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# GOLFDOM

THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE OF GOLF

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## ARTICLES

PGA MERCHANDISE SHOW / by dick farley	27
PGA SHOW PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS	33
WHAT TO DO AND SEE IN PORT ST. LUCIE / by dick lundin	49
PGA SHOW: WHERE PROS GO WRONG / by ernie sabayrac	51
WHAT IS THE COMPETITION BUYING? / by stephen w. byers	53
GCSAA CONFERENCE AND SHOW / by fred v. grau	55
GCSAA SHOW PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS	59
WHAT TO DO AND SEE IN ANAHEIM	67
PENSION PLANS: THE INDUSTRY'S SHAME / by fred v. grau	71
CMAA ANNUAL MEETING / by beverly foster	77
WHAT TO DO AND SEE IN NEW ORLEANS	78

## SPECIAL PRO SECTION

HIGHLIGHTING THE PGA ANNUAL MEETING / by vincent j. pastena	42A
THE PROFESSIONAL APPROACH / by patrick d. williams	42B
PRO SHOP PROBLEM SOLVER	42D
WHAT ARE THE PROS BUYING FOR '74? EAST / by stephen w. byers;	
CENTRAL / by bill nichols; WEST / by don curlee	42F
THE PROFIT PRO SHOP / by chuck cumming	42N

## VIEWPOINTS

ACCENT ON MANAGEMENT / by ken emerson	9
SWINGING AROUND GOLF / by herb graffis	10
GRAU'S ANSWERS TO TURF QUESTIONS / by fred v. grau	18
TURFGRASS RESEARCH REVIEW / by dr. james b. beard	24

## DEPARTMENTS

COMING EVENTS	17	BUYER'S SERVICE	89
NEWS OF THE INDUSTRY	83	ADVERTISER'S INDEX	90
CLASSIFIED	88	PEOPLE IN THE NEWS	90

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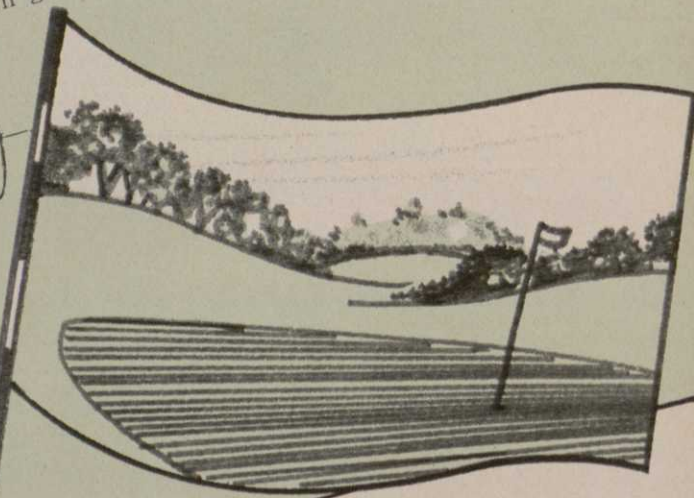
At the present time we have Penncross greens and tees at Speidel Golf Course in Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Virginia. There are 150,000 square feet in our greens and 130,000 square feet to our tees. During the past two seasons our rainfall has been excessive and we are slowly losing our Kentucky fairways because of excessive moisture and leaf spot disease. Our Penncross greens and tees are thriving daily and no serious disease problems.

Poa Annua has moved into our fairways but the Penncross greens have been able to withstand the invasion of the annual Kentucky. I believe Penncross under proper care is the only grass in our area that can compete with Poa Annua. At the present time we have no Poa Annua in our tees or greens and the golf course is three years old. When we first developed our course we used some Penncross sod on two of our greens and this sod had Poa Annua but in two years with proper management we now have eliminated the Poa Annua. Penncross just took over.

Because of the thinning out of our common Kentucky fairways, Penncross is now moving into the fairway. Because we feel that eventually Penncross might take over we are going to overseed with Penncross and we believe in the long run this will be cheaper for us and also present a fairway 300% better than what we now have. We have had to spray our fairway three to four times a year for leaf spot, and Fusarium blight but with the overseeding of Penncross we don't believe we will increase our chemical bill. The Penncross that is now located in our fairways and aprons of our green has never developed any diseases while we spray our Kentucky so we believe Penncross is the way to go in golf!

Signed:

*Edmund V. Murphy*  
Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Va.  
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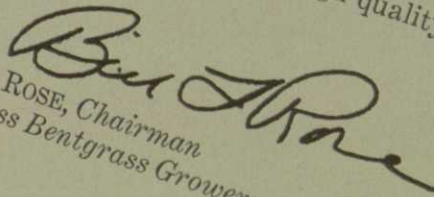
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Thank you for planting more and more Penncross. We will do our very best to keep your confidence and to provide you with a plentiful supply of high quality Penncross seed.

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# KEN EMERSON

ACCENT ON  
MANAGEMENT

## SHORTAGES WILL AFFECT CLUBS

The news from Washington these days is concerned mostly with shortages, present and future. With speed limits being reduced on highways, Federal and state governments converting to smaller cars for transporting staff members and store owners being asked to eliminate excessive or unnecessary electric signs, clubs, too, are beginning to give some thought to whether or not the new state-of-the-nation will affect them.

If you haven't thought about the question yet, the answer is "yes."

Many club managers, particularly those in the North, are re-evaluating their supplies of heating and fuel oil. The majority of these clubs use natural gas as a fuel. They are also on what is termed "interruptable service," which means that during periods of protracted excessive cold they will be asked to convert to oil to conserve natural gas for vital community facilities. Many clubs count on being able to refill their oil tanks during these times of conversion; they depend on 1,500 or 2,000 gallon storage tanks to provide them with a 10-day to two-week supply of fuel.

Now it is clear that refilling these tanks will be neither as simple nor as sure as it has in the past. Accordingly, these clubs already are beginning a careful evaluation of their facilities and heating practices to conserve what little they have. (It should be noted that "Weather Trends" predicts a long-range forecast of "colder in the Northeast and from the Carolinas to the Great Lakes and Minnesota-Dakotas.")

Even clubs in the more temperate zones of the country should take an equally hard look at their energy use with an eye to conservation and efficiency. When no actual shortage exists

for a particular club, it still must consider its image in the eyes of the community. It is not likely that a town that has been asked to conserve electrical energy will approve of a lavish electrical Christmas display on the clubhouse grounds or will watch electric golf car use on the club's course without critical comment.

Many other shortages now are becoming evident. These also will have an impact on clubs. Some of them will not be immediately evident, but consider the following list of crucial shortages: propane and butane gas; anti-freeze solutions; fertilizers; plastics of most kinds; glass products; paper, cardboard and shipping containers; leather goods and, of course, gasoline.

Gasoline, alone, is going to create some unexpected problems for clubs. Many clubs in the northern areas make a practice of plowing out club members' driveways after heavy snows. This practice probably will have to be discontinued.

It takes about 1,500 gallons of gas to run the equipment necessary to keep the greens and fairways cut. Even last year many clubs found that their suppliers were allocating less than this amount to them. This condition, if continued, will require hard decisions by the golf course superintendent.

The image problem also raises its head in this regard. Consider the recent request to Minnesota's Governor Anderson asking him to ban the use of snowmobiles, notorious gas guzzlers, for the duration of the shortage. The governor replied that he recognized the need to conserve gas, but did not feel that any one sport should suffer at the expense of others and that he would consider snowmobiles in the same category as night baseball, football games, basketball and hockey. Can golf cars be far behind?

To those who have felt all along that a golf course was meant to be walked, not driven, the elimination of golf cars, at least the gas operated ones, will be welcome news. Other shortages, however, will create more difficult problems.

Our children have grown up in an economy in which, given the money, they could buy almost anything. We now face a period when, money or not, what we want won't be available. The test will come when we decide whether to become frightened by it or challenged.

The situation is somewhat analogous to that faced by clubs two decades ago. At a time when the income from slot machines in the club's grill and bar seemed to be the difference between profit and loss, many clubs were positive they could not survive their removal. The well-managed club, however, met the challenge and came through with flying colors. Hopefully, today's clubs will face this new challenge with the same amount of determination to solve the problem. Undoubtedly, it will mean considerable belt-tightening, but it can be done.

A less obvious problem, but one that is there nonetheless, is that of the possibility of a depressed economy. Should the country face a real economic crunch, clubs may find that members, already hard-pressed to meet increased dues, may begin to drop some of their club affiliations. Should such a turn of events actually occur, the club industry may once again have to look at such measures as mergers or other cooperative operations to continue to provide facilities to their memberships.

This column only begins to touch on the problems and possible solutions. We will have more on shortages and how clubs are meeting them in subsequent issues. □





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# HERB GRAFFIS

## SWINGING AROUND GOLF

### THE VALUE OF A PRO

What is a golf professional worth to his employer?

The answer, generally, is, "Whatever he can make out of his job." That, usually, isn't the businesslike answer.

I've seen cases in which the answer should be corrected to, "About what the club is worth," because during World War II, there were country clubs that were kept alive through the work of their professionals.

I've seen other cases in which the professional has been a liability to his club.

One of the many bright examples of a professional's high value to his club was told to me by a friend. He had been considering buying a home in Southern California for retirement or as a winter residence.

He said, "My wife and I played golf at many attractive places. At a dozen spots we had friends who formerly had lived around Chicago. Something went bad with my game, and I was losing interest in golf and in Southern California. When a game goes from bad to terrible, winter is winter anywhere.

"My wife kept shopping around. Finally, we rented a place at Rancho Bernardo, without much enthusiasm on my part.

"Then, bored and disgusted with my golf, I thought I'd kill some time by taking a few lessons. I went to Bob Gutwein, the Rancho Bernardo pro.

"He watched me hit a few shots. He said, 'When you get home, have your pro get you clubs with more flexible shafts. You've outgrown these. Those springier shafts will put the life in your swing that your muscles haven't got anymore.'

"Gutwein wouldn't sell me the clubs he recommended. He laughed and said, 'Your pro has been waiting long enough for this sale.'

"Gutwein showed me how to teach myself the body turn I needed to get me really hitting shots again. He is one of those pros who teaches you how to teach yourself.

"The Rancho Bernardo scenery and its course and everything about the place began looking good to me."

My friend remarked, "You can tell anybody that Bob Gutwein gives fine golf lessons. They should be great. They cost me the price of a lot and a house at Rancho Bernardo."

Here's an instance that shows how much a pro is worth to his club.

Early returns, to the highly satisfying extent of 25 per cent of the questionnaires mailed, indicate that the National Golf Foundation's survey of golf facilities and their use will be immensely valuable as a marketing guide.

Don Rossi, the foundation's executive director, knew from his experience as a golf salesman that marketing statistics urgently needed up-dating. His directors emphatically agreed. Lack of an authentic scorecard of the golf market was penalizing buyers and sellers. Judging from the returns to the initial questionnaire, the executives of golf clubs and fee courses also are very interested in learning the correct score of amount and location of golf play.

An impressive, but not at all unexpected fact, is that the returns to date have been from the more efficiently operated facilities. They have their figures readily available.

It's no news to anyone who's been around in the business that a lot of clubs and pay-play course officials have only the vaguest idea of how the business stands.

Several years ago, GOLFDOM suggested that those professionals whose responsibilities and work at clubs went beyond the conventional, be known as golf directors. We've been surprised at the way the term has caught on and

continued on page 12