
Turfgrass Questions Answered by Grau

If you've got a question you want Dr. Fred V. Grau to help you answer in this department, please address it to Grau Q&A, Golfdom, 407 S. Dearborn, Chicago 5, Ill.

Business management represents a great opportunity for improvement and development in the supt's profession. Technical advancements have reached the point where the growing of grass can be accomplished with greater ease and less effort than at any time in turfgrass history. Better grasses, modern machinery, improved technics, effective chemicals and long-lasting fertilizers mean that the supt. can produce championship turf for everyday play with greater ease and assurance than ever before although still at the mercy of nature.

The Case for Business Management

The "greenkeeper" of yesteryear becomes today's supt. by learning and applying modern technics of business management. This means, first of all, organizing activities on the golf course in a business like manner. This includes an inventory of all physical assets, soil tests of every area, plans for alterations and improvement, replacement of needed equipment and periodic progress reports according to plan.

It is not my intention to attempt to explain how one can achieve proficiency in business management. This subject will be given consideration at the GCSA of America conference at Louisville, Ky., next February.

During a recent visit to Chicago we saw evidence of successful business management by supts. Examples of efficient planning and programming may be found in the well kept, attractive supt's offices at several courses. We visited only a few, so we can cite only a few.

There are many good business executives among supts. Those whom we mention here are representative of supts. of the future who are here today. No slight is intended to those who are not named.

Bob Williams, Beverly CC supt, showed us plans and records that tell why he has

gained such high ranking in his profession and in his club. He has earned and has been given added responsibilities involving maintenance of all physical facilities at the club. The net result has been regular salary increases, complete freedom to develop his program and full cooperation of all club employees. In addition to growing grass, he must understand plumbing, refrigeration, heating, painting, repairs, etc. In a large measure Bob has become "Supt. of Buildings and Grounds".

He is not the only one in the Chicago District to achieve this position. Ray Gerber at Glen Oaks, Gordon Brinkworth at Olympia Fields, Don Strand at Westmoreland — and we could name many others — also have raised the standards of the profession, with profit to themselves, by applying principles of business management.

In our capacity as an agronomic adviser, we are often called to a club where money is no object, where they want only the best and they can afford to pay for it. At other clubs there is a tight budget and every move must count. Recommendations must recognize existing conditions. The greater the budget limitations, the greater the necessity for sound business management. The sooner supts. develop this phase of their activities to the utmost, the sooner their profession will be recognized and given just compensation.

Q. We would like to have you help in selecting the most adequate grass or bent for our new fairways. Soil is ideal but after winter rains it gets a bit clayish and dries up quickly. Fairways have been irrigated and allowed to grow natural grasses, some with local river bent. Fairways are thin and poor. Irrigation expenses have to be kept low in summer when course is generally used. So far we have kept Bermudas out, but upon hearing that there are improved strains with fine leaves and better color in winter, we may want to try some, perhaps with dwarf clover. Would a soil analysis help? (Chile, S. A.)

A. Yes, a soil analysis will help. You may