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FEATURES

Profile of the industry

Exclusive annual GOLF BUSINESS survey report covers all aspects of the golf business, providing a yardstick for facilities of all types to compare themselves — from broad areas such as total pro shop sales or course maintenance expenditures to specific questions like proceeds from sales of golf shoes and apparel or the amount spent for water and grass seed. 20

Design tips for golf car storage

Just as important as the kinds of cars a golf operation buys is what happens to them after they delivered. Proper storage facilities can help golf cars look better, last longer, and make more money. 27

Foodservice and spikeproof carpet aid success of daily fee course

Centerton Golf Club, one of New Jersey's more successful public courses, is one place where the foodservice operation helps draw golfers who might otherwise go elsewhere. An integral part of the successful clubhouse design is spikeproof carpeting 28

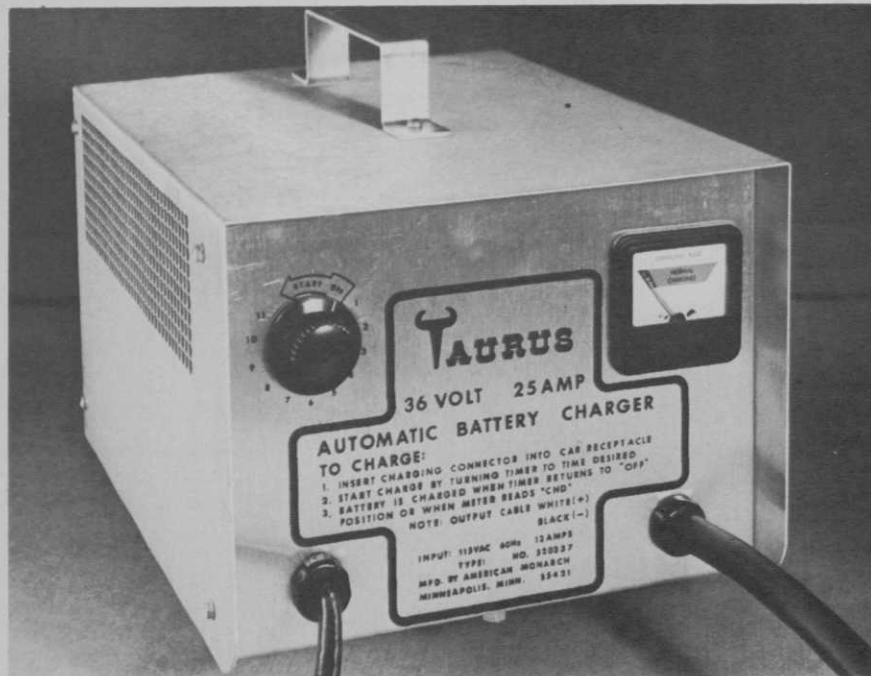
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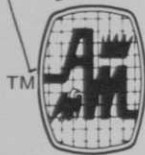
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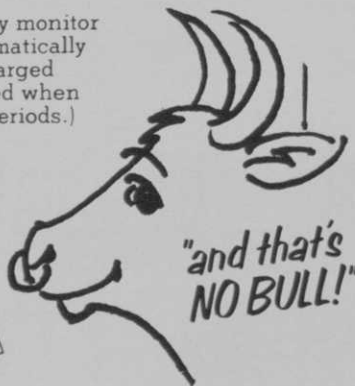
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The old pro

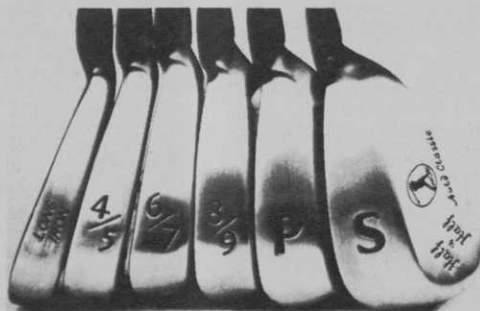
Must the 14-club set be sacred forever?

The golf business needs much more study and discussion about club sales but professionals and manufacturers seem to be afraid to speak up.

I'd guess that considering the improvement in iron heads and shafts — and the high prices of clubs — at least half of all golfers are playing with clubs that are not helping them as much as well designed, well fitted clubs should.

Newer iron head design that makes the clubs practically wedges that get the leading edge of the club under the ball and get the ball airborne, plus the lightweight steel shafts and some grip improvements, probably show the greatest progress ever made in any period of 4 to 7 years in the history of club manufacturers.

The cast-iron-head makers came in with costlier precision heads while the forged-head makers were sleeping. The cast-head makers skimmed the top of the general market, although not scoring well with the expert players. On woods there have been a few



promising innovations, but the millions of golfers who comprise the big market still have to find out what is most useful to them: the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7 wood. Two or three woods are enough for the experts who can deftly manipulate the clubhead.

Nobody seems to have a wood with a large helpful head with about a 13-degree loft that would take care of improving most drives and getting long shots off most fairways. A narrower-face wood of the 5-wood type would give the help needed for the shorter fairway wood shots.

And why should the 14-club set be sacred while every experienced successful professional, every pro salesman, and the top executives who really know golf business must be aware that golf club sales are curtailed by high costs?

Remember the 1-iron, the sand wedge, and the pitching wedge have meant changes in club sets, and those changes are going to continue by some manufacturer who will sell sensationally.

You'll see the day soon when a manufacturer is going to run away with a large market with a set of two woods, 3-5-7-8 irons, pitching wedge, and a wedge. Bring your own putter to the ball.

Idea file

Carolinas Section has film on TV

The film features the 1976 tournament circuit for Carolina pros, but also depicts the pro as a businessman. They are shown at a factory where club grips are manufactured and taking part in educational seminars.

The film's final 4½ minutes show Bob Galloway, 1976 U.S. club pro champion from Rock Hill, S.C., repairing a burned-out piece of grass, directing a grounds crew, and helping a customer check the swingweight of a club. "It shows the viewer that the pro is a member of the business community," said John Derr, executive director for the Carolinas Section.

The 28-minute film has been broadcast 32 times on local television stations and about 75 civic groups, golf, and country clubs have also watched it. The cost totaled about \$30,000, but no money was taken from Section dues, Derr said. Some clubs that hosted tournaments paid up to \$1,500 and tournament sponsors, such as Michelob and Winston-Salem, also made contributions.

Low-calorie beer selling well

Low-calorie, light beers accounted for 8 percent of the 156 million barrels of beer sold in the United States last year, and brewers believe that figure will climb to 10 percent by the end of this year, *The Wall Street Journal* reports.

Brewers attribute the success of these beers to a weight-conscious society and the television commercials of one company that uses famous athletes to tout their product, thereby giving it a manly image. The brewers also believe the beer-drinking market will become more specialized in the near future, and several companies have started to offer beer in smaller cans to attract women.

Break up trap sand compacted by winter

Sand in golf course bunkers often gets compacted by hard rain and, in the north, especially by winter snow and freezing. This can particularly be a problem if your traps are filled with a mixture of sand and clay, like those at Highland Park Golf Course in Bloomington, Ill.

If you have a power trap rake, your problem is solved. Highland Park Superintendent Thomas Gutschow didn't, however, so he came up with his own solution: a garden tractor with a rototiller attachment. He says it works great, especially in the spring, as long as the operator is careful not to till below the depth of the sand mixture.

Pay records needed if disputes occur

Compliance officers for the Labor Department's Wage & Hour Division may visit your golf operation to check the complaint of an employee or former employee. They will ask to look at your payroll records, so if there is a dispute, accurate records will help.

Randall McCray, a Labor Department spokesman, said one area is usually overlooked by club management. "One of the most prevalent problems is that of non-exempt (from overtime pay) employees being paid on a salary basis instead of hourly with no records being kept on hours. Normally, we have to take the employees' word for hours he is working, if it comes down to a question."

McCray said the employees who can be exempt from overtime pay at golf courses are managers, head chefs, superintendents, and maintenance supervisors.

Heated range tees attract golfers

Heavy snow this winter didn't hamper range operations at Plymouth Greens Golf Center in Plymouth Meeting, Pa, where golfers had phoned for reservations on weekends to hit balls from inside 10 heated tees.

The tees were enclosed by wood paneling and plexiglass on three sides, and an infrared heater, fueled by propane gas, raised the temperature to between 55-60 degrees, said pro Bob Intrieri.

The center, just west of Philadelphia, averaged between 100-150 persons on weekdays and 150-200 on weekends. Intrieri sold buckets of balls for 75 cents, \$1.50, and \$2.50, and charged 50 cents per half-hour for the heat.

A golf superintendent

A purchasing agent, too?

A golf course superintendent gets called various names, especially after closing the course on Saturday afternoon; however, seldom is he referred to as a "purchasing agent." Nevertheless — along with titles such as agronomist, pathologist, plumber, and electrician — "purchasing agent" is apropos.

A young superintendent soon learns that the role of purchasing agent is another arduous task that college courses somehow never even mentioned. Consequently, he often tries to take buying decisions without proper criteria. Every course has different needs, but all superintendents face the same questions: When do I purchase? How much do I purchase? What is a fair price?

The answer to each question is bound to vary — the reasoning behind each answer is similar. How much to purchase is relevant to the size of your budget and the course. However, the proportion is similar for all courses. No office buys a yearly supply of stamps, envelopes, and stationery at the beginning of the year; and no factory purchases all the steel, tires, and raw goods it will need at the beginning of the year, simply because needs change and cash flow will not allow it.

As manager of a golf course, your job is

similar to a purchasing agent in a factory. You know you will need certain fungicides, herbicides, and fertilizer; however, you never know what the weather will bring. Keeping this in mind, it may be helpful to use a "benchmark" method. Pick a time in the season and purchase up to that time, for instance June 15. You know what new machinery you need to begin the year, your preemergent and spring fertilizer programs are underway, and fungicides are usually standard up to that time. Then when June rolls around, you can start purchasing on a monthly basis. This allows you to always have needed products on hand, but if the situation calls for pythium control, you won't have your budget wrapped up in Daconil. This method also has advantages for the club. They don't have to invest money in March for products that won't be used until August. (Sure, the question of early-order discounts plays a small part here, but if you look at it closely, it's a very small part.)

If you have chosen which products you feel will perform the best, then look up the rates and have at it on your J.C. Penney calculator. But you may want to back up one step. I have noticed three mistakes being made when figuring how much. First of all, the areas to be treated are not known exactly. Or perhaps you are using figures from Fred who used to be the

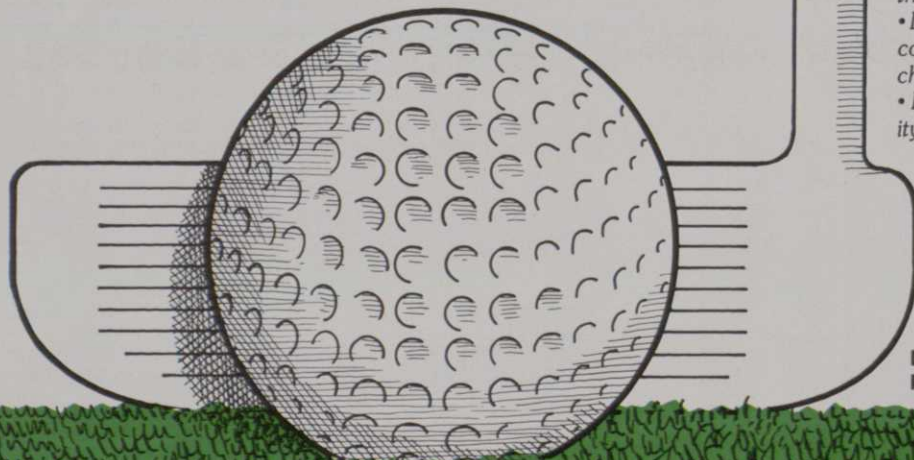
super, and Fred got them from Bill before him, who got them from the "green chairman." Then there is the question of budgeting to treat the greens and tees for a given program, but forgetting that the collars and aprons are usually treated the same.

I'll close with one final thought: I have yet to observe any industry that has managed to extract more service from its suppliers than has the golf course superintendents. As purchasing agents, you have, as a whole, performed way above par. With knowledge gained through efforts such as this magazine, you have managed to keep well informed about products and gain full cooperation from suppliers. In no other business that I know of can you get free delivery across the state, and many times, the next day. You can't buy a car downtown and ever have the salesman stop by the house to see how its running; but you can buy a \$2,000 mower and have the turf distributor salesman stop by and adjust it a year after you bought it, and at no charge!

Keep these things in mind. The next time a board member asks you to shop around or you hear discussions about having a general manager do all the purchasing, point out what a good job you are doing as purchasing agent.

This column was written by Steve Derrick, president of Professional Turf Specialties in Normal, Ill. It originally appeared in the Central Illinois GCSA newsletter.

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WORKING WITH NATURE

News

CONVENTIONS & TRADE SHOWS

Texas hosts biggest GCSAA show ever

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"Adapt or die: that's Butz' law of economics."

So said the controversial former secretary of agriculture during his keynote address at the 49th International Turfgrass Conference and Show held by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America in San Antonio, Tex., February 14-16. Appropriately, the association itself had adapted to the changing golf business climate this past year by reorganizing its administrative staff and putting Jim Brooks in charge of the annual trade show.

The result was that the originally allotted floorspace in the San Antonio Convention Center was sold out, then expanded and sold out again. Obviously, there is no lack of interest in the green end of the golf business. Some 195 exhibitors displayed golf course maintenance equipment and supplies during the convention, which attracted some 5,500 golf superintendents and other turfgrass managers.

"Leisure is the great growth area in the years ahead," Butz said. "We have established the principle of the 3-day weekend in America, and the 35-hour workweek is now the goal of the unions," he added, projecting an increase in outdoor recreational activities, such as golf, as people acquire all of the material things they desire and have more free time.

Butz was the first of about 40 speakers during the conference. This year's educational program was divided into seven sessions: management, public golf

owners/operators, research, thinking superintendent, turf management/ north and south, and weather.

The annual GCSAA business meeting held during the conference resulted in a new national association president, George Cleaver of Chestnut Ridge Country Club, Lutherville, Md.; a new vice president, Charles Tadge of Mayfield Country Club, South Euclid, Ohio; and new directors: David Holler, Gulph Mills Golf Club, King of Prussia, Pa.; James Wyllie, Lambton Golf and Country Club, Toronto, Ontario; and Melvin Lucas, Garden City (N.Y.) Golf Club.

Two educators and a twice-retired golf course superintendent were honored during the conference by the GSCAA Distinguished Service Award, the association's highest honor. Dr. Roy L. Goss, turf specialist at Western Washington Research and Extension Center Washington State University was recognized for "his turfgrass research specific to the Pacific Northwest, including his unprecedented work with turfgrass varieties."

Dr. John C. Harper II, extension agronomist at Pennsylvania State University, was honored for "his unusually active role in Pennsylvania turfgrass organizations and for his well-known role as an adviser who is available, willing, and

knowledgeable about local turf problems."

Arthur A. Snyder, CGCS, retired from Paradise Valley Country Club, Scottsdale, Ariz., was recognized for more than 50 years of service as a superintendent. He had helped establish turfgrass research projects, discovered a fine-leaved bermudagrass (A-53), and founded both the Cactus and Pine GCSA and the Arizona Turfgrass Council after his first retirement in 1953.

On Friday, at the end of the conference, superintendents had the opportunity to visit four San Antonio-area golf courses.

First expo a success, say CMAA exhibitors

The success of an exposition can be judged simply by the amount of sales and potential customers generated by the companies that buy booths to display their product. Using this logic, the 57 exhibitors and the Club Managers Association of America seem to have strengthened their rapport following the latter's first exposition. Bill Maddox, national sales director for E-Z-Go golf cars, is one industry representative who felt the show was a financial asset.

"I'd rank it behind the PGA Merchandise and superintendents'

FAR RIGHT: Opening ceremony at the GCSAA show included officials Tadge, Lucas, Cleaver, Ted Smith, Ted Woehrl, Dick Eichner, and Michael Bavier in front row, Holler, Dick Malpass, and Lou Haines in back.

IMMEDIATE RIGHT: Dan Jones, superintendent at Aventura CC, North Miami Beach, received the first GCSAA newsletter editors award from Dwayne Netland (center), associate editor of Golf Digest, and Dave Slaybaugh (right), editor of GOLF BUSINESS, two of the three judges. Jones edits "The South Florida Green" for the South Florida GCSA.



shows, as far as its worth to us, and we probably go to a dozen shows a year. The exposure was excellent and we got a lot of possible leads. If we're invited next year, we'll come back with a bigger exhibit." The response from the managers was equally enthusiastic. The association's show coordinator, Mrs. Karen Watkins, said the show received a "fantastic reception" from the managers.

The exhibits and the association's 51st annual conference drew more than 1,300 club managers February 13-17 at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles. Speakers introduced a number of new ideas and topics at the educational seminars, including a new kind of insurance to protect the club against actions by members who consume too many alcoholic drinks at the facility. The group also heard from Mike Hurst, who stressed the importance of new promotions at his 8,000-member Marina Bay Club in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Art Holst, a management consultant who discussed motivation, and Somers White, a former Arizona state senator who sees nonverbal actions as an important communication factor with club board members.

Possibly the primary discussion topic among managers was their role in preventing the elimination of tax deductions for club dues and entertainment expenses proposed by the Carter administration. The National Club Association told the managers that preliminary figures indicate that 1,100 golf clubs will close if Congress approves the plan. Newly-elected CMAA President George Burton was among those persons testifying before the House Ways and Means Committee March 17 asking to preserve the deductions.

The only segment of the conference which seemed to elicit a lukewarm response from the managers was the roundtable discussion among country club managers. "It seemed to lack planning. There was nothing new at all," said W. R. "Red" Steger, club manager at River Oaks Country Club in Houston, Tex.

Here are the key points from some of the presentations made to the managers:

— One of the newest legal concerns of a club's operations is protection against members who cause injury or property damage after consuming alcoholic drinks at the club. Knap Bourne, a safety consultant for Marsh & McLennan, the largest insurance brokerage firm in California, quoted a Santa

Barbara legal newspaper that said 125 such lawsuits have been filed against clubs, restaurants, and taverns.

Bourne said the club that continues to serve already-drunk members are inviting trouble. "If a club member gets drunk at your club and kills someone in a car accident — you're liable. If there's no club policy (on serving alcoholic drinks), and witnesses say he's drunk, no training program for employees, the club member can easily win," he said.

Bourne said protection against liquor liability is available, "but not on a widespread basis." He also said that bills introduced in some state legislatures to protect the establishments have been unsuccessful.

— Hurst, whose club totaled \$4 million in sales last year, told the managers that new kinds of food and promotions "are the things that make the club come alive. If you stand pat without promotions, your sales will decline."

Hurst has staged some out-of-the-ordinary promotions; a pajama party was held on Halloween and a ground hog hunting party on Ground Hog's Day. His menu includes shark, and he hopes soon to include alligator tails. He said members enjoy special activities because they want to be involved with their club and they tell others about them.

"It's based on the psychological insecurity of your members," Hurst said. "Exclusivity is one thing, but it's not enough. They talk because of product involvement. Our members tell their friends about the crazy time they had with 5,000 drunks at a pajama party. He's justifying his reasons for the club."

— Holst, a National Football League referee for 14 years, said managers can make their programs more productive if six factors can be related to their members and employees: comfort, convenience, economy, pride of ownership, durability, and safety. "The more you can relate these features to any benefits (of a program), the more people will buy your program," he said. He also reminded the managers that their goals must meet certain criteria to be accomplished. The goals should be obtainable, challenging, easily measurable, shared with others, written down, and subject to change.

— Somers White, owner of a management and financial consultant firm in Phoenix, Ariz., gave tips about keeping good relations with the club's board of

directors. "Think about what your president wants. Some want ego, some want to change the club. Maybe you adjust; if it doesn't hurt the club, go along. You'll get what you want if he gets what he wants," White said.

White said managers should also realize that about 4 percent of the membership will not be pleased no matter what is done, and these persons should not worry the manager. "We tend to operate on the negatives and forget about the positive." But he believes the sour feelings of those in power should be checked. "People are more affected, more strongly, by what they don't like. Find out what your president and board of directors don't like," said White.

The speaker also has a technique to expedite decisions when board members begin to take extreme views on an issue and can't decide what action to take. They should be given questionnaires about their members and then an independent auditor should poll the members and present findings to the board. White says the poll should convince the board members to follow the action preferred by most club members.

The managers concluded their conference by electing new officers. Whitney Travis, manager of the Stock Exchange Luncheon Club in New York City, became the vice president and Donald Beaver, manager at the Philadelphia Country Club in Gladwyne, Pa., was chosen the new secretary-treasurer.

Richard Daley, Carlouel Yacht Club in Clearwater, Fla., and Raymond Watts, The Houston Club, Houston, Tex., were re-elected to three-year terms on the board of directors. Newly-elected members are Bob Hedges, The Arlington Club, Portland, Ore., and James A. Goslin Jr., Warwick Country Club, Warwick, R.I.

TURF INDUSTRY

National federation is born in Texas

With cautious optimism, a group of turfgrass industry leaders endorsed the creation of a national turfgrass federation at a meeting February 15 during the GCSAA convention in San Antonio. A temporary slate of officers and a committee to write a set of bylaws were chosen.

The original idea of a national turfgrass federation is attributed to

Dr. Fred Grau, who made the motion for creation of the NTF, thus putting into action an idea formed 25 years ago. Dr. Richard Duble, a researcher at the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas A&M University, did much of the organizational work of this and two previous meetings.

Duble was chosen as secretary-treasurer of the NTF; Gene Nutter of Chem-Lawn as vice president; and Lou Greco, superintendent at Squaw Creek Country Club, Vienna, Ohio, as president. James Watson of The Toro Co.'s irrigation division seconded Dr. Grau's motion for creation and was named to the bylaws committee along with Grau, Dr. James Beard of Texas A&M, and Tom Mascaro.

The desire is to make the federation resemble the Council on Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST), a relatively successful and noncompetitive group representing agriculture. Without actually lobbying, CAST gathers data and polls industry leaders regarding topics of critical interest to agriculture. As a result, government officials consult CAST on agricultural issues.

In a prepared statement, Duble said, "Areas of immediate concern to the National Turfgrass Federation include pesticide restrictions, water use restrictions, energy conservation, land use regulations, and tax laws relating to greenbelt areas."

ASSOCIATIONS

Builders meet, elect new president

The Golf Course Builders of America met in San Antonio during the GCSAA show, and Eugene Brown of Greenville, N.C., turned the title of president over to David Canavan of Culpeper, Va.

At the annual president's dinner, the builders heard two guest speakers. Ronald C. Reeve, technical director of Advanced Drainage Systems Inc., discussed shallow drainage in agricultural operations and how it could apply to golf courses. William Amick, president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, told the builders that he expected the golf course construction business to be better in the period 1978-79 than it was in 1976-77 — "But that's not saying much," he added.

Amick expects New England to be the "quietest" part of the U.S. as