

"HERB AND JOE EXERTED A major influence on many aspects of the golf industry and on many individuals, including myself. Both were very friendly and neither ever met a stranger. Once acquainted, they always recognized you and called you by name. Each always seemed to take a special interest in you and what you were doing."

— *Sherwood Moore, CGCS,
Past President GCSAA, 1962*

"HERB AND JOE WERE WONDERFUL guys and true friends to everyone in golf. Herb had a great sense of humor ... very wry at times. I remember visiting him in Florida years ago and noticed a plaque on the wall that encased a check for \$20,000 from the bank. Herb explained that the check was supposed to have been for \$20. Big bank error! He loved joking about things and with people, but Herb always used his wit and humor in positive ways. Herb and Joe were the best friends golf ever had."

— *Eb Steiniger, former CGCS
of Pine Valley GC*

"A LETTER FROM HERB OR JOE GRAFFIS was always kept and treasured. Herb was the first to write me after becoming the GCSAA Director of Education in 1976. It was warm and personal with comments of past remembrances about me, the work I had done and mention of my family. And there was an ample amount of the Graffis wisdom and wit. As others have shared their correspondence with me over the years, I have been struck by how personal and meaningful each letter was to the recipient. The Graffis brothers wrote thousands of such letters, not one a canned response. I don't know how they found the time. It was like getting a letter from a family member. In actuality, they were a family member to everyone in golf."

— *Palmer Maples Jr., CGCS,
Past President GCSAA, 1975*

"I WAS ALWAYS IMPRESSED WITH Herb's note-taking system. He was constantly taking notes wherever he was, but on very small slips of paper. Herb would jot something down and then stuff the note into his coat pocket. How did he keep all those small bits of paper straight? Obviously, the system worked when you read the wealth of information and names of people in each issue of *Golfdom*. I often wondered how Joe dealt with the pockets full of news on those small scraps of paper brought home by Herb."

— *Jim Latham, former USGA agronomist* ■

Why Golfdom?

By **Pat Jones, Publisher and Editor**



From 1987 until 1996, I served on the GCSAA staff. I started as a cub reporter for *Golf Course Management* magazine and directed communications, development and public affairs over nine years. At various times, I managed public relations, government affairs, environmental issues, fund-raising, scholarship and research, the magazine – you name it.

It was a wonderful, insane, tumultuous, painful, thrilling and incredibly challenging nine years. Massive membership growth, lawsuits, attacks by environmental groups, a fancy new headquarters, the ill-fated GCSAA Singapore initiative, Paul Harvey, the Iowa Mortality Study, the "coup" that brought down the previous executive team. It wasn't always fun, but it was one of the most interesting periods in the association's long history.

But, in between the crises and the annual conferences, I talked with superintendents daily. I learned about the practices, products and people in the industry. I listened as superintendents discussed the job, its demands and the personal toll it can take. It was a great education.

I left GCSAA in 1996 (nine years in the association business was long enough) and was working happily at a big public relations firm when I was approached by Advanstar Communications, the company that publishes *Landscape Management*, *Athletic Turf* and *Turfgrass Trends* (a great technical/research newsletter). They were considering starting a golf publication and asked me what approach I'd take.

I thought about what I'd heard from hundreds of superintendents, endless committee meetings, focus groups and late-night bull sessions.

Why can't there be a magazine that really talks about what matters to us most? Why doesn't someone tell the real story about life as a superintendent? Why can't we get more short, "how-to" stories that help us solve problems? Why can't there be a magazine that helps me manage my career as well as I manage my turf?

So, after considering what I'd heard from all of those superintendents over the years, my response was, "There's a need for a magazine like Herb Graffis' old *Golfdom*." It should be focused, business-oriented, candid and fun. It should be relevant to the real-world interests and needs of superintendents. Most of all, it should have an attitude and a strong point of view.

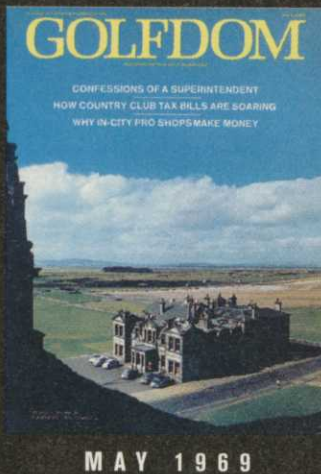
Advanstar liked the concept and (to my delight) recruited me to publish it.

The first order of business was to find a name for this magazine we wanted to be like *Golfdom*. Imagine our surprise when we discovered that Advanstar, through a series of transactions that took place two decades ago, actually already owned the rights to the name *Golfdom*.

After that, it was a no-brainer.

It's a thrill to be able to breathe new life into a magazine that meant so much to so many people in our industry. We hope that a new generation of readers finds it as stimulating, smart and fun as the original. ■

Mr. Golf's Magazine



Continued from page 47
can hear and handle any complaints involving his operation. The pro hears what is wrong with his department and he can settle the problems. But the superintendent is far away behind the grass curtain, and he can't tell his story, especially when his is handling the grave emergencies that seem to be fairly frequent in the nature of the golf course operation."

And he always saw the bottom line. "If everything is going along in great shape, anybody can run a golf course. But when there's heck to pay, the emergency requires a first-class superintendent."

Piss and vinegar

Under Graffis' hand, Golfdom thrived for half a century. But Herb's ability to keep Golfdom moving forward declined as he reached his 70s. In 1976, after the death of his brother, he sold the

publication. After several changes of ownership and names, Golfdom ceased publication in 1981.

Golfdom passed, but Herb lived on as the grand old man of the game. There isn't an industry honor he didn't receive: distinguished service

"If everything is going along in great shape, anybody can run a golf course. But when there's heck to pay, the emergency requires a first-class superintendent."

— Herb Graffis

awards from GCSAA and PGA; induction in the Hall of Fame; even one named for him, the NGF Graffis Award. He died in 1989. He was 95 years old and, as an industry historian says with a smile, "full of piss and vinegar to the end." ■

Jim Brooks is an industry veteran who most recently was executive director of the Lawn Institute.

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Circle No. 144 on Reader Inquiry Card

Spoil the Turf, Save the Trees

Just when Doug Petersan was considering leveling trees to protect greens at Baltimore CC, he heard about a new amino acid treatment that offered hope

Problem

The composition of trees on four holes prevented air movement and limited the amount of sunlight to the grass in those areas. That combined with people constantly walking on and off the greens made it difficult to maintain healthy turf.

Solution

An amino acid formula designed to stimulate the natural processes that control photosynthetic activity, and enhance water and nutrient efficiency of the plant.



The trees still stand on the 10th hole at Baltimore CC and the greens are healthier than ever, thanks to an amino acid product used to treat them.

Doug Petersan had a frightening vision. The superintendent of Timonium, Md.-based Baltimore CC envisioned himself — with chain saw in hand — leveling handsome trees near four holes on the club's East Course to correct nagging problems with thin turf.

The layout and composition of the trees was an integral part of the course's design. Petersan knew that cutting them down would mean altering the feel and atmosphere of the holes, even though the trees' canopies had enlarged significantly over time.

"Cutting down trees, from my perspective, is usually a measure of last resort," Petersan admits.

The problem

The layouts of the 10th, 13th, 16th and 17th holes on the East Course, known as "tree greens," made it difficult to maintain healthy turf.

"The composition of trees prevents air movement and also substantially limits the amount of sunlight to the grass in each of those areas," says Petersan, who has 35 years of experience and is known for his problem-solving abilities. "When you combine that with people constantly walking on and off the greens, you have a great recipe for trouble.

"The situation was getting more desperate with time," he adds. "There were few alternatives. We knew we had to take more aggressive steps to salvage the greens."

Options considered

Petersan and his crew took all of

the normal and available steps to save the greens. "We fumigated, re-seeded and removed trees that didn't affect the integral design of the holes," he says, "but we didn't totally solve the problems."

Petersan considered a tile system and total reconstruction of the greens. But many of the options were too expensive or would have suspended play on the greens for several weeks or even months.

Solution chosen

Just when Petersan considered cutting the trees down, he heard about a new amino acid product, Macro-Sorb, that's designed to stimulate the natural processes that control photosynthetic activity, and enhance water and nutrient efficiency of the plant. Amino acids, the building blocks of protein matter, are natural molecules

that take part in a plant's physiological processes. Plants produce their own L form amino acids by performing a synthesis of the required amino acid or an hydrolysis of some protein that contains the amino acid.

Plants save energy when treated with the natural L form amino acid. In principle, the saved energy can be used for other processes resulting in a healthy and efficient plant that can withstand stress and the onslaught of disease.

Petersan and his crew applied the formulation to the most depleted greens.

Outcome

"We witnessed quantitative improvement within a few weeks," Petersan says. "The plants appeared healthier, less yellow, less stressed, and the tests we ran confirmed this."

The plants on the tree greens were in excellent condition after six months, Petersan says.

Comments

Petersan says that the chemical treatments alone could never cure the tree greens. The regular application program of the foliar and radicular versions of the product were applied in conjunction with fungicides, herbicides or light applications of fertilizer every two weeks. Absorption rates increased, Petersan says.

A look at Doug Petersan

Doug Petersan, superintendent of Baltimore CC, has more than 35 years of experience, and a solid reputation for managing complex golf courses and solving problems on them.



Prior to coming to Baltimore in 1991, Petersan was the superintendent at Prairie Dunes CC in Kansas, ranked one of the top 25 golf courses

in the United States. He hosted four United States Golf Association events over 10 years at Prairie Dunes. Petersan has been the mentor to at least 22 individuals who became superintendents after working for him.

Return on investment

Baltimore CC spent less than 5 percent of its annual chemical/fertilizer budget on 65 acres of fairways, eight acres of greens and four acres of tees on Macro-Sorb and Quelant-Ca, another Nutramax product used to correct calcium deficiencies in plants.

"When we were able to document that use of [Macro-Sorb] resulted in healthier plants and limited the spread of disease and impact of stress, we knew it represented a major cost savings to us in our overall program," Petersan says. ■

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Forty-eight percent of the people polled in a recent *Golf Digest* magazine survey said that the superintendent is the most important person at a golf facility. Where did they take that poll? At a GCSAA convention? It gives me a warm, fuzzy feeling to think that flesh-and-bone golfers think that of superintendents, but actions speak louder than polls.

And actions show me that superintendents find themselves in the middle of a range of industry issues. It's time for a change of attitude on the part of owners, general managers, golf pros and golfers when it comes to dealing with superintendents.

By the same token, it's time for all superintendents to personify the leadership position conferred in that poll.

Rather than helping to set the standards at clubs, superintendents can be found in the middle of playing-condition debates between high handicappers and scratch golfers. Regardless of all the new equipment and super grasses, the rough can't be at two different heights or the greens at two different speeds on the same day.

The green committee or management team should evaluate the needs and desires of its customers and work with the superintendent to define what conditions he or she should manage. Then both sides know the expectations and goals of the programs. The superintendent's performance and the club's support is then realistically measured — instead of by the whims and politics of a new green chairman or general manager.

There's nothing for a superintendent like being in the middle of the beer budget and champagne taste paradox. Clubs want to be like Augusta, Winged Foot or Pebble Beach, but they don't have the money or special events that generate the volunteers and equipment to create those picture-perfect venues seen on television. If club management or members can't count and a superintendent can't educate them with facts and figures, there will be a lot of headaches over that no-win situation.

Superintendents could and should be lead-

Superintendents: Stuck in the Middle

BY JOEL JACKSON



YOU SHOULDN'T
HAVE TO CHOOSE
WHICH SIDE
TO PLEASE

ers at their clubs regarding environmental issues. But instead they find themselves in a tug of war between what's legal, environmentally sound, and keeping the golf course green and manicured to the satisfaction of their employers.

Superintendents should explain the pros and cons of Integrated Plant Management (IPM) and Best Management Practices (BMPs), and clubs should understand that they are the standards of the future.

Superintendents naturally try to please those who control their destinies, but they are also responsible to the government agencies that regulate safety and environmental impacts under their control. Once again, superintendents can find themselves in the middle.

Superintendents should know when there is a problem at the club that could lead to a violation, which could mean a fine or even a lawsuit. Once aware of the problem, the club should take over and make sure that it's resolved.

But if a club ignores problems and hopes to escape detection, the pressure on superintendents is insidious. They know what needs to be done, but the club won't do it. I'd hate to place any employee under that kind of pressure if it ever came to a hearing or trial.

Superintendents shouldn't have to choose which side to please in any issue at a golf club. The club should have a mission statement with agreement on playing conditions, methods of operations, and regulatory compliance mandates.

Superintendents were not meant to be middlemen. After all, aren't they the most important people at a golf facility?

Joel Jackson, CGCS, retired from Disney's golf division in 1997 and is now director of communications for the Florida GCSA.

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developed not only to facilitate absorption by the leaves and roots, but to increase mobility of the calcium within the plant as well.

Quelant™-Ca is normally applied as a foliar spray and may also be applied through fertigation. Either way, it is tank-mix compatible with herbicides, soluble fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides and plant growth regulators. It will even help improve the efficiency of most of these treatments by increasing their absorption and translocation within the plant.

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Circle No. 146 on Reader Inquiry Card



If I Only Had a ...

As a bevy of new products hits the market, we asked the age-old question: What do superintendents *really* want?

BY LARRY AYLWARD, MANAGING EDITOR

Just before Christmas, we asked golf course superintendents what visions they had dancing around their heads for new equipment ideas to help make their working lives easier.

While most superintendents we talked to are satisfied with the equipment and products available, some have wish lists for items that they need to help them with long-standing and irksome problems.

On a recent unseasonably warm and calm December day in the Great White North, superintendent Gordon Witteveen thought it was the perfect time to fertilize the fairways comprising the Board of Trade CC in Woodbridge, Ontario. "But the fertilizer wasn't going on worth a damn," Witteveen grumbled. "I had nothing but trouble."

Witteveen blamed his bad day on his fertilizer spreader. He wishes, he says, that he owned an efficient-operating spreader — specifically a computerized machine to control the flow and pattern of granular fertilizer.

Mark Conner, superintendent of the South Course at Firestone CC in Akron, Ohio, says he wishes he owned a walk-behind mower that could cut efficiently

around hard-to-reach spots, including steep banks and around bunkers. Conner also wishes for a longer-lasting fertilizer. He's not complaining about the brand he uses, which spurs grass growth for two to four weeks, but he prefers a fertilizer that could stimulate six weeks of growth, he says.

Bob Friend, CGCS, of the Colonial GC in Williamsburg, Va., says he wishes he had a heavy-duty thatching machine with more power to thatch greens progressively. He says he's aware of an Australian machine that can do the job, but not one that's available in the United States.

Keith Snyder, CGCS, of Great Bear G & CC in East Stroudsburg, Pa., says he's impressed with most of the products available to make his job easier. But Snyder says he can't afford some equipment, such as high-tech sprayers that are injected with chemicals to make them easier and safer to operate. Snyder's wish is that prices would decline on such equipment, but he's not hopeful.

"The golf course market is a small market with a small group of companies making equipment," Snyder says. "Prices don't come down in niche markets, and manufacturers can get what they want."

Friend also can't afford some equipment, but he has learned to invent his own contraptions, such as a device to blow air through greens. He recently welded a pipe to a blower and attached the gizmo to a four-inch drain tile connecting to the greens. He says he saved thousands of dollars that it would have cost him to purchase a vacuum pump to do the job.

A bigger problem than the cost of equipment is manpower, Snyder maintains. "I have reliable equipment, but I don't have the bodies to operate it."

Ken Noble, superintendent of Naples, Fla.-based Marco Shores CC, says his staff is also short-handed. Noble wants a robot-like mower that can be programmed to cut greens without a human guide.

"But then we would need a high-tech person to fix it," he adds. ■

Here are a few new items released late in '98 and early '99 that may help superintendents solve some of their woes:

Mowers



▲ The John Deere 2500 Tri-Plex Greens

Mower's cut quality is enhanced by a cutting unit suspension that carries the weight of the lift arms on the traction unit and not on the cutting units, according to the company. The 22-inch cutting units come with 11-blade reels, 3-millimeter standard bedknives and a smooth front roller. An offset-cutting unit design provides a reduced wear traffic pattern on the cut area and permits a clear view of the cutting.

John Deere also introduces the 180A Walk-Behind Greens Mower, designed with a narrower width to better handle severe undulations and contours on difficult-to-groom greens. The mower features an 11-blade reel. An external differential drive splits power to both traction rolls to provide straight tracking and easy turning, according to the company.



▲ **Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products** offers the Turfcat 500 Series, a line of Jacobsen Turfcat out-front rotary mowers, which feature a variety of engine and cutting-deck choices for a range of grounds maintenance tasks. Three of the Turfcat 500 models feature the liquid-cooled Kubota diesel engine. A fourth model is powered by a Briggs & Stratton gas engine.

Each mower features a 12-gallon fuel tank, and an adjustable pedal stop for setting a consistent transport/mowing speed.

▲ The Eastman

HoverMower has no wheels and operates on a cushion of air. It can mow in any direction while following the contour of the land, according to the company. The mower can handle hard-to-reach slopes, steep banks, sand traps, retaining walls and awkward angles, Eastman says. The mower will hover over water while cutting soggy turf.

New products continue on next page

Vehicles

Medalist American Turfgrass Seed offers Bluemoon Kentucky Bluegrass, the darkest of any Kentucky bluegrass with a rich green-leaf color. It features a fairway performance down to half-inch heights, according to the company.

Medalist also has

Seed

available Caddieshack Perennial Ryegrass, which is resistant to many diseases, the company says. It has a dark green color and is adaptable in the North and South.

The Jacklin Seed Co. offers Arabia Turf-Type Tall Fescue, which is endophyte enhanced and features top-net blotch resistance. It has a dark green color and can be planted in full sun or moderate shade, according to the company.

Jacklin also has available TopGun Perennial Ryegrass, a high-density seed with a medium-dark green color and medium-fine texture. It features improved brown patch resistance, and has a good summer and fall density, according to the company.

► **UNI-CAR** offers the ACENTE, a single-rider vehicle with automotive styling. A forward center of gravity eliminates the lifting that most single rider vehicles experience when going uphill, according to the company, adding that the ACENTE also features a four-wheel independent suspension that allows for a comfortable ride.

► **Textron Turf Care and Specialty**

Products offers its new generation of Cushman Turf-Truckster turf work vehicles, designed to boost performance, durability and versatility, according to the company.

The four-wheel Cushman Turf-Truckster has a rated capacity up to 2,850 pounds, while the three-wheel model can carry up to 2,500 pounds of personnel and cargo. A longer, 60-inch bed gives the new model 30 percent more cargo space.

The Turf-Truckster 659 features a three-speed



automatic transmission. Other models have a four-speed transmission.

▼ **Club Car** introduces the Turf II XRT to its Carryall Line of transportation and utility vehicles. XRT is intended for "extremely rough terrain," including new golf course construction, grow-in and other non-golf rough terrain applications, the company says.

The gasoline-powered vehicle features heavy-duty, all-terrain tires and a 6.4-inch ground clearance under the differential, according to the company. Other features include independent front suspension and four-wheel brakes.



Misc.

Smithco introduces the Spray Star 1000, a lightweight, maneuverable turf sprayer for use on tees, greens and other areas of fine turf. The sprayer offers either computerized or manual spray control systems. The machine is powered by a 25-horsepower gasoline engine with hydraulic drive to the rear wheels. It also has hydraulic systems for steering and braking.

◀ **Bluebird International** offers the HS-15, a portable hydro-seeder that can spread seed at 3,000 square feet an hour, according to the company. The HS-15 is fitting for small- to medium-sized projects. It can also be used in flowerbeds for quick and easy planting.

Spyker offers two broadcast mulch spreaders. The Model 296 is a 100-pound walk behind; the Model 297 is a 200-pound pull behind. The spreaders broadcast seed, fertilizer and pelleted products.

Otterbine Barebo offers a new version of Bunker Pumper, which features a six horsepower engine and a triple-protection, grease-filled

Misc. continues on pg. 69

