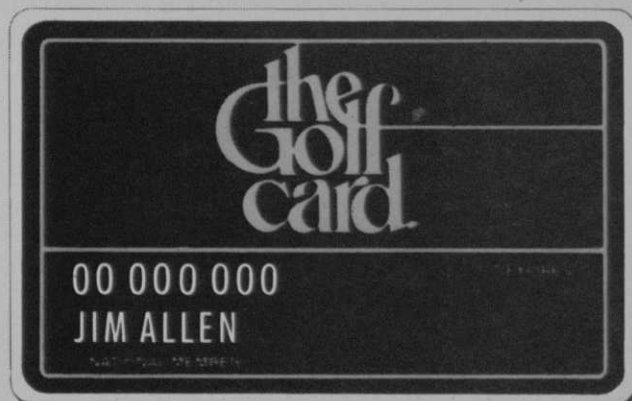


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## WINTER PLANS

# KEEPING MEMBER INTEREST HIGH

Golf and country clubs increasingly serve as the central source of their members' sporting and social lives. This means clubs must expand existing facilities or build new ones to meet these additional demands. Clubs that are successful are so because they have been able to span a variety of member interests and offer something for everyone. This holds true whether the club is blessed with balmy, tropical climate or is snowed in six months of the year.

But perhaps the seasonal club has a more difficult time sustaining member interest over those deep months of winter. At least at warm-weather clubs, members can use the golf course. But at some seasonal clubs, even moderately active members can lose interest in the club; less active members might drop out all altogether.

The effect of waning member loyalty on club income can be disastrous. All club activities grind down, from dining room to pro shop. Staffs and crews are thinned out and the prospect of trying to find and hire for next season reliable, experienced replacements can be a problem to supervisory personnel.

The Denver Country Club has minimized these problems by countering with an active winter program of which substantial part involves indoor tennis and ice skating with attendant activities — teaching programs, special parties — skirting the periphery.

Denver is a typical for a western club (when one thinks of these kind of clubs, vast acreages, expansive fairways and sprawling, modern buildings come to mind. Built on its present site in 1906, it is the only

by Jerry Claussen  
Consultant  
National Golf Foundation  
Rocky Mountain Region

inner-city club in Denver with a golf course. The grounds are hemmed in by arterial streets, residential areas and a large shopping center. Several greens and tees border backyard fences, although they are shielded by trees and shrubs.

The course is narrow and of moderate length, and although most greens have been rebuilt, a few are old and small. These disadvantages are not strong enough to offset the pull of tradition, accessibility and a superb tree-lined course. Even the lure of big money cannot break the thread of loyalty. Extravagant offers have been made for the property, and each in turn have been rejected by members.

The 750 resident family members are leaders in Colorado business, finance and society. Administration works through a board plus committees, an executive (financial) manager and a clubhouse manager.

The manager of outdoor operations is Lou Haines, who in 1968 succeeded his father, the late Jim Haines, a veteran of 41 years as superintendent. Haines, a national director of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, is a graduate of Colorado State University, with a major in horticulture and basically a golf course superintendent who has expanded responsibilities. In his position, he oversees budgets that approach a quarter of a million dollars in the following areas:

- golf course and grounds maintenance operations
- swimming pool operations

- skating rink operations
- tennis court operations (now 12 courts — two indoors).

It all adds up to considerable responsibilities for one young 32-year-old, but Haines handles it with aplomb, minimizing the administrative problems by relying on several experienced assistants for the maintenance, plus the managers of each program.

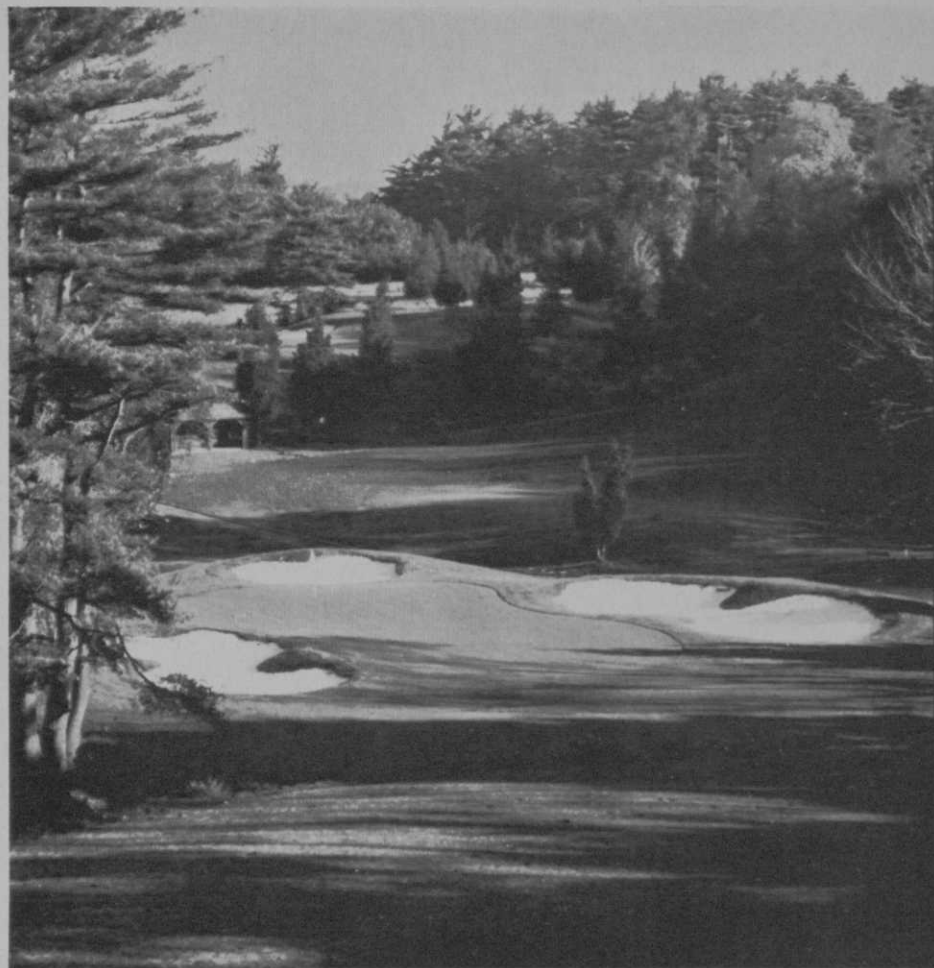
"Each man is assigned his area of responsibility," Haines told GOLFDOM. "Our permanent people know what to do, I don't have to check on them, only minimally. My biggest problem will be replacing our old hands when they retire.

"We want good people and try to keep those we have," he said. "I have pushed hard for salary increases so we can attract the best. But they stay here mostly because they like their jobs."

Starting this season, the maintenance people also had new headquarters. Haines and staff moved into two, 4,800-square-foot buildings near the back of the course. The cost was about \$90,000.

Haines currently has four men on the staff, whose years at Denver Country Club total 86. Rudy Alden, retired head of maintenance for tennis, the swimming pool and skating rink, is still active on a part-time, as-needed basis after 42 years of service. Assistant course superintendent Stan Smith is a neophyte by comparison with 18 years at the course.

Haines' maintenance staff increases to about 22 in the summer, 12 to 13 permanent and 9 to 10 seasonal. The 22 includes 18 for the golf course, two for clubhouse grounds, one for swimming pool maintenance and one for tree care.



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- Portsmouth CC, Portsmouth, NH.
- Stanwich GC, Greenwich, Ct.
- Ferncroft CC, Danvers, Ma.
- Yale GC, New Haven, Ct.



## KEEPING MEMBER INTEREST HIGH continued

Some switch to other jobs in the winter.

"Keeping a substantial year-round staff is a marked advantage for the entire operation," Haines said. "With a minority of seasonal personnel, we have few training or orientation problems.

"Knowledge of procedure over season-to-season means a smoother operation. It shows up in detail work. That makes the difference between a really good golf course and an ordinary one," he said. "A permanent crew has more loyalty and takes pride in its work.

"Many clubs make a mistake in not keeping a larger permanent crew. Most of a budget goes for labor. Much of that can be wasted in training new people each year and repeating previous mistakes. A club can gain back that extra winter labor expense through increased efficiency," he said.

The winter programs at Denver provide reason enough for keeping a large, year-round crew. Also, many jobs can be accomplished by the grounds staff that would otherwise have to be contracted out.

Like many clubs around the country, Denver has been hit with the tennis boom. To meet the mushrooming demand, facilities were expanded to eight outdoor courts. Then, in 1968, they were expanded again to include an indoor tennis house that sheltered two Laykold surface courts. Cost for the structure ran \$100,000-plus. Recently, two more outdoor courts were added, elevated above a new electric cart storage area.

Haines said the indoor courts now are the club's most used facility during the winter months. Because the courts are used so much, and their use is still growing, a tennis professional was retained to give lessons and organize winter tournaments. A combination of more players, snowballing interest in indoor tennis and recent severe winters has rocketed tennis house income 40 percent over projections, reaching near-maximum capacity. Members pay extra for the tennis house, \$4 an hour per court during the winter months.

Haines said indoor tennis re-

mains popular into the summer, especially on rainy days. But even on hot summer afternoons, indoor play goes on, often filling up the 8 a.m. through 10 p.m. schedule every day for lessons. The operating budget for tennis is arrived at after deducting fee income. This includes maintenance wages plus the tennis house utilities, repairs and tennis professional.

The club's winter ice skating program is unique among Rocky Mountain clubs. An 85-foot by 185-foot rink was built in 1953 between the clubhouse and the first hole. Mechanical equipment is housed in a section of the adjacent maintenance shop building. Almost \$100,000 was spent replacing the slab and 11 miles of ice-making pipes in 18 by 1968. It is an outdoor rink, shaded from the bright Colorado sun by hanging sheets of canvas-like material, called Osnaburg. Haines said that the shading material is effective, but causes a great deal of maintenance problems.

"Every time we get a strong wind it takes 15 to 25 man-hours to repair displaced and ripped shading," he said. "Ice planing and maintenance takes another 10 to 15 hours a week. Then, every time it snows, we have to remove that from the ice — it sure doesn't melt."

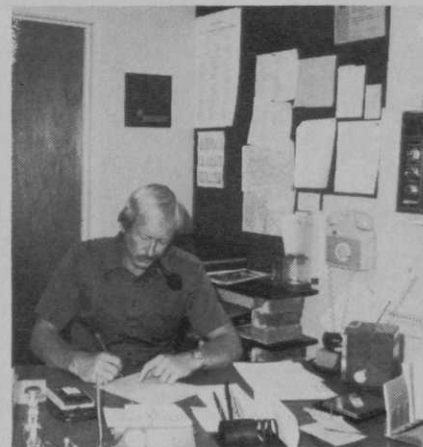
About 75 percent of the annual ice rink facility budget goes out in labor costs. That includes maintenance and staffing of the skate house, where members often hold parties and eat and dance. The ice skating season usually spans November 15 to March 15; hours are 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekends, 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays. A strong youth hockey schedule, including league competition among five teams, reserves 13 hours a week.

A teaching professional is on duty each season for lessons and to organize special events. These include the annual children's show in February. Haines admits that fewer adults, and more children are skating. Families pay an extra seasonal fee of \$25 to take part in the ice program.

A new important winter program for Haines' crew is tree planting. Started in 1972, a major

replacement and transplanting program was needed for two reasons; on a course two-thirds of a century old, many trees will soon reach the end of their life span; and Dutch elm disease is threatening to take its toll on some of the course's 100-plus American elms. Through tree program dollars and an intensified control program, Dutch elm disease losses have been held to one percent a year.

In cooperation with a commer-



Lou Haines, a national director of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, is manager of outdoor operations at Denver Country Club and is basically a golf course superintendent who has expanded responsibilities.

cial arborist, Haines checked out the number of trees that were either susceptible to disease or have a probable remaining life of less than 20 years. Haines then got board approval of over \$100,000 for a multi-year tree program. He detailed his own planting plan. The first winter alone, 175 new trees, in the four- to six-inch caliper category were planted by the club's crew. Some larger transplants had up to 84-inch balls. Some are new; some are transplants from the back of the course. New species have included cottonwood, green ash, American linden, Siberian elm, Colorado spruce and various species of pine.

Despite its vintage and its image as an "old line" club, Denver Country Club is young in activities and fresh in ideas. These two qualities will keep it healthy while Denver and our society try to adjust to change. □



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# LICENSING

## Will It Help or Hinder the Pro?

There is a movement among Florida pros — complete with a lobbyist and a bill introduced in the state legislature — that could have a great effect on the hiring of pros in that state and possibly across the country.

The issue is licensing of pros by the state. Simply, it would require every golf course to hire only licensed pros. Licensing would be handled by a state board that tested the pros. A bill was introduced in the legislature earlier this year and is now in committee. Pros advocating the bill say it will protect the golfer and the qualified pro, solidify the Professional Golfers' Association and provide licensing similar to that of lawyers and doctors.

Licensing opponents say the program would be more akin to that of barbers and truck drivers, that it would create another unneeded state agency that would muddle in the affairs of the pro, and that any program of this nature would undermine the PGA. At the moment, the national PGA has a guarded opinion of the plan. And an interesting

footnote is that even the Teamsters have taken an interest in the Florida pros.

"It is not really a new idea," according to Dave Hull, 43-year-old pro at Naval Station Mayport Golf Club in Florida. "Most recently in this state though I guess it is mostly my brainchild. The idea is for a professional license, not an occupational license, to provide for the state something similar to the American Medical Association or the American Bar Association. The idea behind it is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the golfing public."

Hull feels licensing would put a measure of control back into the hands of the pro. He said in Florida there are many instances where a pro at many courses may be intelligent and a good golfer, yet for the consumer, he is just not qualified. This type of "pro" might improperly manage the program at his course, not be able to manage tournaments that are so important to a club, and might not know when to do things like close a course during inclement weather.

"This type of situation devalues the course, and if it is a development, it devalues the investment the

people has in it," Hull said. He said licensing would mean that all clubs would almost have to come to the PGA for prospective licensed pros when they were shopping around to hire. He said last year 23 clubs opened in Florida and only two came to the PGA for resumes.

"This would not be the prime purpose, but licensing would also require certification of PGA pros from outside the state when they came to take a job in Florida," he said. "The certification of outside pros would have to be done within 90 days. We would not be trying to keep a man out, but just would want to make sure he would be qualified."

Hull said licensing would give the pro protection. "We would pay a fee out of our pocket, and with this fee would be buying an enforcement agency. If a complaint was lodged, the state would step in."

Hull said it would help to solidify the PGA in Florida, and across the country if other sections would institute licensing in their states. "I love the PGA, but it is too loose to have much power at all, and we need something like this."

State Senator Jon Thomas of Miami proposed the bill earlier this year, but for various reasons the Florida legislature was very inoperative passing only a small percentage of bills this sitting. The bill is now in committee, and will be brought up again in the next session.

"Our profession is slipping in the eyes of the public," Hull told GOLFDOM, "and something like this is a way to make our importance felt." He said he feels the majority of pros in the state are sold on the idea of licensing, including the apprentices. At the section's annual meeting in July in Orlando, Hull gave a report on the subject. There were some dissenting views, but no

**Capitol building:** Where Florida state legislature may vote on the bill for licensing of golf pros in that state.





motions against it, Hull said. He said several members said to spend any amount of money necessary to get the bill passed. He said the section is going to put out brochures explaining the program totally to its 1200 members.

The executive committee of the section has already hired a lobbying firm to promote the bill to members of the state legislature. The firm is Lew Ritter & Associates, and works out of Jacksonville. Ritter is no stranger to Florida politics, being a



**Brasington:** "I don't think the state legislature thinks they have enough time to deal with our little old problems . . . it would certainly upgrade the caliber of pros."

former mayor of Jacksonville, and a veteran of 30 years on the state political scene. The firm drafted the bill, and is organizing support in the legislature for the bill, according to Hull.

One interesting sidelight is the fact that Hull was contacted early last month by an official of the Teamsters. The official was feeling out the possibility that perhaps the pros would be interested in affiliating with the Teamsters. Hull said that if the pros agreed to let the Teamsters represent the pros, that the Teamster official said he could guarantee passage of the bill by the legislature. Hull said he does not feel the pros would want to be unionized.

Hull said his section checked with national PGA offices for financial aid in getting the licensing program off the ground. He said the national said it could not back any state plan with money, because it would be unfair to other sections.

Hull also said that about 12 years ago the PGA looked into the possibility of national licensing of pros but scrapped it at the time because any licensing programs have to be carried out by the state. Hull said the national privately wished the Florida section luck, and would like to see it passed.

Chuck Brasington, pro at Gainesville Golf and Country Club, is president of the Florida PGA Section. He says he is not as "hot" for the subject as some of the other pros in his section and on the executive board.

"I do think it would do the golfing public some good," Brasington told GOLFDOM, "and it would certainly upgrade the caliber of the pros." Brasington said he can see where many owners would not like the licensing program if it went into effect, but cannot see any harm to the pro by it. He said it would aid the job security of the pro and would cut down on the number of unqualified pros in the state. He said many of the pros in the state do not yet understand how the plan would work. "I think chances of getting the law passed are small," he said. "I don't think the state legislature thinks they have enough time to deal with our little old problems." Brasington also made the point that the licensing bill does not say a club has to hire a PGA pro, just that the pro be licensed.

Ron Polane is pro at Boca Raton Hotel and Country Club, and is vice president of the Southeast Chapter of the section. He said most pros in his chapter are in favor of the pro-

**Carey:** "It's a thoroughly bad idea."



**Polane:** "If handled properly, I think it would be very good for the pro."

gram because it would give the pro more control over his profession.

"Florida is notorious for opening up clubs with unqualified pros, being unsatisfied and not getting the business they deserve," Polane told GOLFDOM. "I think licensing would improve the pro's image because we would not then have unqualified pros in the state. If handled properly, I think it would be very good for the pro. The way I understand it, we would have control of the licensing board, and would pay for it with our licensing fees."

Punta Gorda Country Club pro Don Williams has mixed emotions about licensing because he is not sure what will happen when the state gets fully involved. The vice president of the Southwest Chapter makes a good point when he says it is unfair to club companies to have an unqualified person selling and fitting their clubs. He makes another good point when he says:

"Most new course developers make a mistake when they hire an unqualified person for the job of pro. Many members and guests at these resorts and developments are affluent persons who belong to or belonged to prestigious private clubs in the north, and they know what it is like to have a first-class operation, including a qualified pro. They know how a course should be run."

to page 53

# COMING EVENTS

New Jersey PGA Section educational seminar, Mayfair Farms, Sept. 8.

Ohio Turf Foundation Turf & Landscape Field Day, Wooster, Sept. 9.

Colorado State University Turf Field Day, Fort Collins, Colo., Sept. 12.

Michigan CMAA Chapter meeting, Spring Lake Country Club, Sept. 15.

Mile High CMAA Chapter director's meeting, Garden of the Gods, Colorado Springs, Colo., Sept. 15.

Detroit CMAA Chapter meeting, Dearborn Country Club, Sept. 16.

Greater Cleveland CMAA Chapter business meeting, Spring Valley Country Club, Sept. 16.

Illinois Turfgrass Foundation Field Day, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill., Sept. 16.

California Association of Nurserymen Convention, Town and Country Hotel, San Diego, Calif., Sept. 16-18.

CMAA Workshop, "Executive Development," Toledo, Ohio, Sept. 18-20.

Florida PGA Section championship and merchandise show, Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club, Tarpon Springs, Fla., Sept. 18-21.

CMAA regional meeting, Kansas City Club, Sept. 21-23.

CMAA Region Five meeting, Atlanta, Sept. 21-23.

Philadelphia CMAA Chapter educational meeting, Soucon Valley Country Club, Sept. 22.

Pittsburgh CMAA Chapter meeting, Sunnehanna Country Club, Johnstown, Sept. 22.

CMAA Workshop, "Club Management," Oakbrook Hyatt House, Chicago, Sept. 22-24.

PGA teaching seminar, Barton Hills Country Club, Ann Arbor, Mich., with Bob Toski and Paul Bertholy, Sept. 22-25.

Indiana Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Woodland Country Club, Indianapolis, Ind., Sept. 23.

Outdoor Pest Services Clinic, sponsored by National Pest Control Association, Kansas City, Kans., Sept. 26-27.

International Sporting Goods Exposition, Coliseum, New York, N.Y., Sept. 27-30.

Metropolitan PGA Merchandise Show, Colonie Hills Hotel, Sept. 29-30.

CMAA workshop, "Advanced Beverage Management," East Norwich, Long Island, N.Y., Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

Wisconsin Badger CMAA Chapter meeting, Beloit Country Club, Sept. 29.

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents and Wisconsin Association of Golf Course Superintendents, joint meeting, Playboy Club, Lake Geneva, Wis., Sept. 29.

Midwest Turf Field Day, Purdue Agronomy Farm, West Lafayette, Ind., Sept. 29.

Mid-America Restaurant Exposition, Franklin County Veterans Memorial Building, Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

Ohio Turf Foundation Field Day, Columbus, Oct. 1.

Rocky Mountain Turfgrass Equipment and Product Show, Adams County Regional Park, Colo., Oct. 2.

Nebraska Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Panhandle Station, Mitchell, Oct. 6.

Florida PGA Section annual educational and business seminar, Sheraton Twin Towers, Orlando, Oct. 6-7.

Midwestern Foodservice and Equipment Exposition, Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 6-8.

PGA teaching seminar, Torrey Pines Golf Course, La Jolla, Calif., with Eddie Merrins and Dr. Gary Wiren, Oct. 6-9.

CMAA Workshop, "Financial Management and Computers," Champaign, Ill., Oct. 7-9.

Gulf South Foodservice and Equipment Exposition, The Rivergate, New Orleans, Oct. 7-10.

Connecticut Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Golf Club of Avon, Oct. 7.

Sporting Goods Industry Fall Meetings, including National Golf Foundation, Golf Ball Manufacturers Association, National Association of Golf Club Manufacturers and Tennis Foundation of America, Scottsdale Hilton, Arizona, Oct. 12-15.

CMAA Symposium, Los Angeles, Calif., Oct. 13-15.

PGA teaching seminar, Westchester Country Club, Rye, N.Y., with Irv Schloss and Paul Runyan, Oct. 13-16.

Indiana Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Harrison Lake Country Club, Columbus, Ind., Oct. 14.

Iowa Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Hyperion Field Club, Grimes, Oct. 14.

Kentucky Turfgrass Council Conference and Field Day, Barren River State Resort Park, Lucas, Ky., Oct. 14-15.

Southeastern Foodservice Educational Exposition, Atlanta Civic Center, Atlanta, Oct. 14-16.

National Restaurant Association "Controlling Food Cost" seminar, Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 14.

Long Island Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Maidstone Golf Club, East Hampton, N.Y., Oct. 16.

Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association Field Day, Westchester Country Club, Oct. 17.

Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association field day, Westchester Country Club, Rye, N.Y., Oct. 17.

National Sporting Goods Association 28th Annual Fall Market, Civic Center Plaza, Phoenix, Ariz., Oct. 17-19.

PGA teaching seminar, Meadowbrook Country Club, St. Louis, Mo., with James Flick and Harvey Penick, Oct. 20-23.

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents meeting, Glendale Country Club, Bloomingdale, Ill., Oct. 20.

Southern California Turfgrass Council 15th Annual Turfgrass Equipment and Materials Educational Exposition, Orange County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa, Calif., Oct. 22-23.

26th Central Plains Turfgrass Conference, Manhattan, Kans., Oct. 22-24.

PGA Business School, Tanglewood Golf Club, Clemmons, N.C., Oct. 26-31.

CMAA workshop, "Creative Food Management," Virginia Beach, Va., Oct. 27-29.

National Restaurant Association "Controlling Food Cost" seminar, Hartford, Conn., Oct. 27.



Nebraska Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Midwest Toro, Omaha, Nov. 3.

Sixth Annual Georgia Golf Course Superintendents/University of Georgia Turfgrass Short Course, Center for Continuing Education, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga., Nov. 3-4.

National Institute on Park and Grounds Maintenance, Chase-Park Plaza Hotel, St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 3-6.

Missouri Turfgrass Conference, Ramada Inn, Columbia, Mo., Nov. 6-7.

National Restaurant Association/Oklahoma State University Workshop, Stillwater, Okla., Nov. 10-11.

National Golf Foundation Public Golf Operations Workshop, Marriott Hotel, Cleveland, Nov. 10-12.

PGA club repair seminar, Denver, with Hubby Habjan, Nov. 10-13.

International Hotel and Motel Educational Exposition, Coliseum, New York, N.Y., Nov. 10-13.

Indiana Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Tomahawk Golf Course, Jamestown, Ind., Nov. 11.

Ninth Annual Clemson University Turfgrass Conference, Clemson University, Clemson, S.C., Nov. 11-12.

PGA Club Pro Championship, Callaway Gardens, Ga., Nov. 13-16.

PGA Business School, Lehigh Acres, Fla., Nov. 16-17.

CMAA board directors meeting, Kansas City, Mo., Nov. 16-18.

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents Annual Meeting, Cyprus Inn, Peoria, Ill., Nov. 17.

National Golf Foundation Public Golf Operations Workshop, Hyatt House, Burlingame, Cal., Nov. 17-19.

PGA club repair seminar, Los Angeles, with Irv Schloss, Nov. 17-20.

Grounds Maintenance conference, Callaway Gardens, Ga., Nov. 18-19.

New Jersey Turfgrass Expo, Poste Inn, Cherry Hill, N.J. Dec. 1-4.

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Conference and Show, Cincinnati Convention-Exposition Center, Dec. 2-4.

PGA Annual Meeting, Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans, Dec. 2-5.

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents clinic, Medinah Country Club, Medinah, Ill., Dec. 3.

Indiana Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, Kokomo Country Club, Dec. 6.

PGA Business School, Omaha, Neb., Dec. 7-12.

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents, election meeting, Army Navy Country Club, Arlington, Va., Dec. 9.

16th Annual Illinois Turfgrass Foundation Conference, Ramada Inn, Champaign, Ill., Dec. 10-12.

PGA Business School, San Diego, Calif., Jan. 4-9.

Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Annual Meeting, King & Prince Hotel, St. Simons Island, Ga., Jan. 11-13.

Penn State Turf Conference, University Park, Pa., Jan. 19-22.

PGA Merchandise Show, Contemporary Hotel, Walt Disney World, Orlando, Fla., Jan. 25-28.

Cornell Turfgrass Conference, Rye Town Hilton, Portchester, N.Y., Jan. 28-29.

USGA Green Section Meeting, Biltmore Hotel, N.Y., Jan. 30.

PGA Business School, Orlando, Fla., Feb. 1-6.

47th GCSAA International Turfgrass Conference and Show, Minneapolis Auditorium and Convention Hall, Minneapolis, Minn., Feb. 8-13.

Golf Course Builders of America Sixth Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, Minn., during GCSAA Conference, Feb. 8-13.

CMAA Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Hilton Hotel, Feb. 11-14.

Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association educational program and business meeting, Atlanta, Athletic Club, Duluth, Ga., May 10-11.

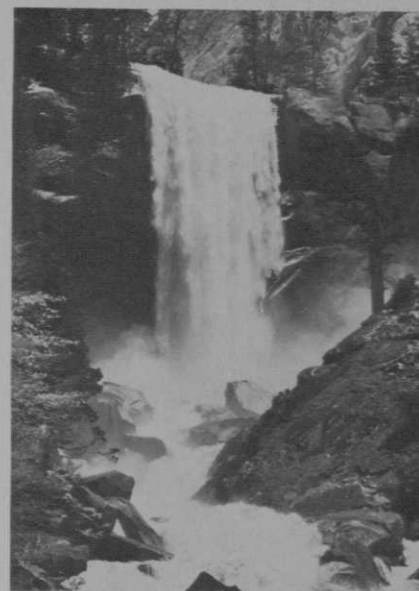
PGA Business School, New York, N.Y., Feb. 22-27.

PGA Business School, Toledo, Ohio, March 14-19.

PGA Business School, Houston, March 28-April 2.

PGA Business School, Palm Beach, Fla., April 25-30.

Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association educational program and business meeting, Atlanta Athletic Club, Duluth, Ga., May 11-12.



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