

three categories: refined, medium or coarse. On a boundary planting that might be 100 feet or more away from the viewer, the texture would be only a small part of the problem. If the viewer is coming within 40 or 50 feet of the plant's foliage then texture becomes rather important. And if the viewer observes the plant at close range, texture becomes extremely important.

To give you an example of what we mean by texture in foliage, let's take two extreme examples. On the one hand, if the reader lives in that part of the country where as a boy, he used to smoke the "cigars" of the Catalpa tree, he will quickly recall the large leaves on these trees. They are also almost as rough as sandpaper to the touch. This would be an example of an extremely coarse foliage.

Now moving to the other extreme where we are looking for a highly refined foliage, I can't think of anything better than the recently popularized Dawn Redwood. It is a cone-bearing deciduous tree. Each tiny that you would hardly know that you were touching it. That is a highly refined foliage.

For medium texture you'd include such plants as Honeylocust, Scarlet Oak, Willow Oak, willow trees of various types, and many others.

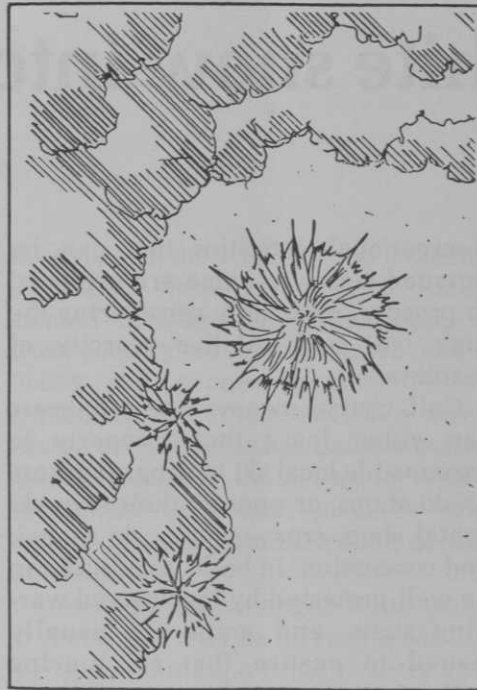
Any superintendent who has ever raked leaves will soon recall that certain ones were so coarse, and so hard to handle, that you got to dislike that tree purely on the basis of its foliage texture.

Deciduous or coniferous?

The logical next question is, "Do you plant all deciduous plants (those that lose their leaves during the dormant season) or all conifers? Or do you mix the two?" The best landscape composition comes from a mixture of the two. However, you need plenty of depth to do a professional job in composition where you include both types.

The best composition is to be found in nature. One must have years of experience and preferably some formal training to sit down with a piece of paper and design something for the next 50 to 100 or 150 years into the future that won't turn out to be just a tall, flat green wall.

The inside shape of the boundary planting is all important, especially if you have anywhere from 50 to more feet of space for planting. It should not be a straight wall of tree trunks. It should have gradual curving bays and interesting promontories. Occasionally you might have room to set



a specimen tree (see above) standing in one of those open, grassed bays. We will cover the use of specimen trees in a later article on composition and design.

How many plants?

We can just hear the impatience building up in most of the superintendents and Greens Committee chairmen who are reading this article. "When are they going to get around to the most important question of all—how many plants will it take?"

The answer is not so much in how many will it take as it is how many can your budget and labor force handle in any one planting season?

It is much better to plan ahead for such projects, especially if you are planning to do the work with your own labor force. We do not recommend this but it is a way of really reducing the total cost.

We are fully aware of how busy the superintendents are, especially in the spring. If they are in a high rainfall area such as the Northeast, it stretches their patience to the last thread in just trying to get the grass cut. We can imagine what would happen if they had 200 trees sitting down in the storage area, and the weather was such, they couldn't get out and plant them. So careful planning is extremely important. Try to envision just about how much could be handled in any one planting season. It is much better to do it gradually than to get discouraged from overextending yourselves.

Ordinarily, on a course that is already blessed with some trees we usually add at a minimum of five to 10 trees on each hole and a maximum of from 30 to 40. Most courses that handle their own planting take on only from one to three holes a year. This is just

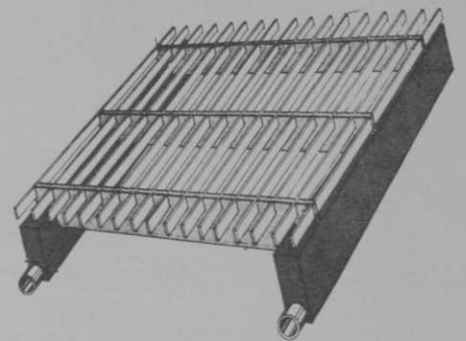
about all the superintendent and his workcrew can manage. If the weather is right it is not too bad. If the weather goes against them, it can become a nightmare.

Spring or Fall?

The next question comes, do you plant in the spring or the fall? Again, the answer is check with your local authorities, especially your Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service or the local nurserymen in your particular area. In the northern temperate zones, it is usually a case of too much rain and mud in the spring. The Fall seems to be the better time because heavy vehicles aren't so apt to bog down or make ruts in your roughs or fairways.

The disadvantage of fall planting is that if it is not done as soon as planting is possible, there will be practically no new roots set before the oncoming of winter. That is the big advantage of spring planting. Each plant can set out a new crop of roots before winter sets in.

Maintenance and the planting techniques will be covered in a subsequent article. We hope that this discussion on boundary plantings has inspired you to give consideration to your course's individual problems. □



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Winter conversion of otherwise idle golf facilities into profitable winter cross country touring centers has become increasingly popular throughout the Snowbelt states. The relatively low dollar investment and maintenance costs required to operate a cross country touring center can yield exceptionally high returns. In some cases, golf courses can increase annual revenues by as much as 40 percent, plus better amortize the cost of normally vacant property, restaurant facilities and hotels.

Cross country skiing is attractive to a broad range of relatively affluent, upscale people because it is easy to learn, as accessible as the nearest snowfall, is an excellent exercise, and a favorite family pastime. According to industry sources, approximately 4 million people enjoy the sport each year.

Sales of cross country equipment have increased by over 400 percent in the past five years, and significant growth is forecast in the years ahead.

Recreational activities that can be pursued closer to home are expected to prosper, especially considering the high cost and relative scarcity of gasoline.

Golf course owners and managers can either lease their property to responsible local ski touring operators or ski shops, or operate their own ski rental shop, cross country ski school, and concession. In both cases, turf can be well-protected by fencing and warning signs, and maps are usually issued to ensure that ski touring enthusiasts don't stray.

Dick Tremblay, co-owner of Tory Pines Resort in Franconia, New Hampshire says, "It made good sense to use our hotel, restaurant and golf course during the winter months." The resort converted its 150-acre golf course, and the surrounding 270 acres, into a ski touring center last year.

"Our courses are tree-lined on both sides to provide excellent wind cover. And our location at the base of Crooked Mountain lends an attrac-

tive alpine atmosphere that people seem to like. Now the program is so successful, we sometimes question whether our primary business is golf or skiing."

Turf Protection

Tremblay, who estimates a 35-40 percent increase in yearly resort income last year due to the winter conversion to ski touring, found virtually no turf damage when the snow melted and golfing began in the Spring. "We kept people off the greens and tee areas by posting signs and keeping flagsticks up all year long," he says.

Tory Pines protected their turf further by directing trails away from delicate grass, and by rotating the maintained ski tracks on a regular basis to avoid potentially damaging snow compaction. Skiing was also suspended when there was less than a plentiful amount of snow on the ground, usually two to three feet. Only two to three inches, however, are actually required for cross country skiing.

Proximity to a prime winter ski touring market is an important key to the success of winter cross country skiing conversions, according to Tremblay. Tory Pines is well situated in an excellent snow region. In addition, it's located only a short distance from Concord, Keene and Manchester — three of the largest cities in New Hampshire. The facility also attracts many Boston-area residents during the weekends.

Insurance

Liability coverage is also an important consideration. Although injuries to cross country skiers are rare — ski touring enthusiasts seldom descend as fast as down hill skiers — operators are just as liable for accidents as they are during warmer months.

"As a resort complex," says Tremblay, "we deal with a year-long insurance package that includes liability coverage for cross country skiers. Last year, however, the only injury we incurred was a dislocated thumb."

Liability insurance is also available at moderate costs for members of the National Ski Touring Operator's Association (NSTOA), located in Brattleboro, Vermont. NSTOA insurance is based upon a percentage of skier days, and usually starts at a minimum



Scenes such as these are the delight of cross country skiers. Trails should be carefully marked to avoid crossing the more damage prone areas, such as greens and tees.



fee of \$600.

Start-up costs

Start-up costs for a small cross country ski touring facility are relatively low, compared to key expenses for establishing a golf course, for instance. According to estimates prepared by one cross country ski equipment manufacturer, first-year revenues can be as high as \$19,000 for a small ski touring center in operation for 12 weeks. See table one for a review of basic expenses and sources of revenue, which illustrate the profitability of winter conversion.

Industry assistance

While some golf course owners may already be knowledgeable about cross country skiing, the majority can usually benefit from assistance provided by cross country industry representatives. The best sources are local

ski shops or the National Ski Touring Operator's Association. Trak, Inc., located in Ward Hill, Mass. and a cross country ski manufacturer, has a strong golf course program. Their touring center consultants can offer advice on trail construction and maintenance, explain the set-up of rental equipment programs, promote and handle general administration of the conversion.

Local ski shops might lease your property and assume all responsibility for implementing a cross country skiing program.

The National Ski Touring Operator's Association provides literature and printed guidelines for effective conversion of golf facilities. The organization set standards for marking trails, and acts as a representative for ski touring operators in the U.S. For more information on NSTOA,

contact: Stan Allaben, NSTOA, Box 557, Brattleboro, VT 05301. Phone: 802/257-4341.

Reaching Potential Golfers

Cross country skiing can be highly profitable, and yield added benefits during the rest of the year as well. A golf course touring center can help reach an entirely new sports crowd, one that might now ordinarily consider golf during warmer months. "You can put an older person or child on a pair of cross country skis," says Dick Tremblay, "and in a matter of minutes they're out on your golf course having a ball. It's a great family sport and one that exposes an entirely new and different sports crowd to the golfing environment. The cross country skier of winter might very well turn into a golfer during the rest of the year." □



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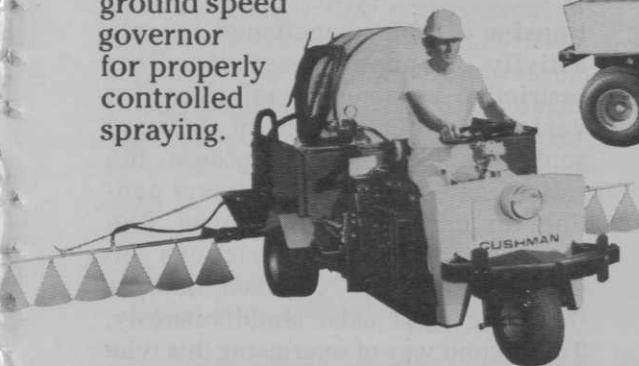
2. SHORT BOX & FLATBED/BOX.

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4. TOP DRESSER.

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the vehicle's ground speed to maintain an even spreading pattern over a 31½" swath. And the hopper holds up to 1,000 lbs. of material from rock salt to powdered fertilizer.

5. SPREADER/SEEDER.

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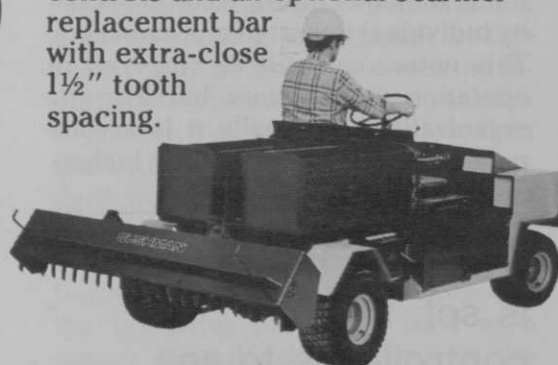
We call it the Quick Aerator because its 46" wide swath lets you finish big aerating jobs fast. It can also move from job to job fast, because it can be



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Managing with budgets

(Editor's note: This is the third and final in a series of articles by Organizational Systems Inc., a research-based consulting firm specializing in solving organization and management problems. The first two articles are found in the October and November, 1979 issues of GOLF BUSINESS, respectively.)

In the first two articles of this series we dealt with two questions: (1) what are budgets?, and (2) how is a budget formulated? The second question was answered in two ways. One was the actual method of formulating a budget in accounting terms, the second was the wider process of budgeting, or how different actors in the organization play different roles, and thereby influence the outcomes of the budgeting process.

It is unwise, however, to think that once we go through the budgeting process everything will take care of itself. What happens with the budgets during the budget period is equally important. Different organizations use budgets for different purposes; and the uses a budget is put to will affect not only the budgeting process in the next period but also a host of other factors.

In this article, which is the last of the series, we shall look at these uses and their implications. There are six possible uses of a budget. An organization may use the budget in one, two or all of these ways, and other organizations may forget altogether that a budget exists. The six possible uses of a budget are: (1) as a tool for control; (2) as a form of progress report on work; (3) as a standard for performance evaluation; (4) as a tool for motivating managers; (5) as a means of feedback on the changes occurring in the environment; and (6) as a source of information for future planning.

Each of the uses offers a different perspective. At the same time they are not independent of each other. How you use a budget for control will certainly affect the motivation of managers. We find, therefore, that a logic emerges as to when a particular use is feasible and when it is not. This logic is not the same for all organizations. Some parts of it will hold true for some organizations, while other

parts may be valid for others. It is up to the superintendent to construct his own logic, and thereby derive the strategy for managing with budgets.

Every superintendent has his own notion of what control means.

1. Budget as a tool for control

Every superintendent has his own notion of what control means. The diversity of such notions becomes manifest in the way budgets are used for the purpose of control. The original notion of budgetary control related merely to the financial control of organizational activities. The main purpose here was to ensure that the limits on expenditure were observed by individual departmental managers. This notion can still be observed in operation in the more bureaucratic organizations. Normally it is accompanied by the use of a fixed budget.

Once the budget is set, the controller is to see that the budgeted amount is spent.

Once the budget is set, the only responsibility of the controller is to see that the budgeted amount is spent. In the extreme cases, underspending is considered to be as bad as overspending or even worse.

The second prevalent notion about budgetary control is to keep a check on the employee's activities. This type of control is exercised in two ways. First is to control the extent of resources allocated to certain activities. This method is effective under the circumstances where authorities are clearly defined and the fixed form of budget is used. The authority of the subordinate manager is strictly restricted as regards

transfer of funds sanctioned for one activity to another activity. This restriction becomes meaningless if a variable budget is used without sophisticated controls, because the subordinate manager can always petition for changes in the budget. The two conditions of restrictions on authority and use of fixed budgets therefore must exist simultaneously. The second way of exercising this type of control is through financial information. This requires an extensive information system, and inadvertently leads to voluminous paper work because every item of expenditure must be carefully explained by the subordinate manager.

Some organizations establish guidelines for the managers with a view to utilizing budgets for one or the other forms of control. However, once established, the actual control is forgotten. If a superintendent regularly files his reports, the upper level management is satisfied simply with the regularity of reports and ignores the actual activity of comparing the reports with the original budget. Invariably, the comparison is left until after the budget period is over, and by that time superintendents invent a score of ways to justify the departures from the original budgets. These justifications may or may not be supported by the levels of performance achieved in terms of production or dealing with whatever emergencies arose during the budget period.

The ultimate effectiveness of the budget as a tool for control is therefore not dependent only on the fact that you have it, but also on how you use it. If not used properly it becomes blunt like any other tool that has been lying around in the stores.

2. A form of progress report

This is a variation on the theme of control. When the controller or manager is far removed from the department either physically or in terms of understanding the technology, more often than not the budgetary information is used to gauge the progress of work going on in that department. Although this is a fairly common phenomenon encountered in research organizations, clubs perhaps will not face this situation.

For one reason, club management is never so far removed physically from the operations, and the second reason is that although the general manager may not exactly know the intricacies of every operation, the progress of each department can be determined through a visual inspection.

3. Performance evaluation

Apart from control of employee ac-

Slack is defined as the understatement of revenues or overstatement of costs.

tivities, there has always been a controversy about the methods to be used for evaluating managerial performance. A superintendent is expected to plan, coordinate, organize and control the activities of his subordinates. Whenever questions about evaluating his performance arise, several issues need to be dealt with.

The first issue is how to quantify performance. The budget presents itself as the most obvious answer. It is argued that the budget itself is a quantification of goals and the results

Improper implementation of the budgeting process will allow slack to be introduced.

of his performance can be translated in financial terms and compared with the budget as the standard.

This argument is valid only if the underlying assumptions have been met. These assumptions are first that all the goals can be quantified in financial terms, and second that all other factors have been under the superintendent's control.

Both the assumptions can be challenged very easily. If the golf course maintenance budget is set at x dollars, it still cannot capture the essence of the quality of the golf course. In such a case, the superintendent's performance, which is essentially reflected in the quality of the golf course, cannot be judged on the basis of whether he kept within the budget limits.

The second assumption can again be challenged because it is a rare situation when all the factors are under the superintendent's control. There is always the weather, breakdowns of equipment, non-availability of skilled people, and a host of other factors that can cause hard, concrete problems for the superintendent.

The second issue is whether we are trying to evaluate the superintendent's compliance with the budget or his ability to innovate and use discretion. If the budget is used as a standard for performance, we may be fallaciously seeking to evaluate the superintendent's compliance. In this case, it may be a case of punishing initiative. If a balance is to be struck between the two aspects of his job, then the budget cannot be used as a standard but rather should be used as a guideline.

The third issue is the adequacy of funding as put down in the budget. If the budgeting process is used as a means of striking compromises, the adequacy of funding is always questionable. In such instances, compliance with the budget could at best reflect partial achievement of goals whether they be the organization's goals or the superintendent's goals.

The fourth issue is that of the presence of slack in the budget. Slack is defined as the understatement of revenues or overstatement of costs. Superintendents introduce slack in the budgets mainly for the reason that the three above mentioned issues have not been resolved in the organization. The use of budgets as a standard for performance evaluation without a resolution of the three issues creates an anxiety amongst superintendents. As a result, they introduce slack in their budgets. Slack will help a superintendent come out a winner no matter what happens. For example, if revenues have been un-

derstated then under normal or favorable conditions the actual revenues will always exceed the budgeted revenues. Under adverse conditions the revenues will match the budgeted revenues. Similarly an overstatement of costs will always place the superintendent in a situation where his actual costs are either lower than or equal to the budgeted costs.

The phenomenon of slack is entirely related to the match between the budgeting process and the performance evaluation. Improper imple-

Quite a few superintendents strive for a zero variance . . .

mentation of the budgeting process will allow slack to be introduced, and then performance evaluation becomes meaningless. On the other hand, improper performance evaluation will create a motivation for the introduction of slack. Many organizations get caught up in this vicious circle.

4. A tool for motivating

The budgeting process gives rise to three outcomes— organization of work, establishment of goals and clarity of influence patterns. The budget then means more than just an

. . . the General Manager may not exactly know the intricacies of every operation.

allocation of money. Superintendents know exactly what the board and club members want and will be looking for. Superintendents also know exactly what activities are to be performed to provide the members with what they want. As a consequence, criteria for performance get clarified. The super-

intendent is not in a dilemma as to whether he should strive to achieve the stated goals of the club or whether to go for the hidden goals of the most

A budget prevents wasting energy on diverse political activities.

influential members.

This has two implications for the superintendent. First, the superintendent is no more anxious about this dilemma and he can use all his energies for the purpose of accomplishing what he is expected to achieve. Second, the superintendent has no more reason to try and play up to individual members of the board or the budget committee in order to maintain support for his position.

Such a budget not only directs the energies of the superintendent towards what is to be done, but also prevents wasting energy on diverse political activities. It may sound as if the superintendent is being manipulated through budgets, but this is not the case. It allows the superintendent to use his competence for his performance and growth. This is what management is all about.

5. Feedback on changes

The budget can serve as a very useful means of feedback on the causes of variation between planned performance and actual performance. A number of techniques have been developed in the field of managerial accounting for the analysis of performance. We shall illustrate one technique with an example.

Any operation will at least involve two factors—materials and labor. The cost of each one may be affected by either the quantity (units of materials or hours of labor) or the rate (price per unit or wage rate). Estimates of quantity and rate are used in the preparation of budgets. During the budget period, however, the actual usage of quantities and actual rates will vary from the estimates. These variations will create differences between actual and planned performance. Analysis of these differences will give us information on the causes of variance.

Let us say that for a particular material the following quantities and rates were estimated and actually used.

TABLE 1.

Material X	Actual	Budgeted
Quantity required (units)	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,800
Rate (price/unit)	\$ 7.50	\$ 8
Direct material cost	\$15,000	\$14,400

We find that the actual expenditure exceeded the budgeted amount by \$600. Both quantity and price fluctuations have caused this difference. The extent of the effect of each quantity and price can now be calculated. The effect of quantity is called the usage variance, and the effect of price is called the rate variance.

Usage variance is calculated by the following formula: Budgeted Quantity (1800) - Actual Quantity (2000) X Budgeted Rate (9) = Usage Variance (-1600). The negative sign indicates that the usage variance is un-

favorable and has led to increase in the overall expenditure.

The rate variance is computed using the following formula: Budgeted Price (8) - Actual Price (7.50) X Actual Quantity (2000) = Rate Variance (+1000). The positive sign indicates that rate variance is favorable and had the effect of reducing the overall expenditure.

The overall difference between budgeted and actual expenditure is the sum of the usage variance and the rate variance. In this case: (-1600) +

Unskilled personnel are cheaper but need more hours.

(1000) = -600.

This is only one of the techniques of computing the effects of different factors on the differences between budgeted and actual expenditures. Depending on which factors caused the difference, we can start exploring what changes in the organization or the environment are going on.

For example, usage variance due to labor may be caused by unavailability of skilled personnel. Unskilled personnel are cheaper to get, but they need to put in more hours for the same job. An imbalance between the effects of skills and wage rate can be understood through such analysis. Questions may then be raised as to why skilled personnel are not available. It is possible that other organizations are luring away skilled personnel by offering higher wages. On the other hand, unfavorable wage rate variance may indicate that the club is paying out higher wages to the people with low skill levels.

Quite a few superintendents strive for a zero variance between their budgets and actual performance. This is due to the fact that variances are used for evaluation purposes. Some superintendents resort to the use of slack to keep within their budgets. Top management needs to look into those departmental budgets where variances are either zero or always favorable. They will most likely find the existence of slack.

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Here again we find that the information obtained through such analysis can be used for control as well as performance evaluation. A restricted use of this information for

A budget can serve as a source for future planning.

control and evaluation would be ineffective if the causes of variance lie outside the control of the manager concerned. The use of budget as a means of feedback provides an avenue for the top management to see what is going on around them.

6. Information for future planning

A budget can serve as a source of information for future planning when all the other uses of a budget are properly matched with one another. The use of budgets for control and evaluation must be coupled with the use for feedback on environment. Together these three will motivate the managers towards performance and valid record-keeping. The information generated out of record-keeping and other analyses can then be used for future planning. Since future planning occurs through the budgeting process, we go back to the actual implementation of the budgeting process.

Summary

Budgets are used in different organizations for different purposes. In most cases we find only partial utilization of budgets even for the two or three purposes they are used towards. It is not our intention to prove any incompetence on the part of the practicing superintendent. The day-to-day activities sometimes force the superintendents to skip a few steps. This almost inevitably leads to skipping a few more steps. Unwittingly the organization relinquishes proper use of a management process which is an integral part of any economic organization.

In this series of three articles we have tried to focus on the complete meaning of budgets and budgeting. Fertilizers, seeds and water are necessary to grow a quality turf. It is not enough, however, to just throw these on the ground. The sequence and amounts in which each one is applied determines the quality of turf and the

play. Similarly budgets are necessary and vital to any organization, but the way they get formulated and way they are used determines how they will affect the functioning of the organization.

Each topic that has been discussed in these articles is related to every other topic. All the topics together are related to other things that go on in the organization. These articles give you only a glimpse of the total organiza-

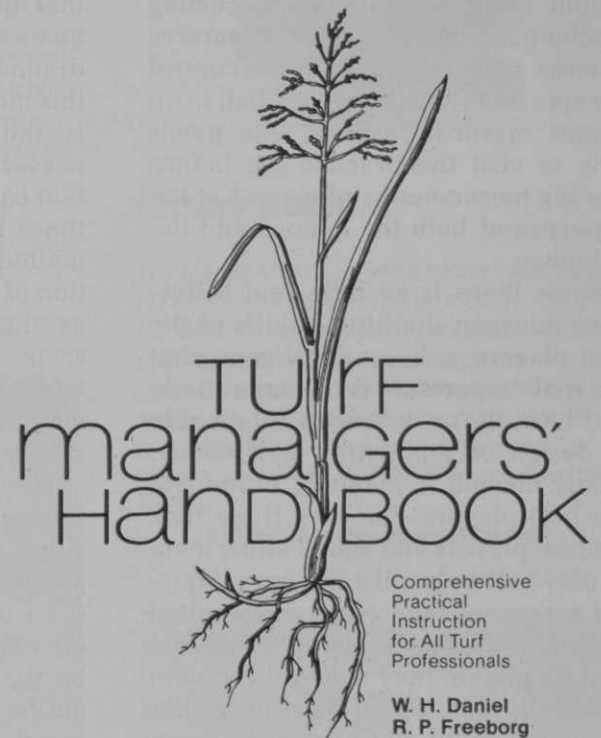
tional reality. It is possible that some organizations carry out the budgeting process in a proper way and yet face a host of problems. Budgeting is not a panacea for all the organizational problems. These articles should not give such a picture because it would be a mistaken view. If these articles make some golf course superintendents ask themselves, "Are we doing our budgeting right?", then the purpose of the articles would be served. □

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Designer's forum

By Dr. Michael J. Hurdzan



Michael J. Hurdzan, Ph.D., is a partner in the golf course architectural firm of Kidwell & Hurdzan, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. He is a member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects and the

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Luck or Skill

The best players of the game are programmed beings that have spent untold hours and dollars becoming mechanical "men". These creatures possess powers and skills to control the spin and flight of the golf ball in an almost mystical fashion. One needs only to visit the practice tee before any big tournament and marvel at the expertise of both the famous and the unknown.

Since there is so little real difference between the hitting skills of the best players, it becomes obvious that the real "separator" is mental attitude and luck. In few instances is one able to design or maintain a golf course boldly enough to mentally intimidate the best players. For even if we took the best players and would allow them to play golf holes like the ones depicted in the now famous drawings called "The Most Infamous Holes in Golf" by Bud Chapman, they would do so with a veracity that would have made the Spartans proud. Perhaps some pros would even play these holes under par.

But why then are there some courses where historically winning scores hover near par? The answer is luck. These golf courses are so constructed or maintained so that skill is no longer the fair "separator", but

rather the winner is selected not just by the rub of the green but by the vicissitudes of Lady Luck.

What then permits some courses to be viewed as tests of luck instead of skill? To be specific and to use proper names would be extremely unpopular, if not totally construed as a miscarriage or defamation. I would prefer to allude to physical elements of some of the more notable examples and let you decide which ones they are.

The first indicator of a luck golf course is where some of our very mechanical artisans of the game shoot 69 on one day and come back with an 82 on the next. None of these professionals go off their game that much that quickly. So one must ask what caused their game to be so dramatically affected as to result in this major inconsistency. Sometimes it is the easily understood factor of nerves or strong gust winds or rains that causes the lucky to prevail. Other times it is the artificial use of heavy, matted rough that denies the execution of a proper golf shot. Roughs such as this must be considered in the scope of luck for a well-played shot may be only a few inches off the fairway but yet to advance the ball with skill is forfeited.

The same may be said of a water hazard or sandtrap, but these are considered hazards expected to exact a penalty and rarely extends on both sides of the fairway from tee to green on every hole. Roughs immediately bordering fairways should, therefore, not be considered and developed into penal hazards. Actually, I endorse the philosophy of Dr. MacKenzie who used no rough at Augusta National or alternatively a friendly rough that is cut at an intermediate height between the fairway and the heavy rough. But the greatest perpetrator of luck has not yet been discussed and that is unfair putting greens.

A few years ago, the U.S. open was held at a prestigious club and because of the high scores, that even was to become dubbed as the "massacre". The reason for these soaring scores was not the length of the course, its roughs, hazards, or climatic factors; but rather it was because the greens were impossible to putt.

A review of the souvenir program from that tournament would show contour drawings of the greens with as much as seven percent fall across the green, while the commonly accepted pitch of a green today is about three percent. These old greens were not considered abnormally steep in 1923 when they were built, because it was common practice to seed greens to mixtures of bentgrass, fine fescues and redtop. In addition, during that period we did not have the overall technology to maintain greens much shorter than $\frac{3}{8}$ ", so the height of cut and grain of the grass was matched to the slope and these slower greens permitted control over a putted ball.

Within the last decade, with our modern maintenance procedures we can double cut our putting surfaces down to $\frac{3}{64}$ ". The net effect of all this was that the greens during this open were made so fast that luck was more important than skill. It was not uncommon for a putted ball to pick up speed well after it left the putter blade. The result was that the golfer could exercise little, or no, skill in controlling the ball. When the likes of Nicklaus, Player and Palmer have a 20-foot putt and leave the ball many feet beyond the hole, skill has been obviated.

Such an analysis is not meant to tarnish the image of the victor, for he indeed may have been the most skillful player on the course those four days. But you cannot help but wonder if our fetish to protect par has not led us to maintain facilities that separate players on some basis other than skill.

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