

# Idea file

## Plan now for your tree planting program

Thinking about adding some trees this year? According to Ray Keen, professor of ornamental horticulture at Kansas State University, superintendents should start immediately on the planning stage of the project.

A good program will plant trees of different ages. This effort should be a yearly ritual, as you eliminate old, diseased trees and replace them with new trees. Trees are always a good way to enforce doglegs and improve the overall architecture of the course.

Keen suggests that if there is frost in the ground in your part of the country, plant slow starters such as oaks as soon as possible. Such trees need a long time to generate roots.

## More than a spill? Check liquor losses

Does your club or beverage service gross more than \$80,000 annually? If so, you may be losing liquor sales in the long run without knowing it.

For example, suppose a one-ounce shot is \$1. For every 3 ounces sold, gross receipts should be \$3. A clever bartender, on the other hand, could be pouring  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ounce shots. Revenue now becomes \$4 — \$3 of which goes into the cash register, and \$1 into the bartender's pocket. Amazingly, 25 percent of the gross receipts have been stolen without a single point difference in pour costs.

With the possibility of theft left open to your employees, consider the various computerized liquor dispensing systems now on the market. Orders are placed, priced, taxed, and recorded in no time — and all with a record at your specifications.

## Keep assistant pros, as others lose theirs

With the ranks changing all the time among assistant club professionals, it seems like it's harder and harder for the head pro to keep any continuity in his staff.

When an assistant first starts off in a new club, the pro should attempt to get some idea of how long the assistant plans to stay, then map out a work program for that length of time. The program must contain a job description and duties. A progressive line of responsibility is essential.

After a normal trial period (usually a year), you might offer the assistant a bonus to keep him on, if he is highly motivated and an integral part of the staff. Base all your dealings with your assistants on a performance rating.

## Move on snowmold soon as thaw hits

The devastating winter that has ravaged most of the nation this year will certainly leave a greater-than-usual snowmold problem for superintendents when warmer temperatures come. Certainly, this will be compounded by the massive pileups of snow in the east, which will complicate matters with flooding.

Snow compaction must be eliminated, if possible. Further damage to the turf can occur with traffic from people and vehicles. If the snow is further compacted by such activities as cross country skiing and snowmobiling, these should be confined to areas that have coarser, harder grasses.

Drifts will also compact snow more. As soon as the melting starts, remove dead grass and debris. Break up the moldy crust; this will help in the overall drying process, accelerating recovery.

## Make sure guests get just desserts

Waiters and waitresses are never finished with a meal after the entree is served. Always be sure to instruct them to merchandise your dessert menu. This will add to the profits all the way around.

After the dinner is completed, the waiter or waitress should make sure the customers enjoyed their meal, then suggest dessert. The dessert menus should be presented to the ladies first and from the left. Many clubs offer a dessert cart and the customers or members can make their selections in view of a variety of dishes.

Today, dessert drinks are also becoming popular. A number of possibilities can be considered for addition to your dessert list.

## Custom club orders can take forever

Over the years, the club professional that gets caught in the bind of sending one of his golfer's clubs back to the factory for repair seems to be heading for a longer wait than usual.

Custom club orders seem to fall into the same category. Most manufacturers receive 75 percent of such orders in the period from September to December, when the companies are heavily into production on new lines.

Professionals waiting until mid-March to order will probably get better service, as long as there is no great demand on material, such as shafts. Repair can be quickened by the use of your own in-shop service or by sending it out to local repair shops.