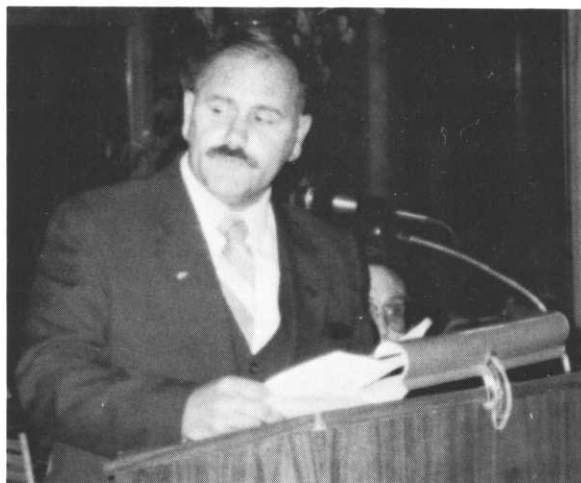


# TRIBUTE TO STODDIE



by GERALD MURPHY  
Superintendent, Somerset Country Club

We have gathered here today for a number of good and important reasons. We are here for the fellowship, for a good game of golf. We are here to achieve a better education, to learn more about bacterial wilt and see its effects with our own eyes. But we are also here to demonstrate our support for this, the first Harold Stodola Research Tourney, and to honor the man for whom this tourney has been named.

Nothing could be more fitting than to name this tourney after the man who dedicated his entire life to the propagation and enhancement of the finest quality turf on earth so the masses could enjoy this game called golf in the most relaxing atmosphere on the most beautiful and tranquil spots in the world.

Some of you are very young and have only heard of the fame of this legendary fellow we fondly call "Stoddie".

Stoddie, born on August 12, 1903 didn't wait long to begin exploring a career in golf course management. In 1918 after several years of caddying at numerous local clubs he became the locker room boy at Oak Ridge Country Club. He moved quickly through the ranks of caddy master, night waterman and then assistant greenskeeper to one of the deans of greenskeeping at that time, Emil Picka. He worked with Emil at Oak Ridge from 1922 until 1926. During this period of time he continued his education at the University

of Minnesota Agronomy school where he also displayed his ability on the golf course by becoming the University of Minnesota golf champ of 1926.

In 1926 he left Oak Ridge to assume the responsibilities of greenskeeper at the Keller Golf Club where he stayed until 1942.

During these early years he began to distinguish himself, as not only a great greenskeeper, but as a man dedicated to his family and friends as well as to his profession. He was a clear thinker with great vision and an ability to speak his mind, even though it often differed from the majority. He did this with such concern for his profession and fellow greenskeepers that when he spoke, though young, his peers would listen attentively with much respect.

Several important things happened to this young man during this period of time. In 1930 he joined the Minnesota Greenskeepers Association and soon after that joined the National Greenskeepers Association. In 1932 he married his wife of 53 years, Ethel.

In 1933 he became a director of the National and, shortly thereafter, became editor of the official publication, "The Greenskeepers Reporter", a job he held until 1941. Of course, being active at the national level didn't keep him from fulfilling his obligation to Minnesota where he chaired every major committee and went through every office of the board including president.

A busy fellow, don't you think? Maybe that is why his nickname at the time was the "Hopkins Hurricane".

In 1940 Harold was elected Vice President of the National and, in 1941, he was nominated as a candidate for the presidency, running against the well known Mr. John Gray of the Essex Golf and Country Club.

And, at the age of 37, Harold became the tenth president of the National Greenskeepers Association, a post he held until 1945. He held the association together with the power of his pen through those trying years. Sure, it was team effort, but every team needs a leader and

the National, as well as each one of us today, are fortunate that this leader was such a man as Stoddie. It was as if the "Hopkins Hurricane" was destined for that job during the horrible war years. Only a man who loves golf and his profession as Stoddie does, and only a man whose faith in God and his country were unshakeable could have taken the pressure placed on this person, small in size, but great in stature.

In 1942 Stoddie moved to the Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio, where he was not only charged with the maintenance of the golf course, but with the Victory Gardens as well.

As we all know, war was declared and the greenskeepers were faced with many problems. There was a ban on fertilizer and mercury. Most men and women were being asked to work in war related industry or sent into the armed service. Rubber for tires and tubes was diverted to the war effort. Gas was rationed by coupon books. Key men were being called for duty. Harold at this time was considered "too old" for call up to active duty. So he did what he could to hold the association together.

All National meetings were cancelled and Harold was left to run the association with little help. As the war effort continued, the demand for men and supplies became greater and the task of keeping the National intact was even harder, especially when the greenskeeper profession was deemed non-essential by the War Manpower Committee.

Less of a man would have given up after this, but not Stoddie. Only after he was sure of the continued existence of the National did he dive into production for the war effort. He left Firestone in 1945 to work on a scientific farm located in Wayzata. After the war this farm was eventually sold to what is now the Wayzata Country Club.

Harold was only able to stay away from golf for a few years before he returned to the profession he loves. In 1956 the Stodolas moved to the Phoenix area where Stoddie again picked up his career at Paradise Valley. From there he moved to the Tucson Country Club in 1963 and remained until 1968.

Well, it must have become too hot for Stoddie in the deep south, so, in 1968 at the young age of 65, Harold and Ethel moved back to Minnesota where he assumed the superintendent position at the Mendakota Country Club. He retired as superintendent of Mendakota in 1977 and moved up the street to the Somerset Country Club where on a part time basis he still does that which he loves the most.

Over the years Harold has received many honors and awards. In 1944 our state association voted him an Honorary Member. Recently, he has received recognition several times. In 1977 our state association honored him for his many contributions to the MGSCA. Also in 1977 the National awarded Stoddie with the Distinguished Service Award at the Portland Conference. The Distinguished Service Award is only presented to those who have demonstrated dedication and outstanding service to GCSAA and the profession.

In 1974 the MCC honored Stoddie with the Mr. Green Thumb award and, in 1977, Mendakota Country Club held a tournament and awards banquet for Stoddie in appreciation for the many years of dedicated service to the club.

This man, who likes to call himself "the last of the Greenskeepers," summed up a philosophy he has lived by for many years and has taught others to live by. To the golfer he says, "play to have fun, take time to enjoy the trees and flowers, view with pleasure the lakes and ponds, maintain a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Above all, don't get so wrapped up in your score and game. If you do, golf will become a nerve wracking game rather than a game of relaxation. Use golf as a time of easy swinging mentally and physically." To the superintendent he says, "don't take your work so seriously that it reflects on your efficiency. Remember golf is a game of skill and is for health and relaxation. Don't get all excited over a spot on a green or a little clover in a fairway. Do not let an ant hill on a green break your spirit or dollar spot on another get you down. Do your work well, take things in stride, be cheerful and good-natured and have a pleasant work for everyone."

This is the Stoddie I know.

He has often said, "I like to be around young people. They keep me young and alive". Stoddie has a love for the young people. When they complain about something, he responds, "oh cry eye", then goes on to point out the good of it all.

This man, who I have been privileged to call friend for almost twenty-five years, has been an example for many of us to try to live up to. He has encouraged us when we were low and he has supported us when we have taken on difficult tasks. I have never ever heard him speak an unkind word about anyone and he always looks for the best, the beautiful, the good in every one and every thing.

## POSITION AVAILABLE

**COURSE FOREMAN FOR MIDLAND HILLS COUNTRY CLUB**

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** Be able to supervise all operations on the golf course under the directions of the golf course

superintendent and assistant superintendent. Have the ability to supervise employees, able to use all golf course machinery and ability to teach others, have some ability to identify types of turf, weeds, trees, insects, and diseases in this geographic area. Also to have some knowledge of minor equipment repair and troubleshooting.

**EDUCATION:** High school degree and have started or wanting to start a two or four year degree in turf management or related fields.

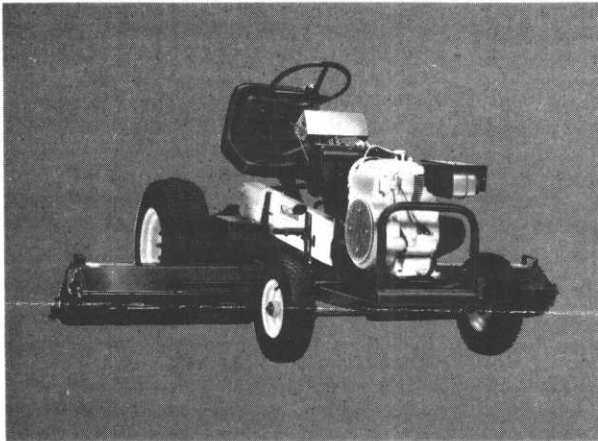
**EXPERIENCE:** At least two years experience on a golf course and have had some supervisory experience.

**FRINGE BENEFITS:** Paid health/dental insurance, paid vacation, paid sick leave, paid uniforms, and paid local dues.

**INCOME:** \$5.50-\$7.00 per hour.

**CONTACT:** Paul Mayes, Midland Hills Country Club, 2001 Fulham Street, St. Paul, Minn. 55113. Phone: 612/631-1545

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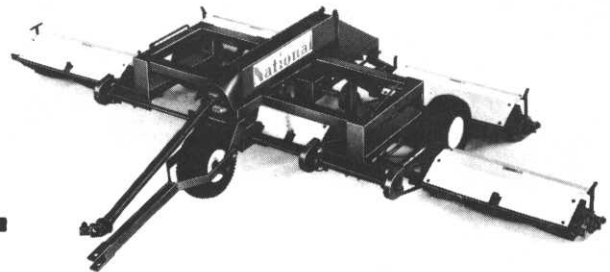
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