

1980's The Detonating Years for Golf Course Management

BY BRUCE KLINKNER, OAK GLEN COUNTRY CLUB

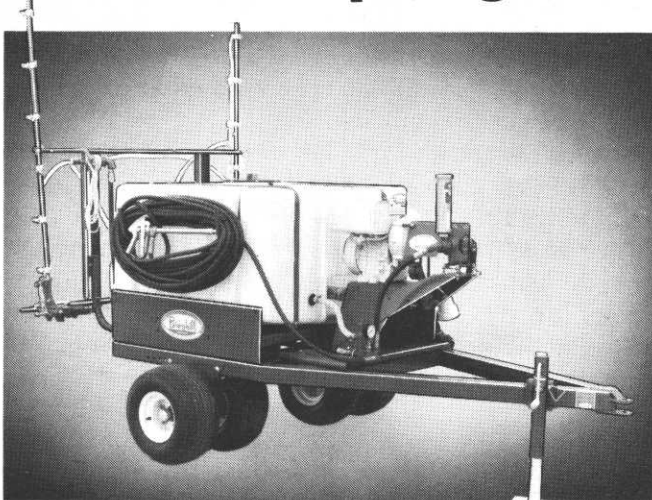
Recently, I had the honor of speaking at a seminar sponsored by the National Golf Foundation. Numerous municipal representatives directly responsible for their facilities attended this seminar. Under the leadership of Mr. Mark DePalma, National Golf Foundation Director, areas of expenditures and revenues were explored within primarily the municipal golf course operation. Presentations from Mr. Tom Magne, M.G.A. - It's Role Within Municipal Operations, Mr. Dick Tollette, Junior Golf At Municipal Operations, Mr. Tom Sampair, Golf Car Fleet Management and myself, Maintenance Practices Within A Municipal Operation, addressed expenditures and revenues from many areas of expertise.

Budgeting, Personnel Management and Long Term Planning, generally established, upper management within municipal operations have the need to understand on a wider scale, the complexities of turf management by superintendents and those factors affecting success or failure at their own facility and how this affects long term budgeting.

Expenditures have continued to progress in areas of labor, supplies, and utilities to produce a choke hold effect on our budgets. Golf Superintendents, as professionals dedicated to turf management, have progressively done a good job of exhausting available cost cutting measures within our club structures. With the vast assistance from our associate members

and the continued education of our members on the local and national level, we have realized a high level of productivity within our maintenance budgets. There is today a continued consensus that sound maintenance policies resulting in quality maintained turf attracts the golfing patrons.

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The process of establishing or origination of revenue producing policies have shown to be a crucial wheel of growth within municipal facilities. An individual club might incur a negative attitude from its golf patrons in its attempt to reestablish or revise a policy proven to be non-productive. Within the framework of public operations the feasibility of a power struggle or political pressure surrounds this type restructuring. A revenue base is contingent upon prime and non-prime demand. Highest revenues are yielded when wise utilization of prime time space is established.

Future alternate forms of recreation for land use could be realized upon the continued competitive nature of golf communities. Some municipal operations have experienced a decline in population growth and in this regard have less pressure for recreation than a younger community. Can municipal operations survive the inward pressure from special interest groups, seniors and juniors, which in some instances yield a 50% reduction of fees?

In summary, the municipal golf community has changed a great deal within the last ten years. Any attempt to cut expenditures further must be superseded by a reevaluation of policy and fee structures, revenue production and community growth and its needs for recreation.