

# What They Said at Louisville



## How Clubs Profit From Turfgrass Conferences

By Phillip E. Drachmann

Chairman of Green Committee, Evansville (Ind.) CC

As a green chmn, I am blessed with two wonderful committee members. One is a doctor, the other a certified public accountant. One is in charge of "T" markers and the other is in charge of ball washers — neither of them do a doggone thing, but they do it well and they don't bother me — and they don't bother our supt. Probably, that's the way it should be.

I think that all types of golf clubs profit from these conferences. They profit in many, many ways, but I am going to only mention five.

Profit No. 1 from any conference such as this is knowledge. It's the most valuable ingredient in turf work today.

Profit No. 2 is Research — the thing that keeps us moving and keeps us improving.

Profit No. 3 is Standards. Your golf course is either good or bad because of its Standards.

Profit No. 4 is Manpower and on a course there is no substitute for manpower.

Profit No. 5 is Good Will. This might be expressed with other words, too, such as respect, good fellowship, friendship, etc.

Knowledge is a true and honorable tool of your profession, and I say very emphatically in order to produce a beautiful course, you

*Here is a roundup of GCSA conference speeches covering general, training and administrative phases of course maintenance. The technical side of the conference will be covered in the April and other future issues of GOLFDOM.*

must be a professional; you can't survive as an amateur. The difference between a good and a poor golf course is knowledge. You can work your head off, you can drive your ground crew to exhaustion, but if you don't have the know-how, you lose.

I attended a turf conference at Purdue in 1950 and I got my eyes open for the first time. I met Grau, Daniels and Charlie Wilson. I asked Grau if he would come down and look our course over, and he said he couldn't, but he would send someone. One day in came Charlie. I asked him to grade our course. I said: "You look over a lot of courses. In your opinion if you had to list all the courses you have inspected this year, where would you place our course?" Charlie said, "Right on the bottom." Then Charlie asked me a question: "How much fertilizer do you use?" I said, "600 pounds." He said, "To the acre?" I said, "No, to the course."

Our course is an excellent one today. Relatively speaking, we spend no more money today on our course than we formerly did, our ground crew is no larger; if anything it is smaller. The amount of equipment we use has not been changed, although it has been improved. No, the change in our own course is due to one thing — knowledge — the knowledge that we gained at these conferences. Today our supt., Ernie Schneider, never misses one.

Research is the life blood of our business.

Research is the motivating power that keeps Noer, Musser and Ferguson frustrated half their lives, literally beating their heads against the ground to find a method or a means, or a grass to solve problems. The result of their work is yours and it is mine, given to us freely with their blessing. We can thank our turfgrass conference for bringing us the wonderful new things that research has produced.

Everything we do today is measured by standards. We definitely know the height standard for cutting the bent on a good putting green. We know the height of the cut for a good fairway. We know the quality standard to be looked for in a good "T." We know what standard to build into a satisfactory trap or bunker. Wherever people play golf today they find these high standards a very enjoyable part of every golf course, and the standards you accept at these meetings become the standards for the overall beautification of your city.

Turfgrass conferences produce manpower. By doing things better or by doing more things with the same manpower, you are producing additional manpower. The technological advances in turf maintenance, plus the great improvement in equipment have done two things: they have produced better golf courses at greatly reduced maintenance cost, and second, every job you do today, you do easier and faster and better. You now save many man hours weekly through your application of preventative maintenance. You have even learned the art of camouflage — a dye in your fungicide will get rid of a brown patch with one spraying; well, at least, it looks that way.

Turf conferences give us extra man hours by showing us the better methods and also give us better manpower. You can hire better people today because you can promise better jobs. A youngster that wants to follow turf work today can make a career of it. The men you hire today need not be common laborers. From these youngsters will come your next crop of supts. They will be smarter than you and rightly so, because they will take all the knowledge that you will give them, and will add theirs to it, and that is the way we want it.

Turfgrass conferences produce manpower, but a great deal more recognition must be given to the matter of proper compensations

for that manpower. The most important man around a course is the supt. The difference between a greenskeeper and a supt. should be at least \$3000. I know that through your association and your conferences you have made a great deal of progress on obtaining sufficient compensation, but remember please: *It Is No Crime To Ask For More Money, If You Think You Are Worth It.* You will be surprised how many times you will get it if you go after it, but don't forget at the same time that members of your ground crew have to live, eat and enjoy life too.

Profit No. 5 is goodwill. One of the greatest contributions to our clubs is the pleasant and friendly relationships that exist between supts. You meet at an annual conference, you meet several times a year at your regional and district meetings. You get to know each other socially, as well as professionally and you find you like each other. Well, what is better than that?

We have an opportunity at these conferences to meet and know personally top turf authorities. Before this conference is over we will all be calling them by their first names, and we will be reading and enjoying articles in turf and garden magazines for many years to come, and we can say: — "Why I met him in Louisville in 1957." Furthermore, if you don't agree with what he says, you can write him and tell him so, I bet you will get an answer, too. Goodwill — friendship — respect — they are created in these conferences and all clubs profit from these.

## Reports Show Members How Their Money Is Spent

By Robert Williams  
Supt., Beverly CC, Chicago

In tying in reports making with the responsibilities of a supt., I believe two factors are of primary importance. The first is why reports are considered necessary; and secondly, how the reports should be formulated and what they should contain.

Let us first look at the why. Why should a supt feel that he is obligated to make reports to his employers? The most obvious reason is that you are spending someone else's money. While we are mentioning money, let us add that today golf courses are spending anywhere from \$25,000 to \$100,000 or more for maintenance alone on an 18-hole course. So there should be no question as to why we should be responsible to report to our officials.

The next reason under why is "clarification". Through written reports we reduce the possibility of being misquoted and misunderstood. When we put it on paper we usually take pains to see that we say things so that they are most clearly understood. After we make a written report, it then becomes a ready reference that can be referred to

at any time to chart past progress, or for future planning. Mutual interest is another good reason why we should make reports. Through reports we can tell the story of course maintenance as it unfolds from day to day. Another why is evident in that through report-making a supt. elevates himself by becoming better aware of what he is doing and more alert to details involved. He is using a sound business approach to the management of a comparatively big business.

As for the how of reports, my program for reporting to my committee starts off with a most basic and yet most important item, our long term plans. Through this, club officials and supt. are able to interpret the type of maintenance the club wants. It clarifies the standard of maintenance desired by members and sets up a plan to achieve this standard. The form is very simple and is made up of three parts: the objective, the recommendations and progress.

Each area of the course is treated separately and all cover the same three points. As an example, let us consider the "tee program". The objective reads as follows: To produce tees of adequate size, level surfaces and with a tight turf that will withstand one-half inch mowing. The size of the tees are to be approximately 4,000 sq. ft. and are to be designed, where practical, to offer a variety of yardage settings.

Now that we have established the objective, let us look at the supt's recommendations: (1) Rebuild most of the tees to relevel and to increase size. (2) Use bent turf from old greens. (3) Investigate the use of Merriion bluegrass on tees. (4) Use maintenance technique similar to greens. (5) Use soil and seed mixture weekly for the repair of divots. Now we have the objective and the recommendation. All that is left is to record the annual progress in very brief form. This same procedure is followed for all areas as tees, greens, fairways, traps and landscape.

Each year our grounds committee goes over our long term plan and either approves or revises its contents. In this way we have a general continuity in our maintenance program and we do not find ourselves zig-zagging from year to year with trial and error practices. Our long term planning has been our answer also to the problem at some clubs where the frequent changing of committee members and chairmen tends to keep changing the general maintenance program.

With our long term plan established, we have started on the way to better administration and the next step comes quite easily. We set up an annual plan of operation. Under this plan we start out with each area again and list all items of maintenance for these areas and approximate dates. Using the tees again as an example, it would read something like this:

Fertilizing  
Organic Nitrogen — Nov.

Complete — May & Sept.  
Liquid — Summer  
Fungicide  
Mixture A. — Weekly, May through Aug.  
Insecticide

Etc. Etc. Etc.

This list continues, showing mainly all items of material and any items I wish to list as reminders, such as root pruning, etc.

After we set down all the items of maintenance for all areas, then we have a pretty close cut picture of just how we intend to operate and what materials will be required. By now most of the work relied upon to formulate the annual budget proposal is completed.

We have discussed three types of reports: long term plans; the annual plans; and the budget. It follows that we should next be concerned with periodic progress reports. Here I make up a report for our committee which keeps it and myself informed as to how our plans are progressing. Our experience, under our set of conditions, has proved that this report should be made on a weekly basis during most of the year and on a bi-weekly basis during slack times. A weekly progress report contains the weather conditions for the period, the labor situation, the major items of maintenance accomplished each day and a few notations from the supt. on points of interest or information. We keep a file of these reports and they become a daily diary that has proved to be most helpful for reference.

We must remember that it is difficult for club members to realize what goes into the maintenance of a course and through these reports they are acquainted with what goes on behind the scenes. They become aware of our problems and accomplishments. I know many supts. feel that such a report takes too much time to prepare. I should add that the time involved is about five minutes each day to jot down the day's work and then about 30 minutes once a week to formulate the report. The club office reproduces and mails the copies. For this small effort, the benefits are numerous.

In addition to the aforementioned reports, I make up several other types of reports for the grounds committee that might be grouped together as miscellaneous reports. They include such items as equipment inventory, conference proceedings, committee meeting summaries and others. Frequently, club officials ask for a report on some special situation.

## Progressive Education Leads to Self Improvement

By SHERWOOD A. MOORE  
Hollywood GC, Deal, N. J.

Just what is progressive education and why is it the supt's responsibility?

Among other things, progressive education means: Attendance at turf conferences; At-

endance at Short Courses; Joining both the GCSA and your local association; Attending Field Days; Subscribing to publications that pertain to your work; Field testing new materials; Supporting programs that bring recognition to your job.

Why should the above items be your responsibility? Because they help you to attain your main objective — self improvement, betterment of job and making yourself more of a professional man.

Some years ago our New Jersey Association received a letter from the Veterans Administration requesting, among other information, the qualifications of a course supt. In our answer, we stressed that a supt. should be associated with a turf management organization, should attend short courses and conferences to keep abreast of new developments in turf management, and should be a person who is anxious to apply what research has taught or given him.

I don't have much patience with fellows who say: "Why should I join the Association? What good can it do me? Why should I go to the turf conferences — there is nothing new." That really jars me! Even if these fellows didn't think there was anything new, it wouldn't hurt them to brush the cobwebs out of their minds and get thinking progressively. Anyway, there are plenty of old things well worth reviewing and learning for the first time.

Twenty years ago, when I first took a job as a supt. I could have written a book on turf management. But now, I wouldn't attempt it!

As the supt. assumes responsibilities that come with progressive education, he should impress upon his club officials that it is to their advantage to underwrite his expenses to schools, conferences and meetings. It is a small investment for the dividends received.

## Employee Wants Security, Recognition of Ability

By WARREN BIDWELL  
Seaview CC, Absecon, N. J.

A golf course working staff must have talents equal to the varied tasks which confront it from time to time. When some new phase of maintenance is encountered and a better understanding on the part of the staff is required, an on-the-job training plan may be necessary. In most cases, however, a new man is trained and integrated with older, reliable employees.

When new problems are under consideration, a supt. will be wise to entertain ideas from members of his staff. When practical thinking has been offered and proper recognition given, staff members have a feeling of belonging to and being a part of an organized team. We should make every effort to encourage employees to think as they work.



Presidential Escort - John Gray (l) and John MacGregor (r), former GCSA presidents, convoy Paul Weiss, newly elected head of the organization, to the podium.

Ability and attitude of staff member is considered his No. 1 asset; next in order is his attendance. Many supts. have learned that members of their staff who live within five miles of the club usually are most reliable men in attendance. Also, their nearness to the job makes them readily available for emergency use. Keeping good men and giving them job security through steady employment and offering them accepted benefits are of paramount importance in our business. Fortunately for the supt., the practice of seasonal hiring has been on the decline in the last 15 years.

In this day of many fringe benefits for industrial employees, what has happened in the golf business that enables us to successfully compete with industry in holding key staff members on a yearly rather than a seasonal basis? Some clubs pay a basic salary and offer a bonus at the end of the year which has been subscribed to by the membership on a voluntary basis and is, therefore, non-taxable. Other clubs cover their employees with the hospital services which are available at no or low cost. One Eastern club, with a rather broad outlook on employee relations, has put into effect an annual wage for maintenance employees. They are guaranteed a minimum salary, complete medical-surgical coverage, a

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## Superintendents' Banquet

Can you find yourself here? You're looking at a scene from the GCSA banquet, the climax of the Louisville show which came on the evening of Feb. 13th. During the proceedings, Pres. Paul Weiss served as toastmaster, Helen Lengfeld of the United Voluntary Services was the feature speaker and Ward Cornwell, outgoing GCSA pres., presented 25-year emblems to 13 supts. Cornwell also presented Joe and Herb Graffis, Golfdom's publisher and editor, a plaque in appreciation of their contributions to the supts' organization over the last 30 years. Others on the program included Col. Lee S. Read, who paid the amateur golfers' tribute to the GCSA and Harry Moffitt, pres. of PGA, who brought greetings from his organization. The Leo Feser award for the outstanding contribution to the GCSA Reporter was presented to Tom Dawson, Jr., Fenway GC, White Plains, N. Y.

two-weeks vacation with pay and a \$1500 life insurance policy. At Christmas time, a new high in morale is reached when this club gives a party in the main dining room with a dance orchestra and all the trimmings. At this time, a week's pay plus five dollars for each year of service is given. This is just one example of how a club recognizes the importance of its working staff.

## **Supt. Should Insist on Authority to Run His Dept.**

By **MARION MENDENHALL**  
Kenwood CC, Cincinnati, O.

Interference by the green chmn. members or other club employees can't be tolerated by the supt. in securing supplies because they are not in a position to know as well as he the technicalities of the chemicals and other materials that are needed.

For this privilege of absolute control, the supt. must become the purchasing agent for his department and handle the club's money as wisely as he would his own. When the supt. can show in black and white that he is getting the most for the club's dollar, his value is greatly enhanced.

To be a good purchasing agent the supt. must study budgets closely, but not buy quantity to the detriment of quality. As purchasing agent he must keep informed on all new products, current prices and availability of the materials he uses.

To secure best possible prices and quality of materials, the supt. must give all suppliers an equal chance to bid for his business. Written bids eliminate misunderstandings and also help to eliminate interference from members who may try to unload their products on him.

It is the supt.'s duty to keep on good working terms with the club's office. He should make a constant check to see that all gasoline tax refunds are recovered, watch for discounts and see that bills are paid in time to collect them. It is surprising how small discounts and tax refunds can add up to important money. Bills should be paid only after proper vouchers have been filled out by the supt. Thus the supt. has complete control of purchases for his dept. and it is his responsibility to see that all statements are correct before being paid.

Just a word on inventory. It should be held to a minimum except for hard-to-get items and emergency materials. Oftentimes we think that buying in quantities saves money, but does it? Long storage unnecessarily ties up large amounts of the club's working capital. If you figure this capital tied up at 5 per cent, cost of extra insurance and storage cost, you may find that quantity buying is not very economical.

Storage of materials often is haphazard. Chemicals, costing several dollars per lb., may be left on the floor in open containers

and all kinds of materials stacked together. This leads to costly waste to say nothing of possible damage to turf that may be caused by improper mixing of chemicals. All materials should be kept in properly labeled containers.

## **The Supt's Responsibility for Area Maintenance**

By **Ray Gerber**

Supt., Glen Oaks CC, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

To tell how maintenance of the course, clubhouse grounds, parking lot, practice range and new grounds construction is performed is too detailed for the time I have. Consequently, I will refer mostly to why these various areas are the responsibility of the supt.

The supt. is chosen principally because he meets qualifications of directors and the green chairman. It is his duty to maintain the course in a condition which meets requirements of the club's members. The maintenance program should be planned so certain jobs are performed on days and during hours when play is normally light.

Clubhouse grounds should be maintained in a condition which will give each member and guest a friendly, warm welcome as they drive through the entrance gate. Flowers should be of the type which can be planted around a home and in a location where they will be most attractive. Care of trees, shrubs, walks, and lawn furniture can't be emphasized too much. There should be a sufficient number of waste paper receptacles properly maintained and fire hydrants should be painted. It is very important to keep turfgrass around the clubhouse, pro shop and swimming pool in the finest condition.

Why is maintenance and planning of the clubhouse grounds placed in the hands of the supt.? Can you name any other employee around the club who is more qualified to handle these jobs? He usually is on the job seven days a week throughout the golfing season. He knows what kind of help to hire. He usually has in stock certain items necessary for maintenance. If not, he knows where to purchase them quickly. Furthermore, equipment used for the clubhouse grounds is stored in his equipment building and is serviced there. Equipment should be kept not only in good mechanical condition, but also should be maintained in a pleasant appearing condition; nothing looks worse than an old, beat-up piece of equipment around a beautiful clubhouse and grounds.

Walks should be kept well edged. The edges of the paths should also be neat in appearance. Hedges should be carefully trimmed. There is no point in having a nice bed of flowers and then leaving the edges untrimmed. Keep flower beds in condition so that they will be a spot of beauty for all to see.

Many other specific items could be men-

tioned. All are important, because all are part of our responsibility. The club house grounds is an area in which you can sell your talents not only to the men but to the ladies.

Maintenance of the parking lot usually comes under the supervision of the supt. However, there are certain clubs where the responsibility has been delegated to the clubhouse manager.

The parking lot should be kept in good condition and give a neat appearance, free of all kinds of debris. Cracks in black top or cement areas should be repaired so that unwarranted damage can be prevented. All parking lane strips should be kept in a clearly visible condition. Bumper rails should be kept painted or covered with some other suitable material if the type of rail requires it. With all his many jobs, why should maintenance of the parking lot come under supervision of the supt.? He simply is in position to supply the manpower and equipment necessary for work of this nature. Utilizing the existing ground crew is not only economical, but allows work on the parking lot when the lot is vacated.

Maintenance of the driving range or practice range, as it is sometimes called, is to the best of my knowledge, always under the supt's supervision. The practice tee usually receives the worst punishment of any tee on the course. At an active club there are several thousand balls driven during a day, and all types of clubs are used. It is almost impossible to grow turf under these conditions. But one must do his best since the practice tee is where players like to warm up before going out on the course. The practice tee is also the place where the pro gives most of his lessons.

• The practice pitch green should receive the same attention as any regular green with one exception — the height of cut — since the pitching green usually is not used for putting purposes.

Maintenance of the practice grounds falls in line with the regular maintenance program on the course. This includes watering, mowing, fertilizing, treatment for diseases and insects, raking and edging the traps, aerifying and filling divots on the grass. Consequently, it follows that such maintenance should come under the supt's supervision.

New grounds construction certainly should come under the supt's supervision or inspection. He is the one man who will have to live with the results of new construction. For this reason, no other person will have the interest, much less the knowledge, to supervise its maintenance.

The supt. should have access to all plans and specifications if he is to fulfill his responsibilities satisfactorily. If a job has been let out on contract, no part should be paid without his approval. This should be the understanding between club and contractor before the work is begun. Regardless of whether the work is to be executed under contract, or by the club's own employees, the supt. should

check plans thoroughly before presenting them to the green chairman for approval.

## Emphasizes "Why" of Training .. Rather Than the "How"

By ANDY BERTONI

Supt., Meadowbrook CC, Northville, Mich.

I am going to emphasize the Why, or the reason we should train new men, rather than the How, or the method of training new men.

Actually, there is no magic formula in training new men. Teach the what, the how, the when and the all important why of greenkeeping. You then can advance from the practical to the professional plane, depending upon the receptiveness of your protegee.

Let us throw the spotlight briefly on Bob Williams' method. In the past nine years, Bob has had five trainees. Three were Purdue graduates, one from Massachusetts State, and one had long practical experience in greenkeeping. All now are progressing in turf management. Bob employs these men for technical work such as spraying, fertilizing, surveying, and as administrative assistants. In this way they work closest to that part of the job that they will eventually be charged with as supts.

Other supts. follow much the same pattern. Many work with promising men of limited formal education. They should all be congratulated for their long range thinking. Yet, it seems to me that everyone is more concerned with the welfare and the shortage of supts. than are the supts. themselves. We simply must invite and encourage new volunteers in our profession. They must enhance and propagate it. They must start where we left off — not start where we began. Common arithmetic totals the average age of our group on the mellow side of life. We must have replacements.

We produce all types of grasses and yet we hesitate to nurture our own vocation. Do we hide our heads in our own sand traps? I say again if we don't look ahead, we shall certainly stay behind.

It becomes almost a duty to supply new supts. not only to replace the aged, deceased and retiring but to supply trained men for new courses. You are aware of the population growth. And you have heard of the added number of new courses. Where will supts. come from? Our GCSA scholarship and schools cannot produce them rapidly enough.

What happens if we do not train new men? Who will take over new courses, vacancies, etc.? Will it be the pro, whose days as a golfer and teacher are numbered and who calmly reflects that he can always fall back upon greenkeeping? I bear them less malice when I know how their loyalty is prioritized. They are far better than general mgrs. who know nothing of turf grass but reap financial rewards by the sweat of some one else's brow. Or the

## Bell Heads Architects



D. W. Gordon      Bell      Watson

William F. Bell of Pasadena, Calif. was elected pres. of the American Society of Golf Course Architects at its annual meeting at the Boca Raton Hotel and Club, Boca Raton, Fla. in February. Other officers elected were: Howard Watson, vp, Lachute, Quebec, Can.; David W. Gordon, secy-treas., Doylestown, Pa. Robert F. Lawrence of Indian Creek CC, Miami Beach, Fla., is retiring pres. of the architects' organization.

farmer — while a good soils man, he is anything but a course supt. in his appearance, dress, action, and position in social life. And let me alarm you further, will there appear a central figure who will take over X number of courses? He is the man who lays out plans, programs, and budgets, etc. for these courses which he visits and checks periodically. We know that equipment manufacturers have slated courses in turf work for their salesmen and personnel. These are mentioned more as a possibility than a probability. We do not question their legitimacy, but it must be impressed that we must produce true sons from true parents. Our self-taught, trained personnel are such.

All golf has advanced. Clubs, balls, bags, styles, swings, theories, turf, management and equipment all have moved forward. The pros and managers have kept pace and profited. It seems all have progressed except the supt. and his ability to supply greenkeeping artists. It's time we got in step.

You will find a trainee an excellent comrade to discuss and understand problems and burdens. It is surprising how much more one can see with another pair of eyes. You will find him capable of accepting responsibility and one who can fill in for any job. The amazing and grand paradox is that you will learn far more from him than he will learn from you. Your reward will come back many times over.

Now for some advice! Teach the social aspects as well as the practical. Prepare trainees with the proper outlook as regards prestige, appearance, gentlemanly qualities and the social graces.

## Another Set of Rules for Golf Cars

GOLFDOM receives numerous requests for "standard" regulations governing golf car ownership, operation and charges at clubs.

There are no "standard" regulations. Almost every club seems to have different regulations. Opinions as to whether private ownership of golf cars, ownership by the pro or club with rental to players, or leasing arrangement by pro or club, with the lessor providing maintenance, is the most generally satisfactory arrangement vary widely and according to many conditions. Not the least of these conditions concerning ownership and operation is that of being able to yell loud and tough.

Kinks are being eliminated in car construction and design. Maintenance and operating costs are being reduced. Frequently, though, the charges pros make for maintaining or renting cars leave a narrow margin.

Western Golf Assn., Golf, Ill., and Metropolitan New York Golf Assn., 40 E. 38th St., New York 16, have booklets containing compilations of golf car operating regulations and charges.

Golf cars are here to stay. Their use will increase, so you might as well consider the development calmly and for the good of all.

GOLFDOM'S observation is that any set of golf car rules is "subject to change without notice."

Among regulations that have come to our attention are those of Oak Hills CC, San Antonio, Tex. This club's rules for "scooters", as announced last fall, are:

1. Any member desiring to purchase a privately owned scooter and use it on Oak Hills CC course must first obtain permission of the board of governors and approval for his use of this scooter.
2. He must provide a place to keep the scooter at the club according to specifications set up by the club.
3. A charge of \$5.00 per month will be made for electricity, gas, etc.
4. A liability policy as specified by the club must be provided for any private scooter used on Oak Hills CC golf course.

We would also like to call your attention to the fact that as of Jan. 1, 1957, no more privately owned scooters will be allowed. The club will operate all scooters used on the course.