

Wanted: Young Men to Train for Turf Management Positions

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IT is quite evident that progress in turfgrass management is definitely being slowed down by the scarcity of well-trained young men to take over the many jobs which the rapid development in all areas of this tremendous business has created. There is parallel need in many fields of turf management. In the future, golf will find itself increasingly in competition with these fields for a supply of trained talent that is pathetically inadequate in numbers to meet demand.

I have been asked to speak on training opportunities available in colleges and universities, to what extent these are being used, and what the prospects are for young men taking such training.

In an effort to fulfill this assignment, I sent questionnaires to a number of institutions which, to my knowledge, have taken an active interest in turfgrass, either from an educational or research standpoint, or both. I received replies from nineteen of these in the U. S. and one in Canada.*

The summary of information given by these schools is I believe, an almost complete record of the contribution by educational institutions in the training of young men for the turfgrass business during the last 10 years.

1. Of the 20 institutions reporting, 9 offer a 4-year curriculum in turfgrass management leading to a B. S. degree.

2. Only one institution at the present time offers a 2-year training course.

3. Only one institution offers a short course of more than 1-week duration. This is designed primarily as a refresher for individuals with some experience and attracts only a very few beginners.

4. During the past 10 years the institu-

tions offering a full 4-year course have graduated a total of 80 students. This is an average of approximately one student per institution per year. The institution offering a 2-year course has turned out 54 students during the same period.

5. The present enrollment in the 9 institutions offering a 4-year course is 72. It is quite apparent that enrollment is on the increase, although it is pitifully slow.

6. This is evident also in the enrollment at the institution offering a 2-year course. Present enrollment here is 22. It is obvious that the shorter time involved in completing the 2-year course at correspondingly lower cost, has been an important contributing factor to the greater popularity of this program.

7. The record is relatively much better in the case of students who are taking advanced training after completion of 4-year courses. A total of 12 institutions offer graduate training in turfgrass. During the past 10 years these institutions have graduated 31 students with advanced degrees. The present enrollment is 21.

It is evident that this record falls far short of meeting demand. Actually, about the only encouragement we get from it is that enrollments are increasing and a very large proportion of the students who successfully complete their training stay in turfgrass management work. The available records show that approximately 75% of the 2 and 4-year course graduates have jobs in this field. The figure is better than 90% for the advanced students.

The records covering the type of work in which graduates are engaged cover practically the entire range of activities in the turfgrass field.

The records also show that the proportion of individuals graduating from turf management courses who go into golf course work is relatively small. It probably does not constitute more than 10 to 15 percent. I think there are several good reasons for this. I would list competition as the major factor. Other phases of the turf-

*University of Arizona, University of California, University of California (LA), A & M College of Colorado, Florida State University, Georgia Agr. College, Purdue, Iowa State College, Kansas State College, Massachusetts State.

Michigan State University, Rutgers University, Cornell University, Oklahoma A & M College, Ontario Agr. College, Oregon State College, Pennsylvania State, Rhode Island State, Texas A & M College, Washington State College.

grass industry have been willing to offer higher financial inducements than have golf clubs. But I do not believe that this is due entirely to the fact that clubs could not meet this competition in many cases if they were willing to do so. While there are some outstanding exceptions, there is still a widespread failure to recognize that golf course management has become a very specialized and technical business. It requires men who not only have a good background of basic training but also have served an internship in practical course operation. Assistantships that are sufficiently attractive are few and far between.

Diversity of jobs held by turf graduates is a good indication of the opportunities in this field. When we add to this the fact that the demand for trained men to fill these places is greater than the supply, it is a bit difficult to account for low enrollments reported.

Training Publicity Needed

One reason for this may be that many young men planning to enter college do not know that such training opportunities exist. This can be corrected by the development of more adequate publicity on the possibilities and advantages of this field.

A second, and perhaps even more compelling reason may be that young men who are interested primarily in the practical side of turf management are not sold on the necessity of taking four years of college training to fit themselves for it. The very wide differences in the number of students in 4-year courses compared to those taking shorter courses is good evidence of this. While the 4-year training period is more desirable, it should be admitted, that it is possible to present a practical training program in a shorter period of time.

It is regrettable that institutions having the personnel and facilities to do this have been so slow in recognizing the need and in trying to do anything about it. I am happy to announce that Pennsylvania State University will activate such a training course next fall. Beginning in October, a special curriculum in turfgrass management will be offered at Penn State as a part of the winter course program. It will cover a period of 16 weeks in each of two years. Upon successful completion, students will receive an appropriate certificate of accomplishment. We believe that only by the adoption of some such program as this can the educational institutions meet their share of the responsibility in the field of training for turfgrass management.

Golf Catches Up With Carson City



Carson City, Nev., last of the state capitals without a golf course, corrected that situation this winter with the completion of a 9-hole municipal layout. Bob Baldock was the architect. When the course was officially opened, Gov. Charles Russell (1) and Carson City's mayor, Turner Houston, were among the first golfers to put it to a test.

Metairie Members Aid New Louisiana Turfgrass Assn.

The newly organized Louisiana Turfgrass Assn., well supplied with grass problems but short on cash, received help when W. Gordon Hayward, green chmn., Metairie CC, New Orleans, got club officials to approve asking the club's members for contributions for the new turfgrass group's work.

The solicitation letter pointed out that the association would benefit not only golf course but home lawn and park turf. Member response has been quick and good, says Metairie Supt. Lou G. Vickers.

Hayward conceived and promoted the plan of member participation as one way of reminding members how much research and other work course maintenance demands. Hayward also has been prime mover in Metairie's long-term plan for rebuilding its course without losing a day from plan. Supt. Vickers says the rebuilding is about 80 per cent completed.

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