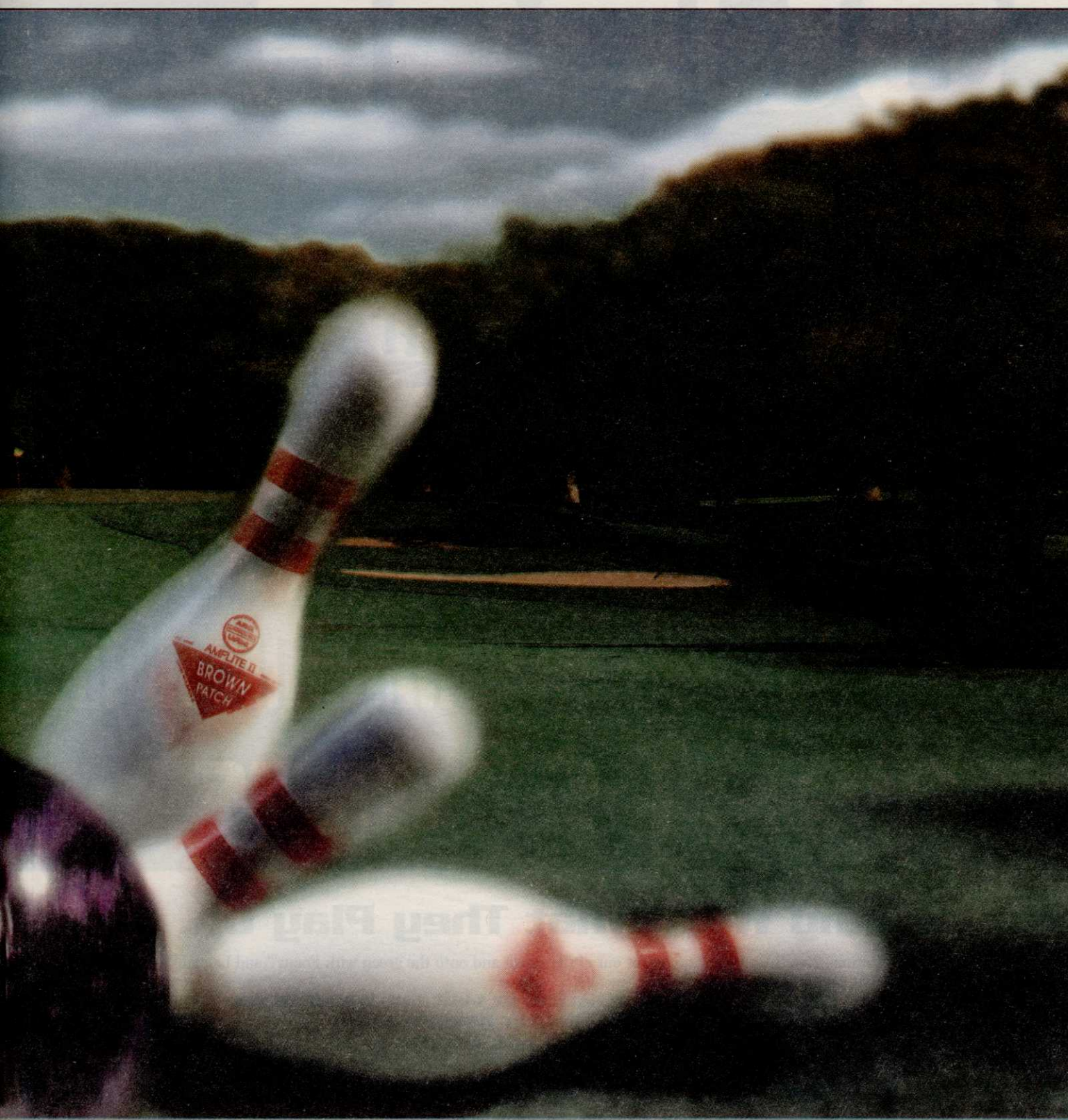
John Anderson — 1936 — Deceased.

Fred Burkhardt — 1935 — Deceased.

W.J. Sansom — 1934 — Deceased.

John MacGregor — 1933 — Deceased.

Colonel John Morley — 1926-1932 — Deceased.



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