



SMOKE SCREEN

By Rod Johnson



During recent years, I have been most supportive of GCSAA, our national organization. Numerous times in this publication I have cited the benefits of GCSAA membership. I have praised the direction that the present Board of Directors is leading us. I have defended new programs, dues increases, By-Law changes, and construction of a new headquarters building.

As the President of WGCSA and as an involved member of GCSAA, I feel it is appropriate and necessary to inform you of a recent GCSAA Board of Directors decision that I cannot support. Despite acknowledging its important role in recent success, GCSAA has decided to drop its present committee system.

Until now, the organizational approach of GCSAA has been to name Directors to Committee Chairmanships. Committees were then formed from a cross-section of Superintendents from throughout the country. This approach has served GCSAA well. The organization has prospered from the involvement of its members, an involvement headed by committee participation. Members have given

freely of their time and talents because of their dedication to the profession and the recognition of the long-term benefits of a strong national organization.

To set the record straight, as of this writing I have not, nor has 99% of the general membership, been directly informed of this new organizational approach. At the risk of sounding like having a personal bellyache, I would have thought that as a chapter president, as a voting delegate, or as a recent committee member, I might have received a letter directly from GCSAA. As it stands, I was forwarded a copy of a letter sent to an existing committee member.

To date, I have put complete faith in the decisions made by the present Board of Directors. It would be redundant of me to attempt to list the great strides that GCSAA has made under their leadership. This faith aside, I cannot let the GCSAA letter go unchallenged.

The letter states that the reason for the discontinuation of the present committee system was the Board's perception that committees, which are pres-

ently appointed on an annual basis, are unable to address issues in a timely manner. In that same context, it was concluded that committees meeting once or twice per year were unable to resolve issues.

To the given reasoning, I say, "BULL!" The effectiveness of a GCSAA Committee lies on the shoulders of the Committee Chairman, with the individuals selected to participate, and ultimately, in how the Board of Directors acts or reacts. The very way that the dropping of the current committee system is being communicated shows where part of the problem lies.

Come on GCSAA Board, tell it like it is! The present committee system has become a political nightmare. At issue is the naming of fellow Board members to Chairmanships of high visibility "grave" committees and the list of committee members that reads like a "Who's Who" in delegate voting. That's the smelly truth. If committee status is not politically important, then why were Co-Chairmanships established?

Oftentimes the truth hurts. The truth is that how GCSAA Directors are elected is the hidden issue. The political smell starts at the Voting Delegate level. At the Orlando Conference, a rightfully placed challenge was aimed towards delegate voting. Unfortunately, the challenge fell away. The elimination of delegate voting requires a By-Law change voted by delegates. The By-Law change stood the proverbial snow-

(Continued on page 34)

Table of Contents

A Silver Anniversary	1
President's Message	2
Jottings From	
The Golf Course Journal	3
Editorial	7
The Wisconsin Golf Course Quiz	9
Wisconsin Pathology Report	11
The Wisconsin Golf Course Survey	13
Wisconsin Soils Report	14
From Across The Country	17
The Editor's Notebook	21
Legal Matters	25
Personality Profile	27
The Sports Page	31
Walking or Riding Greensmowers	
For Putting Greens?	35
Schwab, Monroe CC Team Win	
John Deere Tourney	35
NOER Center News	37
Hydrojet Tour, Scholarship Winners	38
Rock River Hosts July Meeting	39

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(Continued from page 2)

ball's chance. The real issue is the entire GCSAA "Political System".

Please, GCSAA Board, allow us as involved members to add to the organization through the present committee structure. Take it upon yourselves to help "clean-up" the politics. Police yourselves. Continue to take steps to take the politics away from those Delegates with large numbers of votes and even larger egos.

Most of all, give us credit as GCSAA members to smell a rat. We have been active, concerned, and involved members by choice. Please give us the opportunity to continue.

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