

"the golf course superintendent"

(His Qualifications - His Responsibilities - His Requirements)

This article was written to acquaint the golfer with the Golf Course Superintendent and to promote understanding between golfers and the men who have been entrusted with the finest and most valuable turf in the world.

PROFESSIONALISM

There is typically one individual directly responsible for the playing conditions of our modern golf courses. Although the title varies, this individual is generally known as the GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT. He joins and cooperates with the Club House Manager and the Club Professional in providing the best possible facilities for playing the game of golf. In this respect the Golf Course Superintendent is charged with managing the entire area where golf is played.

As with most professionals, the stature and knowledge he enjoys today, were not easily achieved. Near the turn of the century, young men from rural areas with farm background began to migrate into the metropolitan areas and seek work at golf courses as what was then known as green keepers. There he was in his own element, and through a combination of experience and pure instinct, he began to adapt his knowledge to the business of maintaining golf turf. Of course, golf courses of that period did not compare with the courses of today. The green keeper of that period was less knowledgeable, tools were less sophisticated, but as the demand increased the equipment was greatly improved, the green keeper became more knowledgeable and as a result the courses provided much better turf and playing conditions.

As the popularity of golf rose sharply in the 1920s there was a greater need for greenkeepers who could and would accept the challenges of the increased player traffic and the players' demands for higher quality playing conditions. As these conditions increased and the men who accepted the challenge became more knowledgeable the business of greenkeeping became a profession and has taken its place in the world along with other professions.

To better understand the complexities of this profession today, we will describe, in the following paragraphs, the Golf Course Superintendent's qualifications, responsibilities and requirements. Hopefully it will result in a finer appreciation and relationship between those who play golf as a recreation or profession and the Golf Course Superintendent.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S QUALIFICATIONS

Although the Golf Course Superintendent's main concern is that of growing golf turf, he is more and more becoming directly involved in the management of the entire golf course facility. In addition to having an agronomic education, it is a valuable asset if he has additional education in what at first would seem unrelated areas, such as business administration, education or engineering.

To be more specific, the Superintendent must be familiar with the many facets of golf courses, and how they relate to the game of golf. To produce and maintain the specialized turfgrass required, he must have a knowledge of the available types and varieties of turfgrass as well as possessing the technical information required to produce the desired results. He must know and understand the complexities and interrelationships of soils, fertilizers, irrigation drainage, insects, insecticides, turf diseases, fungicides, weeds, herbicides, tools and equipment ranging from hand tools to complex hydraulically-operated fairway mowing units.

He must be able to secure, train and supervise labor and work intelligently with his employees and employers. He must keep accurate and complete records on all aspects of his job. He must know how and where to obtain information re-

lating to all aspects of his job and he must read technical publications almost constantly to keep pace with the rapid developments in his field.

The Golf Course Superintendent's personal characteristics must include integrity, understanding and humility. As the trusted custodian of much of the course's property, the Superintendent's integrity will dictate that he must do what is good for the course, not what may seem best for his personal interests. He must have an understanding of the golfer's feelings, which enables him to accept the blame for missed putts, lost balls and "unplayable" lies.

Working with forces of nature tends to instill a great sense of humility in most men, and consequently requires that they be flexible in their planning and actions. Superintendents know full well that their best planning can easily be altered or reversed by a natural phenomenon such as drought, flood, insects or disease. Therefore, he will continue with his original plan as long as possible, keeping in mind that the need to react immediately is ever present.

Add to these qualifications the knowledge required to deal with the problem related to roadways, trees, flowers, buildings, tennis courts, skeet ranges or other maintenance phases of a golf course, and it becomes more apparent that the Golf Course Superintendent carries a tremendous responsibility in presenting pleasurable recreation facilities.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY

Because of widely differing circumstances it is difficult to fully itemize the Superintendent's professional responsibilities.

Local conditions and factors, including geographic-climate location and number of holes to the history and organization of each course must be considered. Naturally, there are many common areas of responsibility for all Superintendents, but there are also many localized aspects.

A commonly held misconception is that the Golf Course Superintendent is always directly responsible to the clubhouse manager or the golf professional for the management of the golf course playing area. In fact, these three parties are usually individually responsible for their distinct areas of management, which when combined will result in the total operation of the clubhouse facilities, pro shop and golf course.

Most clubs have a "green committee" and the Golf Course Superintendent will work and be responsible to this committee.

We will list 11 areas of responsibility that should be included in the Golf Course Superintendent's responsibilities:

- (1) Golf Course Management (the entire playing surface of the course, to include the tees, fairways, roughs, greens and surrounding areas)
- (2) Area Management (entrance roads, parking lots, practice putting green and driving range)
- (3) Landscaping (planning, planting and removal)
- (4) Structures (buildings, fences, bridges and shelters)
- (5) Equipment (purchase, storage, inventory and maintenance)
- (6) Personnel (working staff, procurement, training and supervision)
- (7) Materials (purchase, storage, inventory and application)
- (8) Budget (preparation, explanation and execution)
- (9) Record Keeping (expenses, weather, material application and inventories)
- (10) Knowledge of Golf (participation, rules and regulations)
- (11) Reporting and Advising (periodic contact with "green committee" and golfers)

All of these responsibilities are of great importance. Each one is a sort of a natural, however, there is one, Number 10, that is a little different than the others in that it might seem that it does not have any direct connection with the growing of turf, grass or with the maintenance of the tees, greens, fairways, etc., but actually it does. If the Superintendent knows the rules it

(continued on page 10)

Greens' Clippings

We are happy to report on the interest being taken in the profession of the Golf Course Superintendent by the Golf Chairman of one of the Clubs in St. Paul. The gentleman is Mr. Bill Hite of the Town and Country Club. Bill is attending a course in Horticulture Science at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chaska and he hopes to be able to arrange his business so he can attend Dr. Donald White's short course in Turf Management early in 1975. The course he is now taking is a prerequisite for Dr. White's course.

John Lightfoot, Editor of the Arrowhead Turf Association's "Cup Cuttings" advises that their Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 4 at the Quadna Mountain Lodge in Hill City, Minnesota. The Nominating Committee, Archie Beel, Chairman, has recommended Eino Maki for President; Byron Ringhand, Vice-President; John Lightfoot, Executive Secretary; and Darrell Bruggman and John Sternal as Directors. We have not received the results of the election but assume the members accepted the recommendation of the Nominating Committee.

Dr. Donald White of the Horticulture Science Department of the University of Minnesota will conduct a short course in Turf Management from February 10, 1975 to April 14th, on Mondays from 6:20 p.m. to 8:50 p.m. in the Horticulture Science Building, Room 415, St. Paul Campus. This is a 4-credit course and the cost is \$60 plus \$4 course fee. The course will be limited to 30 students and the prerequisites are 1001 Horticulture Science, Soil 1122 or by the consent of the Instructor. Inquiries should be addressed to Dr. White at the address shown above in this article. The Zip Code is 55101.

With play slowing up a little at the clubs, Superintendent Bill Johnson at the Edina Country Club is busy enlarging some of the traps. Specifically on holes 4 and 11. I am sure this will make the hackers happy. It will, however, make the course a better test of golf and that is what the game is about.

(continued on page 6)



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SOME FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN SELECTING A FERTILIZER

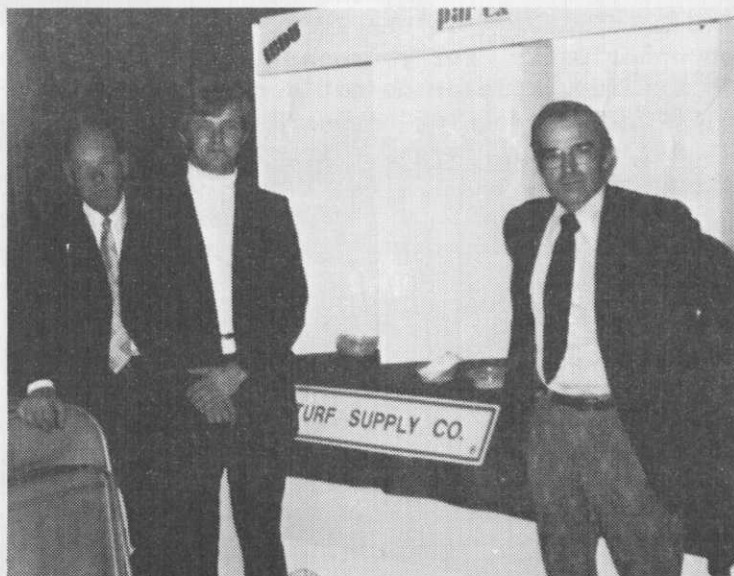
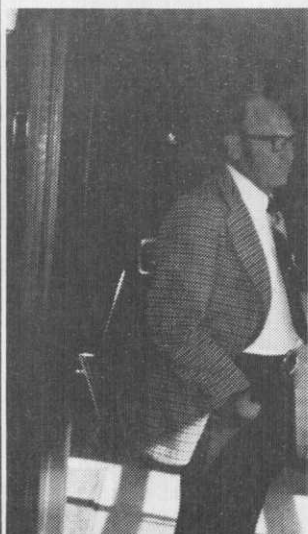
Factors Required	Milorganite	IBDU (Swift)	Mixed Fertilizer	Scotts (UF)	Uramite or Nitroform	Chemical Nitrogen
Spreader Calibration	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Watering-In	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bad Weather Application	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Heavy Traffic Application	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Spreader Clean Up	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sufficient Bulk for Coverage	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Every Growth Element	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Disease & Nematode Suppression	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Water & Energy Conservation	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Enhances Natural Growth Curve	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Snow & Ice Removal	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Dormant Application	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Low Salt Index	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Bacterial Action	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Does Not Burn	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Long Lasting	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
High Analysis	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Less Nitrogen Needed	Yes	No	No	No	No	No



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PICTURES TAKEN AT MONTICELLO COUNTRY CLUB



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GREENS' CLIPPINGS (cont'd from page 4)
We ended the reporting of the Annual Tournament, in the October issue, with a promise that we would have more in this issue. We were obliged to cut the report of the Tournament short because of lack of space and the lateness in the month of the event.

This exceptionally popular Tournament was played on the Rolling Green Country Club course and what a course it is. The front nine is more or less open and the back nine heavily wooded. This makes about as interesting an 18 holes of golf that anyone could desire. On the front nine you can do a little spraying and still have an opportunity for your par with an excellent recovery shot. However, on the back nine, please do not spray because if you do you are in serious trouble. It was interesting to hear some of the remarks of the players as they finished their round. It was something like this: "Terrific," "Never played a course like this," "Most interesting," "Great," "This track is a test for anyone," "Tough but fun," "I hope I get a chance to play here again," etc., all most complimentary. Another thing that made the course so interesting and fun to play was the excellent condition in which Superintendent Jim Lindblad and his staff had the course. Congratulations, Jim.

The popularity of the event is growing so fast that it is causing a little concern with the tournament committee. With some 200 players and more wanting to enter, and particularly more wanting a later starting time than 8 a.m., this raises the question of how it can be done and still get them all around and finished before dark. The cart situation is another problem. Rolling Green has a good number of carts and the committee ruled that there could be only one cart to a foursome and there was still a problem. This means the committee is going to have to sit down and take a good hard look at the facts and come up with a solution. With all of the talent, experience and devotion of these fellows you can be sure they will come up with the answer.

Below are pictures of the winners of the various categories of this outstanding event.

Assistant Superintendent, Senior, Club Official, Superintendent, Guest Green Chairmen, Guest Professional, Associate member, High scorer.



Steve Young



Carl Anderson



Chuck Killiam



Campion
Bill Johnson



Judd Ringer



Jack Adams



Bob Reith, Jr.

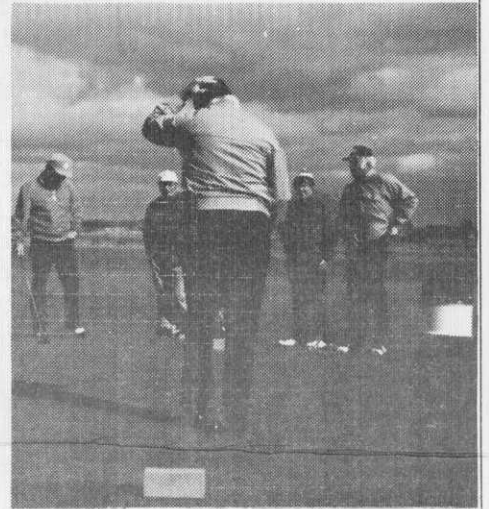
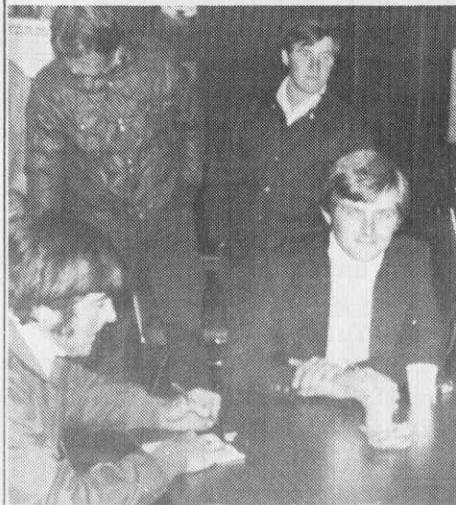
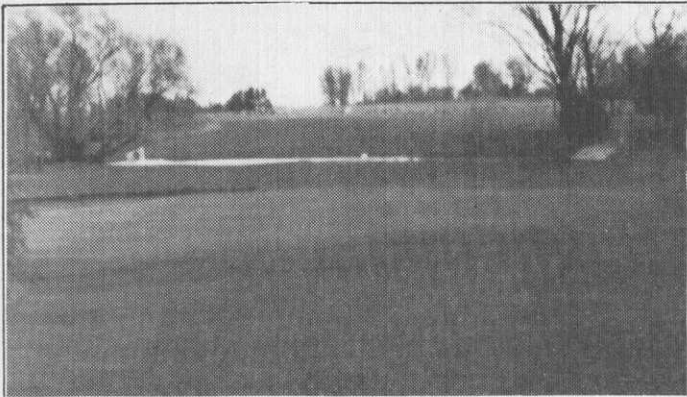


Carl Tychsen

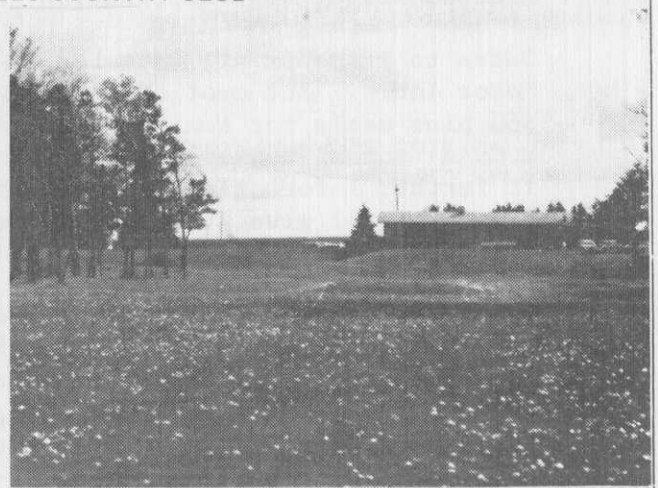


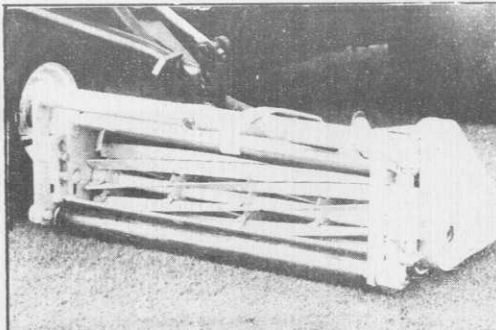
John Lightfoot

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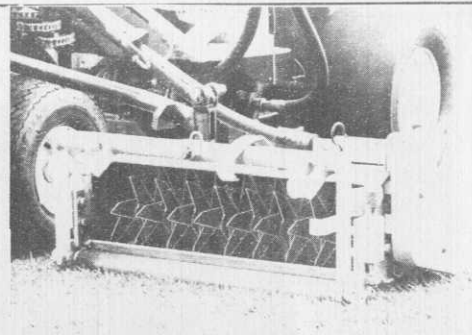


PICTURES TAKEN AT MONTICELLO COUNTRY CLUB



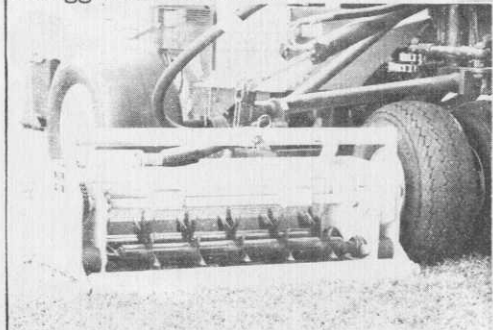


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GREENS REELS

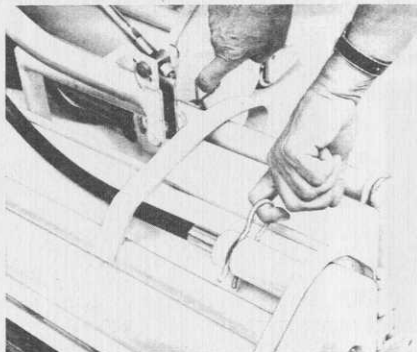
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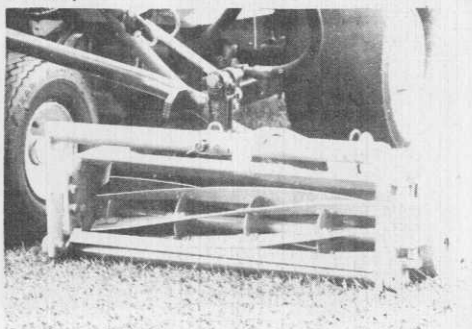


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GREENS' CLIPPINGS (cont'd from page 6)

This is only November but it is not too early to start planning to attend the GCSAA 46th International Turfgrass Conference and Show in New Orleans, February 16-21, 1975. Conference Highlights are: Pre-Conference Seminars, Certification Examinations, General Education Assemblies, Special Interest Sessions, Turfgrass Industry Show, Annual Meeting and Election, Turf Tour, Ladies' Program, Social Events and Golf Tournament. There will be 40 speakers at the week-long educational program on various subjects that will be of great interest to conference registrants. Social activities will include the traditional Monday evening get-together and Thursday's Annual Banquet and Dance. More detailed information can be had by contacting the GCSAA Headquarters, 1617 St. Andrews Drive, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

Dates to remember are December 3-4. The GCSAA Pesticide Seminar at the Normandy Motor Inn. The cost of this Seminar is \$40 for GCSAA members plus meals and \$60 plus meals for Non-Members. Also December 5-6. These are the dates of the MGCSAA Annual Conference and Annual Meeting, also at the Normandy Motor Inn. If further information on both of these meetings is available before we go to press we will give it to you in some other section. Probably under the heading of MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE BALANCE OF THE YEAR.

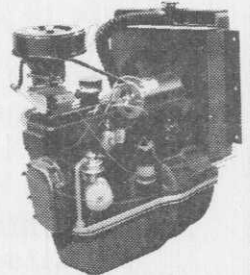
For those of you that have not been able to attend many or any of the MBDSAA meetings during the year, due to heavy work-load, now that the season is drawing to a close and hopefully the pressure is letting up, you will be able to attend the last two, November and December. Both of these meetings will be interesting and educational, so make plans now to attend.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S QUALIFICATIONS, ETC. (cont'd from page 3)

will be of a great benefit to him and his staff in the cutting of the fairways, greens and tees, the placement of the cups on the greens, the placing of the tee markers, the marking of the water hazards, the lateral water hazards, out of bounds, ground under repair etc. Also to aid him in doing the afore-mentioned items it will be of great benefit for the Superintendent to play a round of golf, at least once a month and more often if possible, with the chairman of the green committee. It will give him first hand practical knowledge and will enable him to discuss problems more intelligently with the various committees and players.

As stated before, the specific responsibilities of a Golf Course Superintendent will vary greatly, however, in general terms the Superintendent's main responsibility is to provide the players with the finest possible playing conditions.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S REQUIREMENTS

The business practices of golf courses, such as, purchasing, accounting, finances and personnel vary considerably and one Superintendent may approach the problems in a different manner; there are basic rules and practices that exist and must be followed by the Superintendent if he is to accomplish the best results.

Among the important requirements of a Superintendent is that he have complete opportunities to work with and assist with committees in the planning stages of major programs. Many good ideas pertaining to potential changes in the course originate informally; they can best reach material accomplishment under the guidance of a well coordinated committee and Superintendent. In many cases thousands of dollars have been wasted and much dissatisfaction caused by unwise decision and action taken without the full knowledge of the Superintendent. Making the most of a Superintendent's skill and knowledge has been proven to be the most successful and efficient manner of operating a golf course.

Another requirement that is advantageous to both the course and the Superintendent is to have an agreed upon long-term golf course development program. Then establishing a procedure which will afford the Superintendent the means of implementing that program.

The Superintendent should be given the opportunity to continue his education in his chosen profession. Superintendents should attend conferences and meetings where the results of current research findings are reported and explained. Membership in professional organizations in his field is a valuable asset to the Superintendent as through these organizations he learns that experiences and problem-solving methods are exchanged for the betterment of both the individual and the course.

The Superintendent should welcome suggestions, from club members, directed toward the improvement of the course. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the Superintendent is the technical expert on golf course management, and that those phases of the operation should be placed directly in his hands.

Cooperation and coordination are key words whenever a Superintendent's requirements are being discussed. Although he cannot rely upon the cooperation of the weather or other natural elements, he should be able to depend upon his employer and golfers. As stated earlier, flexibility is a necessity for Golf Course Superintendents, but for sake of a high quality course, all concerned should cooperate and coordinate with one another.

The Golf Course Superintendent is a man of many hats and therefore must be versed in agronomy, horticulture, entomology, plant pathology, landscape architecture, construction, accounting, meteorology, civil engineering and mechanics, as well as public and labor relations.

The qualification, responsibilities and requirements of a Superintendent will vary tremendously from course to course, but the basic aspects will always be present in one form or another.