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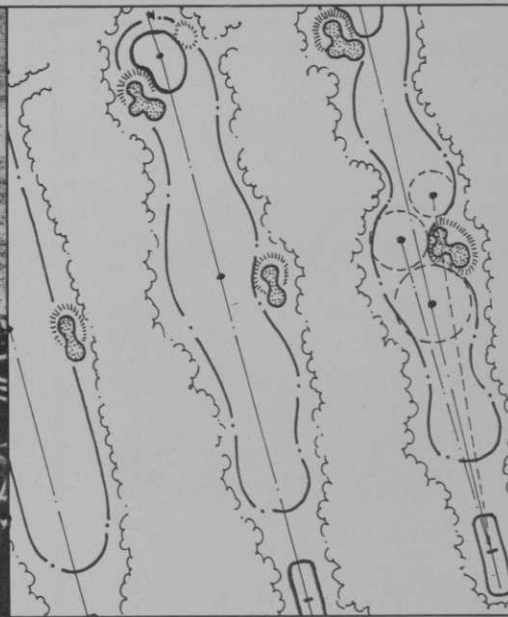
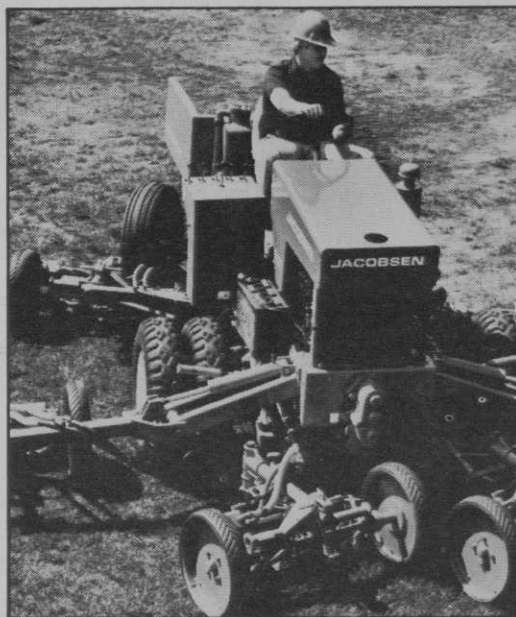
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WORKING WITH NATURE



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Stretched executive course/p. 18

golf business/june

VOLUME 52 NUMBER 6

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FEATURES

Modern maintenance equipment cuts manpower needs

The biggest part of any golf course maintenance budget is labor, but judicious selection and use of equipment can reduce labor costs. Superintendent Stan Metsker explains how it has worked for him. 8

Contour mowing adds flair to fairways

The simple expedient of mowing fairway contours as curving lines, rather than straight, can reduce fairway area — and, therefore, the amount of fertilizer and other chemicals you use on them. A team of golf course architects shows how it's done. 14

Seay and Palmer design a county course

A government golf course laid out by the team of Ed Seay and Arnold Palmer has to be news, but so is the way the course construction was financed. Editor Dave Slaybaugh brought back this report from the Spessard Holland Golf Course in Florida. 18

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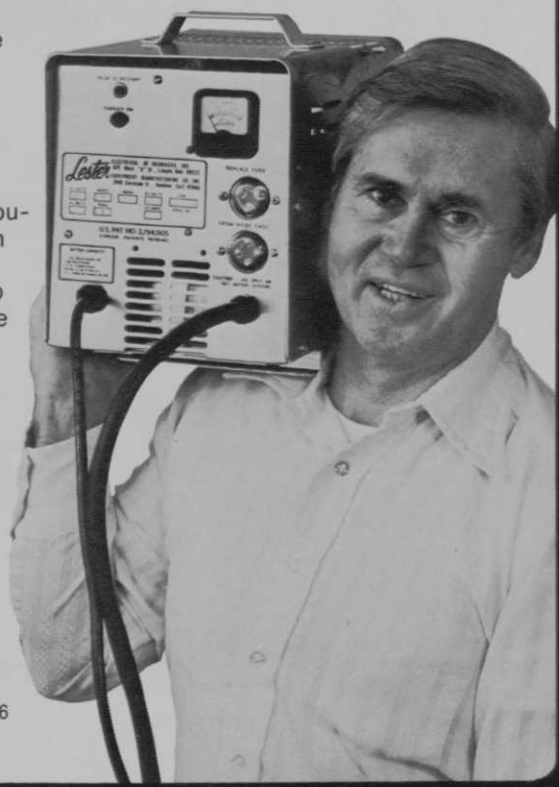
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Idea file

Superintendent aids heart attack victims

Members of the Lancaster Country Club in Lancaster, Pa., are receiving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction under a program begun by superintendent Ken Diedrich.

There was little interest in the sessions until a club member suffered a heart attack in the clubhouse. A member who had been taking the classes was there and administered oxygen until a doctor arrived to provide further treatment. The incident served as an example for the service and class enrollment increased.

Paying employee taxes can save money

Payroll-tax strategist Roy Johnson, president of PCS/Reports Ltd., New York, says employers can save money without cheating their employees in some cases by granting smaller pay raises and picking up the worker's social security tax.

The example Johnson uses, according to The Wall Street Journal, is an employee earning \$15,000 annually who gets a raise to \$16,500. The cost to the employer is \$17,498.25,



since he must pay 6.05 percent in social security taxes. The tax also takes the same percentage from the employee's wages, leaving the worker with \$15,501.75.

By limiting the salary increase to \$15,500 and picking up the employee's social security tax (12.1 percent), the employer pays \$1,875.50 in taxes for each employee. This means the total amount for wages and taxes of \$17,375.50. The employer has saved \$122.75 and the employee has lost only \$1.75.

Flower Show booth aids public relations

The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents bought space for a booth for the third consecutive year at the Chicago Flower Show in April.

Five association members were in the booth each day, providing passersby with information about the maintenance of their home lawns. Various weed pests commonly found in the area were placed in pots on top of the booth, easily attracting the attention of many persons. Posters showing turf diseases were hung behind the booth.

News

PRIVATE VS. PUBLIC

Burlington, N.C. owners fight city course

A fight by 10 owners and pros of daily fee courses in Burlington, N.C., and surrounding Alamance County against the low fees and occasional no markup of pro shop merchandise at a municipal course has spurred an investigation of that course's business practices by the Burlington recreation commission.

The fight envelops many of the traditional issues that daily fee owners normally object to, specifically low rates. But there are also a number of deviations from the norm that make the Burlington situation unique.

The city of about 50,000 persons purchased the golf course in 1975, even though there were already too many golf courses in Alamance and the three surrounding counties for all to be profitable, according to National Golf Foundation figures. The new course, Indian Valley Golf Club, lies about 4 miles north of the city limits and draws numerous players from outside of Burlington who do not support the course with taxes.

And now, in reaction to the charges of cut-rate greens fees, an ad hoc committee of the recreation commission will recommend that rates be raised to match those at daily fee courses. If the city council approves the increase, one major reason for establishing a municipal golf course has become nullified.

The daily fee operators and pros joined forces and hired an attorney after an advertisement December 17, 1977, in the Burlington Times-News. The city said in the ad that numerous pro shop items would be sold at discounts for Christmas specials; all golf balls were sold at \$11 a dozen, gloves at \$4, sweaters from \$6.50 to \$13.

But it also advertised that all shoes, golf bags, and accessory items would be sold at \$1 over cost and golf clubs at cost plus tax. Sets of Wilson model 1200 woods and irons were sold at \$265, Wilson LD woods and irons at \$155, Wilson Staff woods and irons at \$250 and

all Hogan Apex and Director woods and irons at \$265.

Even though this tactic upset the daily fee owners, they were more concerned about the methods they believed the city was using to keep up the course. "We're worried about the use of unlimited funds for the golf course more than about merchandise, but the merchandise was proof of their attitude," said Steve Walker of the Shamrock Golf Club in Burlington.

The daily fee contingent is maintaining that the city course has attempted to needlessly undercut their operations in the past. They point to lower rates, special discounts for nearby college students (\$2 for 18 holes on weekdays) special group rates, and the use of city employees from other city departments to cut course maintenance costs that are not reflected in their expenses.

The city denies many of the charges, especially the one concerning the use of other city employees. They were also embarrassed by the discovery that 47 sweaters intended to be sold at the Indian Valley pro shop were allegedly delivered to city hall and purchased by city employees for \$6.25 each.

The city purchased the course from a private individual in 1975 apparently for about \$425,000. Cecil McKay Jr., a golf course

realtor in Lansing, Mich., told GOLF BUSINESS he had tried to sell the course for \$472,000 before the city bought it, but had no takers after more than 30 inquiries. Prospective buyers complained that the second nine was not complete and that course equipment and the clubhouse were inadequate.

City officials told residents that the federal government would pay for half of the purchase cost when attempting to sell the idea, according to Walker. Once the property was purchased, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, an agency of the U.S. Interior Department, turned down the city's bid since there was no public need; there already were enough courses.

The reason for the purchase is still hazy. Some residents and daily fee officials blame former mayor and councilman Paul Andrews. He was accused at a public meeting of playing golf for free at the course with a guest pass and also waiving fees for his guests. The city does allot 19 free passes for its officials and the media, but no one has been able to prove that Andrews is guilty of any wrongdoing concerning the purchase.

The cries of the daily fee owners have brought some preliminary recommendations from a committee of the recreation commission that should please them.

The committee has agreed to increase fees 50 cents, which raises rates to \$4 on weekdays and \$5 on weekends, the same as those at many daily fee courses.

They also want to take softgoods out of the pro shop, hire a ranger to monitor those who pay for nine holes but attempt to play 18, and limit discount rates to students who are 18 years or younger.

Approval of the recommendations must be given by the city council.

PUBLIC COURSES

100 Michigan owners join association

About 100 daily fee golf course owners in Michigan, troubled by increasing financial problems, have each anted \$25 and formed the Michigan Association of Public Golf Courses.

The group has been formed to derive financial benefits and put together educational programs to help owners improve their golf course and operations management.

The association was formed about three months ago, said Dick Grossnackle, a member and owner of the Perry Golf Course in Perry, Mich. He said the primary catalyst in forming the group was a hope that insurance costs could be trimmed.

"After talking to five or six different companies, we found one who will write for the individual courses that are members of the association at about a 25 percent savings," Grossnackle said. The owner said his \$4,600 insurance premium was slashed by \$1,100 since the insurance company received business from so many golf courses.

The group feels, though, that this is just one way they will benefit from the association. They want to hire a full-time manager in about a year to coordinate the insurance program and act as a lobbyist on tax issues that concern the owners. The owners feel they need an organization to help them fight ever-increasing property taxes, said Cecil McKay Jr., a golf course appraiser and realtor in Lansing who is the group's acting executive secretary.

"The seminars on taxation were the most poorly attended sessions at the National Golf Foundation's workshop for daily fee owners in November," McKay said. "It's because they're frustrated and

NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION BOX SCORE

January-May 1978		REGULATION COURSES	EXECUTIVE COURSES	PAR 3 COURSES	TOTAL
OPENED FOR PLAY	New	12	6	1	34
	Additions	11	4	0	
STARTED CONSTRUCTION	New	22	3	1	41
	Additions	12	2	1	
PROSPECTIVE		49	4	4	57

don't feel they can really do much about it by themselves."

McKay feels the heart of the association will be numerous education programs on golf course management. "We're trying to set up the association for business management aspects. The biggest problem in the golf industry is that no book or guidelines have ever been written for golf course management," said McKay.

The group is working with the Michigan PGA Section to include a seminar for daily fee management at a state PGA show in mid-October.

The association hopes to pay for its manager and other expenses, such as a planned newsletter, through proceeds from a state tournament this summer.

Amateur golfers who play at daily fee courses can enter the tournament for \$10 each. Winners from each course will meet for the state championship in the first week in August, with the association guaranteeing \$1,400 in prize money for the top finishers. Grossnackle said the association expects to net about \$20,000 from the tournament.

McKay said the tournament has been devised so association owners won't have to pay dues that will become too high in the future and force owners to drop out. "We want to have a source of income other than dues to pay the manager's salary," he said.

Dan Burgess, owner of Hickory Hills golf course in Jackson, Mich., is the president of the association. Other officers are Keith Ronan, vice president, owner of Alwyn Downs golf course in Marshall, and Jack Grossnackle, Perry golf course.

McKay said attempts to organize other state associations are taking place in Ohio, Indiana, Florida, and North Carolina.

GOVERNMENT GOLF

Courses may unite as OPRA chapter

A movement has been initiated in Ohio to form an organization under the auspices of the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association to unite approximately 70 government golf courses in the state. Included would be golf facilities operated by municipalities, counties, the state itself, and other government bodies.

The organization would be a chapter of the OPRA and would provide for "the free exchange of

ideas among golf administrators, golf course managers, golf professionals, golf superintendents, and others," according to Gene Burress, supervisor of golf for the City of Cincinnati and one of the prime movers of the idea.

Burress suggested the organization could provide guidance in organizational structure, job descriptions and salaries, expense accounting, purchasing, setting greens fees, player development, and similar areas.

OPEN SPACE RULING

Two Maryland clubs retain tax privileges

Concluding a legal struggle that goes back several years (see GB, August 1976, p. 20), Maryland Attorney General Francis B. Burch recently ruled that the Burning Tree Club and Congressional Country Club, located just a mile apart in the Washington suburb of Bethesda, could retain their "open space" preferential tax treatment because they do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin.

The prestigious, all-male Burning Tree, the golf club of U.S. presidents, was given a clean bill under a provision of the law that makes discrimination against women acceptable if the club is operated "primarily" for men.

Burch cited as evidence the fact that the men's locker room occupies two-thirds of the clubhouse and a substantial addition would have to be built in order to accommodate both sexes. He also observed that Burning Tree, unlike other clubs, "does not play host to women at any time." He noted that the golf shop, separate from the clubhouse, "allows entry to members' wives only by appointment on specific December days prior to Christmas."

The ruling also found that Burning Tree does not discriminate against race, because the 547 members include two blacks as well as "members of Spanish, Indian, and Oriental origin."

Congressional was found not to be discriminate against blacks even though it has no black members. An opinion of the attorney general's office noted that the club adopted a new policy of screening applicants last December that was an "affirmative action to make its membership practices more open and less susceptible" to the "blackball."

COMPANIES

Textron agrees to buy Jacobsen

Textron Inc. and Allegheny Ludlum Industries Inc. signed an agreement in principle on May 3 for Textron to acquire for an undisclosed amount of cash the assets and business of Jacobsen Manufacturing Co., an Allegheny subsidiary producing tractors, mowers, and other course maintenance equipment.

Corporate officials declined to comment until the deal is finalized — which Jacobsen Advertising Manager Roy L. Beatty said would be about June 1. No drastic changes in organization were expected, however.

Textron is already involved in the golf business through such subsidiaries as E-Z-Go golf cars, Homelite power equipment, and Bell helicopters.

Toro sets record for quarterly sales

The continued increase in the sale of turf irrigation equipment helped The Toro Co. achieve sales of \$71.8 million from February through April, the highest amount during any quarter in the company's history, David T. McLaughlin, chairman and chief executive officer, has announced.

Sales of turf irrigation equipment rose 67 percent during those three months compared to the same period last year.

Jacobsen closes sodcutter plant

Jacobsen Manufacturing Co. stopped production on all sodcutters and three other pieces of equipment, and also shut down its Minneapolis factory on April 26, said Howard L. McPherson, vice president and general manager of the Turf Products Division.

Other products that were discontinued are the Edge-R-Rite, an edger used for trimming; Sub-Air, an aerator; and Mete-R-Matic, a machine used for top dressing.

The company will continue to supply parts for the equipment through its dealers and distributors.

The production of Trap King,

the machine that rakes sand traps, will be moved to its Racine, Wis., plant.

This is the second plant Jacobsen has closed within a year. Its Bruce, Wis., plant closed on July 1, 1977. "The closings are part of a total program aimed at utilizing manufacturing capacities more efficiently," McPherson said.

SEED

Still no decision on burning limits

As of late May, no decision had yet been made by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's regional office in Seattle on the amount of land in Oregon that will be allowed for field burning this year by the state's grass seed growers.

State law limits the burning to 50,000 acres, but the Oregon Seed Council is requesting that 180,000 acres be burned this year to prepare the land for the 1979 seed crop. Opposition has formed in Springfield and Eugene, with residents in the latter city reportedly not wanting any land to be burned.

Groups there say particulates from the burning fields create a health hazard and violate the federal Clean Air Act.

A 50,000-acre limit will cause a gradual deterioration of seed quality and a 25 to 75 percent reduction in the amount of seed produced for the 1979 crop, said Dave Nelson, executive secretary for the Oregon Seed Council.

Oregon Assistant Attorney General Don Arnold has said he believes the growers will be allowed to burn between 100,000 and 120,000 acres. "They hinted they would allow something over the 50,000-acre limit," Arnold said.

Nelson has proposed that growers use backfiring and strip-lighting to reduce the particulate levels, but apparently the idea has not impressed government officials. Nelson said the group is prepared to go to court if the EPA does not grant the 180,000-acre limit or its equivalent by using the alternative burning methods.

Seed growers have been asked to contribute funds for a possible legal fight and the seed companies will be approached, Nelson said.

The Seed Council feels burning has done little to violate the clean air standards in Eugene and Springfield.

Clippings

Brief news from in and around the golf business . . .

The Cleveland District Golf Association has given a new rating to the golf course at **The Country Club** in Pepper Pike, Ohio. "It's the first time we've ever substantially reduced the rating on a course because it was in such excellent condition," CDGA rating committee chairman Ed Preisler told a local newspaper. "The old course rating was 71.3, but it will now be played at 70.36." Credit for the new rating goes to course superintendent Al Muhle and his crew.

The late **Jack Ormond**, golf course superintendent at Canoe Brook Country Club for many years and a pioneer in fairway renovation and crabgrass control, was recently enshrined in the New Jersey Turfgrass Association Hall of Fame. Ormond began at Canoe Brook clearing land before construction of the golf course and served as superintendent from 1942 to 1968. He was a director of the New Jersey Golf Course Superintendents Association for six terms.

Jacobsen Manufacturing Co. presented its 1977 California Turf Equipment Top Volume Award to its leading U.S. distributor, the **B. Hayman Co.** President Ray McMicken accepted the award during ceremonies in Los Angeles last month.

Spokane, Wash., will host the **American Sod Producers Association's 12th annual Convention & Field Days** July 19-21. In addition to exhibits of sod industry supplies and equipment, the program includes of sod farming and seed production/processing facilities. Headquarters hotel will be the Sheraton-Spokane. Contact: ASPA, Association Building, 9th and Minnesota, Hasting, NE 68901 (phone 402/463-5691).

Dr. Joseph Duich of Penn State has informed us that the university's **1978 Turfgrass Field Days** will be held August 16-17 at the Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center at Pennsylvania State University. For details, contact Dr. Duich at 21 Tyson Building, Department of Agronomy, University Park, PA 16802.

Executive Concepts, International, parent company of Brookhaven International, Ltd., is looking for a place to build a **very exclusive, very expensive private golf club and resort**. C. F. "Bud" Brooks, president of the Nevada-based corporation, said "We have been making inquiries and conducting feasibility studies of many locations in the Western hemisphere over the past year and have now reduced our prime considerations to a very few." Still in the running were Hawaii, two Caribbean islands, and southern U.S. sites.

The proposed club would have a tournament-specification 18-hole golf course, putting greens, driving range, tennis courts, saunas, and a \$2 million-plus clubhouse. A limited number of nontransferable lifetime memberships would be available "by invitation only" and would cost \$25,000 plus annual dues of \$5,000.

Municipalities thinking about building a golf course, whether it's their first or their fourth, will be interested in an 8-page pocket-size brochure offered by the American Society of Golf Course Architects. Titled **Planning the Municipal Golf Course**, the publication discusses space requirements, outlines methods of financing the development of municipal courses, and includes sample financial reports from facilities around the country. For a free copy, write to ASGCA, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60601.

Thinking about a golf vacation? Consider Virginia. The Virginia State Travel Service (6 North Sixth St., Richmond, VA 23219) offers a free **Golf in Virginia** directory listing 74 public and semi-private courses within the state. Each listing gives number of holes, course length, par, features, and a brief overall description.

Superintendents with nematodes or other problems requiring fumigation may want to contact Hendrix and Dail, Inc., **soil fumigation specialists** for prices and a copy of their free descriptive brochure. The company serves the area east of the Rocky Mountains "from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes." Write to Hendrix and Dail, Inc., P.O. Box 631, Greenville, NC 27834 or phone 919/758-4263.

Douglas T. Hawes, former professor of agronomy at the University of Maryland, is the new director, Mid-Continent Region, of the USGA Green Section . . . **Doug Ballenger**, former assistant pro at Hunt Valley GC near Baltimore and a member of the 1973 Walker Cup team, has joined the staff of G. L. Cornell Co. in Gaithersburg, Md., specializing in the leasing and rental of Harley-Davidson golf cars.



Ballenger Skelton West

James E. Skelton has been appointed coordinator of golf course operations for the Firestone CC in Akron, Ohio. He has been working on the Firestone courses in various capacities since 1966, most recently as working supervisor of the North and South courses . . .

John West has joined the staff of Lake Barrington Shores (Ill.) GC as superintendent of the residential-recreational community's 6,505-yard golf course, which is scheduled to open next month. West has 18 years experience in course maintenance, plus 8 months recently spent constructing golf courses for Moore Golf Co. of Culpeper, Va.

Rich Gardner is the new West Florida representative for Lakeshore Equipment & Supply Co. . . . **Richard L. Colman** will be plant manager of Ag Industries Mfg. Corp.'s new sulfur-coated fertilizer facility in Columbia, Ala. Scheduled to go into full production this summer, the plant will be the first of its kind in the United States.

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golf business

Modern maintenance equipment reduces manpower needs

by Stan Metsker



Like the one pictured above, the traps at the Country Club of Colorado are well-groomed by one worker using a Toro Sand Pro motorized trap rake.

While the cost of operating a golf course has been increasing during the last decade, the size of course maintenance crews has been decreasing, and also the portion of the budget devoted to labor costs. In his 1929 book *Golf Architecture in America*, George C. Thomas, Jr. reported that, "Roughly speaking, it should take 20 men to care for the average 18-hole course properly."

At Cherry Hills Country Club in 1958 a course maintenance crew of about 14 was used in the summer, and seven in the winter. At the Country Club of Colorado we are now doing the job with nine workers in the summer and five in the winter. The reduction in crew size is largely due to automation. The effect on the budget is a sizeable reduction in the percentage of the budget allocated to labor. From two-thirds to three-fourths of the maintenance budget was normally spent on labor 10 years ago. For 1976 and 1977 the figure at the Country Club of Colorado was 48 percent.

In the comparison chart below showing the number of men used per job, each man represents 40 hours of work at that job.

It is difficult to compare the requirements at different golf courses, but any golf course that has not been able to hold labor costs down should take a hard look at what automation can do.

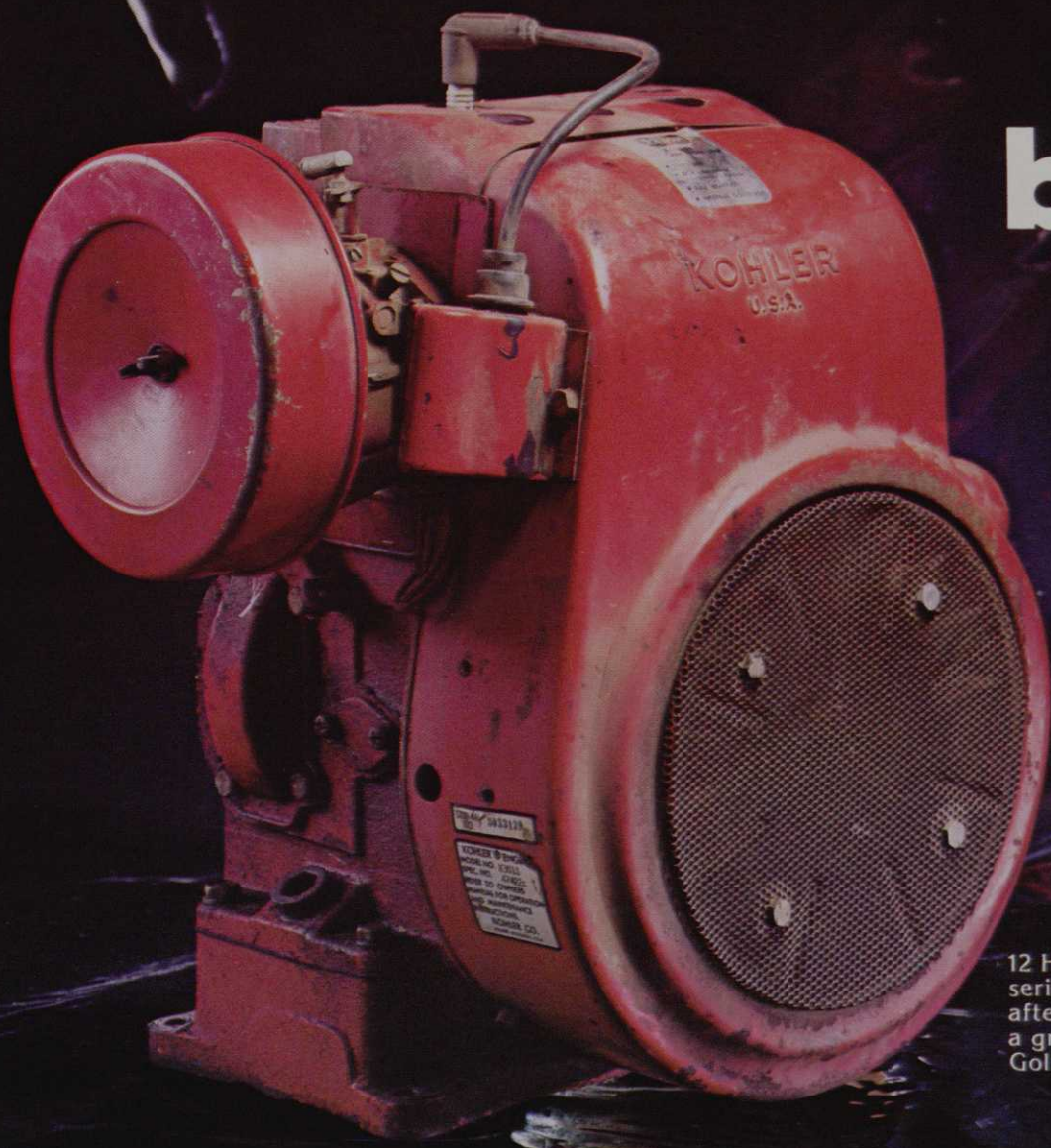
Turf care

Irrigation and mowing are the two main areas where automation has helped the most. During these years we have gone from quck coupler systems to semi-automatic to full automatic. With these changes we not only acheived a reduction of manpower from four night watermen to just one daytime technician, but we have also gained much better control of the water. Short intervals of irrigation can be applied, which allows better infiltration and less runoff. The total

Stan Metsker, golf course superintendent at the Country Club of Colorado in Colorado Springs, holds a degree in horticulture and has been active in golf course and turf work for 20 years. He has written numerous magazine articles, spoken frequently at turf conferences, and lectured on horticulture at a community college.

For ad on following page circle 102 on free information card

JOB	1958	1977	CHANGE	COMMENTS
Irrigation	4	1	-3	Due to automatic system
Care of greens	2	½	-1½	Due to triplex mower
Raking traps	1	½	-½	Due to motorized trap rake
Small area trimming	1	1	0	Same
Rough mowing	1	1	0	Same
Fairway mowing	1	1	0	Easier with hydraulic lifts
Large area trimming	1	1	0	Same
Mechanic	1	1	0	Works harder than ever
Foreman	1	0	-1	Not needed due to smaller crew
Spray & construction	0	1	+1	Does work formerly done by foreman
Superintendent	1	1	0	Does more work and less supervising
Total	14	9	-5	Savings of salaries and fringe benefits



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amount applied can easily be controlled down to the minute.

The reason the modern-day waterman should be called a technician is that he must not only know how to fix the usual plumbing problems, but he must also understand and be able to repair the control system and the more complicated sprinkler heads and valves.

The inventory of parts that must be kept on hand has also changed. It is not unusual to have to wait for parts these days; therefore in order to keep everything running, it is necessary to have a well-stocked parts inventory. Three thousand dollars worth of parts on hand for an 18-hole golf course is not too much.

Mowing practices are a little more difficult to measure than irrigation. We have undoubtedly saved labor in most areas due to better equipment, but it is especially obvious in the mowing of greens. Where we formerly

used four men for 2½ hours (10 man-hours), we now use one triplex greens mower with one operator for 4 hours.

The quality of the cut between the two methods is very close to being the same. When everything was working good and with a good operator, we probably got a better cut with the walk-behind units, but the triplex unit does a good job and has fewer mechanical problems. The triplex certainly has the advantage on weekends when crews are hard to get and overtime must be paid. This is also true for the trap raking.

Trap care

The motorized trap rake does a better job of keeping the sand loose than raking by hand. Not only that, but it is now possible to find personnel who really do not mind the job because they get to drive a motorized vehicle as opposed to walking several miles — many of them through hot, loose sand



The advantage of hydraulic lifts on fairway and rough mowing tractors is not so apparent in mowing as it is in transporting the mowers from one part of the course to another. The operator doesn't even have to get off the tractor.

They've Joined the Dixie Green® Fan Club



Golf professionals, golf superintendents and weekend players alike sing the praises of Dixie Green® overseeding mixture. Their reasons are the same: Dixie Green® produces a smooth, true and beautiful putting surface that will last the winter through. Here's what some of the professionals have said about it:

"I mowed 15 days after sowing Dixie Green® and was on my way to the prettiest putting surface I have ever seen." Bob Martin, Superintendent Clarksdale Country Club, Clarksdale, Mississippi.

"Dixie Green® has given me a uniform, dense putting surface that has putted consistently true. The color has been outstanding . . . even though the temperature in January dropped to 11 degrees F Bent greens went off color . . . but Dixie Green® came through like a champ." Ed O'Donnell, Superintendent Brook Valley Golf & Country Club, Greenville, North Carolina.

Dixie Green® overseeding mixture is a premier mix of Highlight Chewings-type red fescue which was judged World Champion at the 45th Annual Royal Agricultural Show in Toronto, and Derby turf-type perennial ryegrass. This fine mix has proven a winner for winterseeding of greens, tees and aprons all over the South. Dixie Green®—a great mixture for you and your members.

INTERNATIONAL SEEDS, INC.

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