

Record Attendance at Annual GSA Meeting

By **HERB GRAFFIS**

An attendance of approximately 1,200 golf course supts., club officials, supply and equipment salesmen, golf architects, college and turf experiment station authorities, park, lawn and military turf men, pros and managers made the 18th annual turf conference and show of the Greenkeeping Superintendents' Assn. at Hotel New Yorker, New York City, Feb. 10-14, by a considerable margin the largest business meeting ever held in golf. Pres. Marshall E. Farnham, supt., Philadelphia CC, was reelected as head of the organization after a most resultful administration.

Action on changing the name of the association to identify it in its expanded function as the outfit which includes men in all fields of turf culture and maintenance was deferred until the executive committee of the GSA meets in April to give full deliberation to the suggestions put forth.

Selection of site and dates for the next annual meeting and equipment and supply show of the GSA also were deferred in order that consideration may be given to proposals for holding the affair in the south to permit outdoor demonstration of equipment. For the first time the greenkeepers at this convention gave southern turf problems a prominent place on the program. Problems peculiar to southern California and the Pacific coast were not particularly considered at the convention due to coast clubs not sending their superintendents to the convention. In the majority of cases convention expense of the attending greenkeepers was paid by their clubs as a logical and highly profitable use of some of the course maintenance budget.

Because of the time of the convention conflicting with the period of greatest activity at southern resort courses there was not attendance from the south proportionate to that of the northern and central states, nevertheless the south was represented by men from some of its leading clubs.

Southern California greenkeepers, represented by Wm. H. Johnson, made a bid for the 1948 convention, but withdrew it after considering that the plans of the section's course supts. and club officials for establishing turf research work at the University of Southern California would need a few years for development to the extent that the section could draw with a promise of making substantial contributions to course maintenance work in territories where greenkeeper and university or state research tie-ups has been in operation for some years.

Attendance at the educational conference was almost 100%, a much higher percent than is usual at the business conventions club officials attend. Discussion was so lively following some addresses that it had to be halted lest it throw the time schedule far off.

Business of the exhibitors generally was good beyond expectations, even though ordering to get in line for early 1947 delivery has been in progress for some months. There was reflected in the exhibits a great deal of development directly due to war work.

Program Well Balanced

Program of the conference was exceptionally valuable in information for application at the clubs whose men attended. The program covered all high spots of technical and management angles and the purpose of the entire work in providing excellent turf for recreation or business use.

Presiding over the various sections of the conference were:

- General session—Marshall E. Farnham
- Southern grass—T. M. Baumgardner
- Northern grass—Prof. L. S. Dickinson
- Lawn Management—Dr. Gilbert H. Ahlgren
- Turf Improvement clinic—Charles Hal-lowell

An especially significant item of the program was the symposium on district organization which was devoted to discussing means of increasing attendance at various district meetings and arranging programs that would be practical, fresh and attractive. In this huddle were discussed methods of further coordinating work of the experiment stations, short courses and Green Section of the USGA. This feature of the program brought out the fact, unknown to most club members and many officials, that greenkeepers' Mondays off at least once a month during the growing season are generally devoted to meetings at various courses whose members belong to sectional greenkeepers' organizations and that many evening meetings during the non-growing season bring course superintendents together for educational meetings that have had tremendous effect in raising the standard of golf course maintenance.

Clubs Get Most Benefit

These meetings and the short courses have had far greater financial benefits to clubs than to greenkeepers personally as was pointed out by Herb Graffis, editor, GOLFDOM, in his talk on the future of greenkeeping. Graffis, whose remarks are printed in this issue, observed that present general scale of greenkeepers' salaries was failing to bring enough first-class young men into greenkeeping. This condition, unless recognized and corrected by club officials, would defeat the ambitions of the GSA, the Green Section and the short courses, Graffis warned, in commenting on the lag of greenkeepers' salary readjustments behind the wage increases of unionized labor. For this he said that

greenkeepers were not blameless inasmuch as they'd not made the same resultful study of their executive capacities and relations as they had of grass.

General plan of the program was that of balancing theory, tests and background of successful turf development and maintenance, as set forth by Green Section and experiment station authorities, with reports of the work and observations of eminently successful greenkeepers. Digests of the addresses appear in this and subsequent issues of GOLFDOM as space permits.

No indications of sensational improvements in grasses or turf management appeared in the papers presented. Seemingly most promising as an eventual development is use of zoysia on tees although slow growth of the grass hasn't permitted enough use to give the greenkeepers the answers they seek about it. Weed control progress was reported with considerable advance being made in applying 2, 4-D with a high degree of certainty.

Greenkeeper-Architect Tie-up

Possibly of greatest immediate general significance to golf was the general session in which the relations of golf architects and course superintendents were discussed. The demand for more golf courses is spotlighting the golf architect. Greenkeepers have seen from the reconstruction work they'd had to do the wisdom of having expert architectural service plan course design. The greenkeepers also have seen the expense of maintenance and reconstruction resulting from architecture that did not take into full consideration the greenkeeper's knowledge of local conditions.



Latest in course maintenance equipment was a focal point of interest at GSA show.

The close tie-up between architects and greenkeepers rooting from formation of the American Society of Golf Course Architects and the addresses and discussions at the GSA convention is certain to produce great benefits for golf. Especially promising as a result of this combination of forces is the prospect of improvement in the smaller courses. Small town course organizers have shied away from expert architect and greenkeeper advice either because of lack of acquaintance with the functions of the architect and greenkeeper or in the mistaken belief that such services would cost too much money. Experience of most of the better designed and conditioned small town clubs has demonstrated that green-fee revenue from visitors attracted to a course above the average makes competent architectural and green-keeping advice in construction a highly profitable investment.

The GSA decided at New York to make a salary survey among its members within a few months. A joint committee composed of representatives of the USGA Green Section, leading colleges, turf extension men and GSA representatives was appointed to determine a standard of qualifications of a greenkeeping supt. It will be interesting to club officials to compare the figures of the survey with the report on the necessary qualifications of a first class greenkeeper.

Executive committee of the GSA is taking action on a recommendation of Homer

C. Darling, pres., Greenkeepers' Club of New England that an educational motion picture on turf maintenance be sponsored by all greenkeeping organizations in the U. S. and Canada.

Stan Graves, Indianapolis municipal courses, was appointed to make a survey of venues for the 1947 GA tournament and submit recommendations.

Ed Casey, Baltusrol; Bruce Matthews, Green Ridge; and Stan Graves, Indianapolis continued as hold-over directors of the association.

Arrangements for holding the convention were excellently handled by the host associations, the New Jersey GSA with H. T. Isleib as pres., and Sherwood Moore as sec.; and the New York-Connecticut Turf Improvement Assn., whose pres. is Harold LeFurgy and sec., Tony Maslin.

GREENKEEPING SUPTS. ASSN. ELECTS 1947 OFFICIALS

Pres.—Marshall E. Farnham, Philadelphia CC, West Conshohocken, Pa.

V.P.—Chester Mendenhall, 6245 W. 80th St., Overland Park, Ks.

Sec.-Treas.—A. L. Brandon, P. O. Box 106, St. Charles, Ill.

— *New Directors* —
for 2 Year Terms

Emil Picha, Oak Ridge CC., Hopkins, Minn.

Malcolm E. McLaren, Oakwood club, Cleveland, O.

Ray Gerber, Glen Oak CC, Glen Ellyn, Ill.



Crowds at GSA exhibits during interludes between conference sessions made product investigation and shopping an important phase of the greenkeepers' meeting.

GSA ADDRESSES APPEAR IN THIS AND FUTURE ISSUES
