

# COMMITTEE UPDATES

## Conference Committee

The 1996 MTGF Conference Committee has been hard at work making the necessary arrangements and lining up the best speakers available to make sure the third annual MTGF Conference is a success.

Your MGCSA representation on this committee includes Jim Nicol, Mary Burg, Mike Kelly, Dave Solga, Patty Knaggs, Leif Erickson and Pat Walton.

The Board of Directors of the MTGF has set a goal of profiting \$50,000 from the conference while increasing the quality.

The MTGF Board of Directors is hoping to see a substantial increase in attendance from the allied association's other than the MGCSA. The registration fee for the conference shall not be increased from last year. In order for the MTGF conference to be a success, it is essential that the MGCSA play a major role in serving on the MTGF Conference committee.

If you should have any questions, comments or concerns regarding the conference, feel free to call any of the committee members listed above.

—Pat Walton  
*Rolling Green C.C.*  
*Conference Co-Chairman*

## Scholarship Committee

This is a reminder that Legacy Scholarships are available to children and grandchildren of any Class AA, A, B, C, D, Associate and Affiliate members that have been in the association at least five years. The children/grandchildren must be high school seniors or graduates under 23 years of age who plan to enroll or are already enrolled in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited four-year college, university or vocational-technical school.

One Joseph S. Garske Legacy Scholarship in the amount of \$1,250 and three Legacy scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 will be granted to children/grandchildren that meet the eligibility requirements for the scholarship. The Joseph S. Garske Legacy Scholarship will be renewable for one year contingent upon full-time enrollment and satisfactory academic performance. This is a change from what was printed in the March-April issue of *Hole Notes*. The other three are not renewable, but students may reapply to the program each year they meet eligibility requirements. These awards are for undergraduate study only.

We are also offering two \$1,000 scholarships to students in turf-related classes as we have done in the past. These candidates must be beginning or have completed their first year in a two-year turfgrass technical program or have completed their second or third year of a four-year program with major emphasis in turf management.

Candidates must be residents of Minnesota or be employed by a MGCSA member superintendent. Students will be eligible to apply for both the turf scholarships and the legacy scholarships, but will only be able to receive one.

Qualified students may apply for either of the scholarships by calling or writing the MGCSA office and requesting the proper application. Applicants for legacy awards will have until June 1 to return application forms to Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America, Inc., while applicants for turf scholarships will have until July 1 to return applications to the MGCSA business office.

—Charlie Pooch  
*U of M Les Bolstad G.C.*  
*Scholarship Chairman*

## Public Relations Committee

As we move into the summer of '96 we all have expectations about our courses and how they should look and play during the season. Our members also have expectations and most of us would admit that the two do not always agree.

The following reprint from the March/April issue of the USGA Green Section entitled "Great Expectations" gives us a golfer's view of at least the top 10. Even though this was a survey done in the Pacific Northwest, I think the "Top 10" could apply across the country and to each of our courses. The bottom line however is simple: we as superintendents need to do a better job of communication with our members so that those expectations may be more realistic and better understood by all involved. Thanks to the USGA Green Section for permission to reprint this article below.

—Rob Panuska  
*Waseca Lakeside Club*  
*Public Relations Chairman*

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

*The Top 10 Results of a Survey of What  
Playing Conditions Golfers Prefer*

By Larry Gilhuly

Psst! Superintendents! Want to start a lively discussion with a group of golfers? Ask this one: "What expectations do you have regarding the playing conditions, maintenance and overall atmosphere of a golf course (home or away) when you play?" In the time it takes to line up a one-inch putt, the answers will fly.

This same question was asked of a cross-section of members of the Pacific Northwest Golf Association and Washing-

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# Great Expectations—

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ton State Golf Association Boards of Directors, volunteers, and other association members that included men and women of varying ages and playing abilities. Some of the answers were predictable, while others describe the difficulties that are faced by those responsible for the maintenance of a golf course. Without further ado, the "Top Ten" answers were as follows:

## 1 — Smooth Greens of Adequate Pace

When John Bodenhamer, Executive Director for the PNGA and WSGA, asked the question, the first and most emphatic answer in most cases was fast greens. Not surprisingly, those who still insisted on fast greens were single-digit players.

## 2 — Notice of Aeration Date

It is not surprising to see this make the list; however, when it appears this high, somebody is not doing a good job of communicating. Whatever it takes, get the message out to your players that aeration will occur on certain dates. The best way to address this situation is to set the aeration dates one year in advance, with tournaments scheduled around these "holey days."

## 3 — An Open-Minded Superintendent

Let's face it. Maintaining the playing field for over 400 people from various walks of life is like walking through a mine field! Emotions frequently become involved from both sides, and simple issues can rapidly lead to superintendent decline. Don't fall into this trap! Remove your emotions from the table and look at questions from players as an opportunity to educate or learn, not as an attempt to tell you how to do your job. Treat every player's questions or concerns with consideration and respect, and the chances are you will get the same in return.

## 4 — Proper Course Setup

Improper tee marker alignment and hole locations often receive the fastest and most heated response on the day of the occurrence. Creating a T-square from one-inch irrigation pipe is a simple and fast method for tee mowers and course setup personnel to eliminate misaligned markers. Proper hole location comes with basic training and a knowledge of the game.

## 5 — Bunkers Maintained

Regularly raked and edged bunkers provide hazard definition and eliminate footprints or other irregularities.

## 6 — Firm (dry) Conditions

If you have to deal with a poor irrigation system, inconsistent soils, inadequate labor or any number of other variables, trying to achieve firm conditions without losing turf is extremely difficult. Trying to explain these situations to a player who doesn't care to listen may prove to

be one of the most difficult tasks faced by a superintendent. On the other hand, applying too much water does nothing for the game, the grass plant or the budget. It can expand the superintendent's resume if continued over an extended period of time.

## 7 — Protect the Environment

Golfers are asking more questions about how golf courses affect our environment. These players need to be educated by those who maintain their facilities. As a starting point, the results of the USGA Environmental Research study and the benefits golf provides to people and the environment can be found at your regional USGA Green Section office.

## 8 — Level Tees

A simple problem that can be corrected only by reconstruction.

## 9 — Green Grass

To all of those players who believe this is achievable on a year-round basis in combination with point number 6, it is time for a reality check! Only golf courses with high budgets, excellent irrigation systems, consistent soils and weather patterns that seldom change have a chance of achieving this goal. Furthermore, maintaining a totally green golf course increases the use of water, fertilizer and pesticides. Golfers need to realize that a golf course main-

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## Great Expectations—

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tained with firm conditions and some brown areas is far superior in every way to a sea of green!

### 10 — Variety in Course Setup

This is another easy one that can be addressed by establishing a series of hole location charts that assure diversity on a daily and weekly basis.

So, what can we learn from this survey? Three points immediately come to mind, including:

#### Lack of Education Among Golfers

There is a glaring lack of education among golfers regarding the environment as it relates to irrigation practices and the need to have a totally green golf course.

#### Expectations

The expectations for smooth greens of adequate pace, notice of aeration, proper course setup, defined and maintained bunkers and variety in course setup are all reasonable and should be achievable.



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## Communication Skills

Most important, the fact that many golfers in this survey believe superintendents are close-minded points out the need to work on communications skills. Even if a question or comment from a player appears trivial or is based on emotion, the way the superintendent responds will create the perception of open- or close-mindedness. If you are perceived as close-minded, even logical explanations to suggestions or requests may be considered excuses and will hurt your credibility. Remember, an open mind can open many doors, while a mind that is closed can only shut them.

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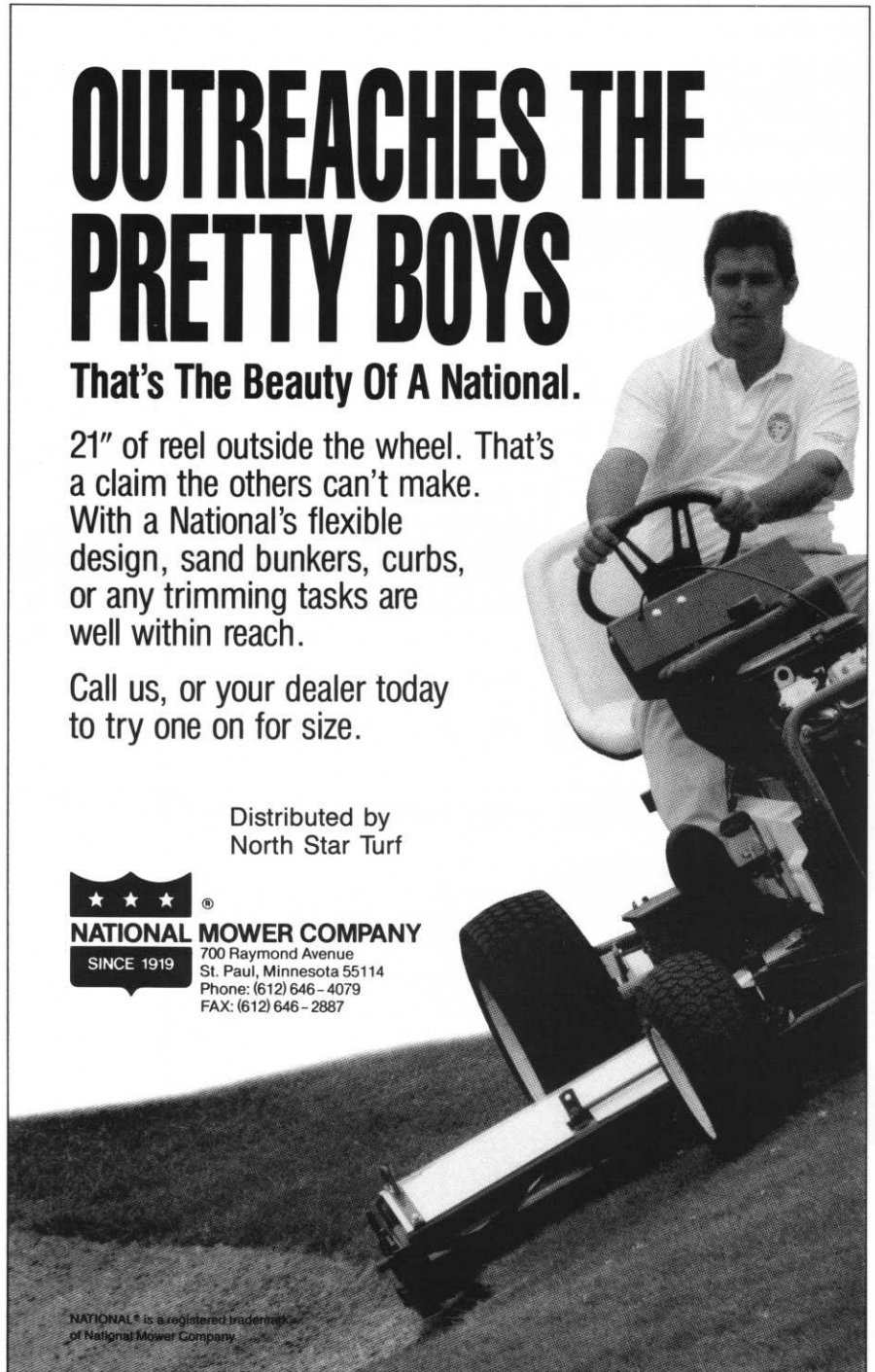
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