

class, and that is my opinion of the type of operation that Wedgewood Valley has attained. Even though there were hints of confusion during the construction phase of the course, I think the end product speaks for itself and is a tribute to Denny Hendrickson and the fine organization he is associated with. I can imagine the many hours of frustration which must have been conquered to complete a project of this magnitude. I think each of us in attendance at the meeting would say to you personally, well done, Denny.

Each of our MGCSA members has received the flyers concerning our annual conference at the St. Paul Radisson. You are again urged to not let the move to St. Paul deter you from attending this very educational conference. MGCSA always has a wealth of knowledge in attendance at this conference and we would like to share it with our membership. However, only by your attendance will you benefit by this information. If you haven't already filled out the housing and pre-registration forms do so today and send them to the appropriate locations.

If this issue of HOLE NOTES makes it to you before our November meeting at Greenhaven I will just say. let's hope for one more great day for golf. Think Spring!

Greenskeeper? Groundskeeper? Superintendent!

by W. H. BRAUNIG, JR.
Superintendent
Lost Spur Country Club

It seems to me we have an image problem. Not among ourselves, but with the golfing public.

The title "greenskeeper" came from THE KEEPER OF THE GREEN, a man hired to be the pro, superintendent, manager, club maker, stable man and waiter. As his image improved, his duties became teaching, club making and course care. Somewhere in the 1800's the pro-superintendent split into two separate professions. The golf professional's image improved even greater and the superintendent was left with the image and title of the greenskeeper.

That image and title was acceptable and served the "greenskeepers" for a great period of time and by no means should we think lesser of our predecessor, the greenskeeper.

Now days, however, golf has become a very fine tuned game. Professional and amateur alike have demanded better playing conditions; truer and faster greens and so on. To produce such conditions takes a greater amount of knowledge and expertise than that of the old time greenskeeper. Enter the Golf Course Superintendent.

Golf Course Superintendents are much better educated (quite often with a college degree) than the greenskeeper of the past. The Golf Course Superintendent of today is not merely a greenskeeper or a groundskeeper. His is much, much more than either of them. He is a professional in the turf grass management field. So next time someone introduces you as the greenskeeper or groundskeeper, do yourself a favor and correct him. A professional image can only help us!

I would like to thank Turf Supply for its one page "pat on the back" to superintendents in our HOLE NOTES a few months back. I have it posted in our clubhouse and the National's commercials on cable TV this summer were great to see also.

MINNESOTA'S GOLFING HERITAGE Prairie View G. C.

by DON GROSS
Superintendent
Prairie View Golf Course

Prairie View Golf Course is an 18-hole, par 71 course located 1/2 mile northwest of Worthington, Minnesota, on Highway 266. Construction began in 1981 and was completed in May of 1982. The course opened for play late in the summer of 1983. Tim Westland was course superintendent during the construction and seeding period and I became superintendent in March of 1984.

Prairie View was designed in the traditional linksland found in Scotland with an American emphasis on prairie grasses and flowers. The result is a golf course with a undulating terrain and a

creek which winds through the middle of the course through two large water detention ponds used for golf course irrigation and acting as a desiltation basin for Lake Okabena. The course is unique as there are numerous areas with natural prairie grasses and no trees. Prairie View has approximately 22 acres of prairie grass areas, 40 acres of fairway, 50 acres of rough and approximately 9 acres of water. Nineteen greens total 121,000 square feet with a pure sand base of 2 1/2 feet to 3 feet. Twenty nine tees cover approximately 176,000 square feet with a 50% sand, 50% soil mix.

Prairie grass management requires special maintenance procedures and the burning of prairie grass is without a doubt the singly most beneficial step in prairie management. Burning is generally accomplished in mid April to mid May and provides a competitive advantage for prairie species. Mowing at a height of 6" is substituted during late May if burning cannot be accomplished due to wet weather. The long range management objectives for our prairie areas are to maximize esthetic character by maintaining diverse

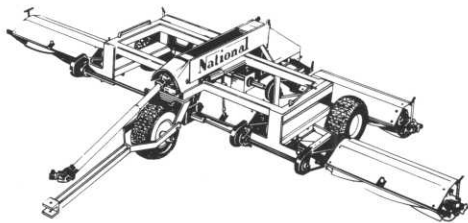
population of native plants and animals, control noxious or undesirable weeds, integrate the prairie with the cool season turfgrasses by carefully defining all mowing lines and to monitor golf play and make adjustments in the height of prairie grasses.

The prairie theme was continued by remodeling a rustic old barn for the clubhouse. The tee trash containers are old wooden whiskey barrels and the ballwashers are mounted on top of old hand water pumps. The tee benches are stained 2"x6" pine wood laid between two old iron wagon wheels. There are 4 wooden shelters on the course stained the same color as the tee benches and trim on the inside of the clubhouse. The goal is to build one shelter a year until each tee has one. The shelters will provide shade and give the golfers a place to sit as there are no trees to provide shade.

An elevated outlet on our lower reservoir was designed to allow for periodic flooding of the lower areas of the course while providing adequate overflow capacity to protect greens and tees. Volume of

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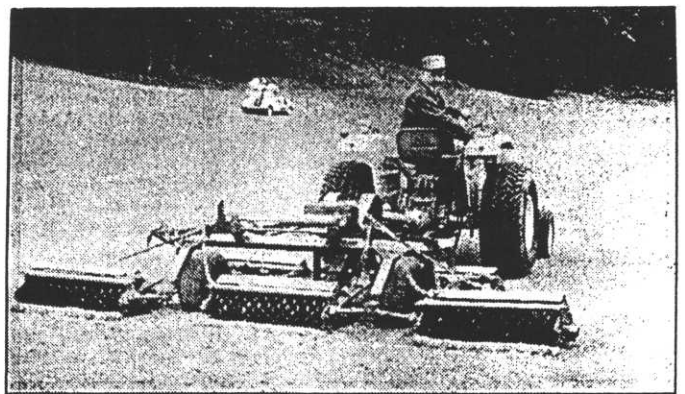
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water through the outlet control structure exceeds design and construction limits and consequently we are experiencing more flooding than was anticipated and undermining and erosion of our bridges and spillway. We are in the process of evaluating the water way system but haven't developed a solution to the problem.

Prairie View Golf Course has begun its fourth year of operation and many golfers on their vacations stop and play the course because of its Scottish Links type design. We receive many favorable comments on the design of the course. The most common complaint is when the golf ball gets into the prairie grass. This is offset by favorable comments about no leaves to contend with in the fall.

The usage and membership has continued to grow at approximately 20% for each year of operation. The long range goal is to develop the golf course usage and revenues that will eliminate the need for general fund tax dollars for support of the operation and become one of the better known public golf courses in our area.



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GET THE MOST OUT OF CONFERENCES

Conference and trade shows, such as GCSAA's International Turfgrass Conference and Show, offer an important opportunity for you to invest a small amount of time and money for a large return. Most professionals believe that occasional opportunities to educate themselves are central to their ability to provide continuing good service to their employers. This is especially applicable to golf course superintendents, whose responsibilities are expanding rapidly.

Learning opportunities come in several forms at a meeting such as GCSAA's. There is the chance to benefit from the knowledge of experts; the more concrete learning afforded by the chance to examine new equipment and products; and the benefit derived from associating with other superintendents.

Attending intensive education sessions can make conferees feel as if they're trying to drink from a fire hose--so much is coming so fast that it's difficult to absorb anything. The best way to overcome this problem is to plan ahead. Select your program of educational sessions carefully, considering the value that each topic has for your problems and situation.

Take plenty of notes--they help you keep organized--but be sure you're not so busy writing things down that you forget to listen. If conference proceedings or recordings of the sessions are available, take advantage of them.

Trade shows offer an opportunity to observe a wide variety of equipment and supplies in a relatively short period of time. It's possible to "comparison shop" among many equipment manufacturers. Whether you have a specific need to fill or are "just looking," you will benefit from the time you spend on the exhibit hall floor.

If you own or can borrow a camera, consider taking one along to photograph items that you are interested in. Photographs of informative posters can save you time by keeping you from copying down information. Don't be hesitant to discuss your requirements with the sales representatives on the floor--they are there to inform you. They may also have descriptive brochures you can take home with you.

Meeting strangers at a conference need not be difficult. All you have to do is be willing to introduce yourself to those around you at a meeting or in an elevator, for example. Have a ready supply of small talk about the weather or sports ready to ease the first few minutes of conversation. There is a rapport that develops quickly in these kinds of encounters which can lead to valuable exchanges of information.

Look for the new attendee and pay special attention to him. If he feels lonely or isolated, chances are he won't return next year. If that happens, he loses and so do you.

Education, exhibits, exchanges with fellow conferees--they are three important aspects of attending a conference. Each is a valuable, and each is part of the investment you make of your time and money when you attend a conference.

CREDIT: NEWSLETTER OF NEW ENGLAND