

that no one was paying any attention anyway. Did you ever hear that old saying, "When in trouble and in doubt, run in circles, scream and shout."? Well, it doesn't work, everybody else is so busy running and shouting in their own circles, that you can't get their attention.

I remember my Pro going on and on about the condition of a particular course... it was just fantastic. I had to go check it out for myself because on its best day it had never impressed me. It was just as I remembered it... hard and brown. It was difficult to tell the fairways from the rough. I realized that for a Pro, it probably played well, and he scored well. That is one of the key points to the Pro/Supt relationship which is not always the greatest. You feel very personally about your golf course, he feels personally about golf. It is not the same.

It is certainly your job to know your course warts and all. However, there never was the perfect golf course and there never will be; it is just the nature of the beast. There are too many things over which you have no control. A desire for the perfect golf course could be termed a mild form of insanity.

One strong defense against stress is to enlist the help of the golfer with a good Public Relations program. How do you do this? It has been talked about and written about for years. None of what I heard or read was my style. I do not give talks to the garden club, wear a three-piece suit, attend all the club functions, or greet everyone on the first tee on Saturday or Sunday. They have all been suggested and might help, if you are so inclined. There is an easier and more rewarding way. It is simple, direct, and once you get the hang of it, a lot of fun. It is to talk to the golfer. Many turf men treat the golfer as the good and the bad, the old and the young, the men and the women, and anyone in between. My PR time (I ran away before I knew better) with the members is the most productive part of my day. I can state from experience that ninety percent of all the feedback you get will be positive and give you a great feeling. With all that good stuff, you should be able to handle the ten percent negative. I can also say that if your attitude is positive

and light, you will win over most of the negative people.

A positive attitude will be reflected back from the person you are dealing with. Don't deal with negativism. I can remember being haunted for years because I refused to accept a compliment and let it go at that. A lady golfer was lavish in her praise and I thanked her and replied that I thought we were progressing nicely, but that I was concerned about the increasing clover in the fairways. She looked at me in amazement, "Clover? It's nice, I have a lot in my lawn." I told her that golf courses consider it a weed and it did not provide a good lie for the ball. She said, "I never knew that; it does make the fairways look blotchy, and the ball does not settle down in it." That one person spread the word. I think she must have talked to every golfer in the club. Within one week the membership were all very concerned with the clover "problem." It ended up being the biggest complaint of the season, after cup placement. The moral of the story is don't provide ammunition for your stress factor. Along the same line, an officer in the Navy told me something I have never forgotten, "Never knock yourself; there are always plenty of others who are willing to do it for you."

About eighty percent of the golfers are not adamant about the condition of the course; they will usually accept conditions as they find them without too much fuss. They will respond well to your PR attempts. Ten percent will accept any conditions and just don't care enough to even think about it. They, too, will respond to a friendly "Hi" and a few pleasant words. The ten percent that are left you will really have to work on. This is the group that sometimes make you wish you had a nine-to-five job in an office. They are usually very verbal, fair-to-good golfers and communicate pretty well within the club and among themselves. It is not easy to convert chronic bitches, but it well worth the effort and everyone should keep working at it. Select the loudest and strongest and project your public relation to him - or her, as is sometimes the case. I won one over by the simple expedient of sitting down and having lunch with him. I ruined my lunch and my digestion, but with that start, he is now one of my biggest boosters. Seems his biggest complaint was that no one listened to him—meaning me, the Pro, or officials of the club. That was easy, I can listen like crazy. Of course I have to put up with a five-minute discussion every time I see him, but that is a small price to pay for his good will. He has also done my PR work for me within the chronic bitching group. One really needs the support of this group when we encounter the other type of stress.

For want of any other name, I will call it **Disaster Stress**. This happens when your mistake is very obvious and right out there for all to see, and can't be passed off as a natural event - such as weather or disease.

I had one happen to me in mid-season, the worst time. Early on, there is a good chance that active growth will get you out of trouble. Late in the season, the cool nights, warm days and fall rains are very forgiving. Then too, you are doing renovation work anyway.

Before the current pesticide regulations, we used some pretty potent chemicals. I used sodium arsenate as a total kill on weeds in the sand traps. It was cheap, killed in a few hours, and also soaked through my sneakers and inflamed the skin under my toenails. My casual attitude about this has changed along with our chemicals. After one of these sprays, I sent one of my summer college students to rinse out the tank. In view of what happened, it is ironic that he was a chemistry major. My instructions were to spray the small amount of material in the tank into the brushy edge of the woods on the way to the pumphouse, rinse the tank out, then refill with water for the next use. A day or two later, I added fungicide to the tank and sent two men to apply it to the greens. The chemistry major had not rinsed the tank, merely filled it. The residue chemical in the tank was enough to brown out the first nine greens spayed, which happened to be the back nine. Upon refilling, the dilution rate was so high, the rest of the greens were not harmed. The damage was evident the next day, and it was not hard to figure out what had happened. I called the Greens Chairman at once. He voiced his primary concern in the first question. "Does it

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# ASSOCIATES' CORNER

## Reed's Sales and Service

The image of a bearded man, trekking across the prairie with a gray whetstone carried on his back, comes to mind as Harvey Reed describes the way his father started in business 30 years ago.

"He was sort of a modern version of the guy who went around sharpening knives," Reed said. "But instead of carrying the sharpening stone on his back, my dad had his tools in the back of a truck."

Lloyd Reed was a dedicated worker, traveling door-to-door in his truck offering to repair broken engines or equipment, always ready to put a keen edge on any blade, from a pen knife to a lawn mower.

As his business outgrew the truck and garage, Reed moved into a little shop in 1956 and then people started bringing their lawn mowers to him. In the next five to six years the repair business grew steadily and Reed added an additional 225 sq. ft. of space to his shop and put an employee or two on the payroll. In 1961 son Harvey joined the business, followed the next year by the other son, Dan. In another year Reed was able to add a major manufacturer's line to the business, and with the addition of Lawn-Boy mowers on the floor, the once door-to-door traveling repairman became known as Reed's Sales and Service.

The growth has steadily continued, making the total space today exceeding the size of the original shop by a thousand square feet. The business Lloyd Reed began nearly three decades ago is now owned and operated by sons Harvey and Dan. The employees number 13 and the business still operates with its founding principles: provide quality service and fill the needs of customers in Minnesota.

Dale Walesheck is the new on the road in store salesman. Dale calls on golf courses, cemeteries, cities and parks and corporations. Dale sells R&R products, Lawn-Boys String Trimmers, Kaye Corporation Products...almost everything under the sun to keep you going. Dale believes in fast and dependable service. Charles Brooks is the

heart of the company, working in engine parts. Charlie handles Briggs and Stratton, Kohler, Tecumseh and various other lines, providing quality service to accounts. Keeping everything together is of course our secretary Merance Peiffer who has been with Reed's for 13 years.

Reed, who began his career with the business by repairing lawn mowers back in the early 60's, is a firm believer in the service schools that manufacturers have set up. It is there that Reed employees get some of the most valuable training they ever receive in repair and servicing.

While lawn mowers account for a big share of Reed's profits, he readily admits that, "We couldn't make it just selling and repairing only lawn mowers." Another aspect of the business, managed by brother Dan, centers around industrial and automotive tool distribution.

Still, Reed's Sales and Service had its beginnings with lawn mower sharpening and repair, and that continues to be its mainstay.

"After being in business as long as we have, we've built up a good reputation in the community," Reed said. "A lot of our customers knew my dad 20 years ago and they keep coming back. The people who know us tell others and we keep getting customers coming in from farther and farther away."

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than you, it is only human that this will make you feel just a little bit better. There are no secrets in the art of Greenkeeping - but it is an art, not an exact science, with each turf manager operating just a bit differently than the guy down the road. So your neighbor's routine might be a revelation to you. No one man knows it all, but collectively, all the answers are there if you keep looking.

If planning and thinking are giving you the yips... try going to the course - alone - just before dusk. The turf always looks better at sundown, the golfers are gone or going, and there is no one to say, "Phone for you," or, "What do you want me to do now?". Put a clipboard on the seat of a golf car and ride the course the way a golfer would play. Write down whatever comes to mind - put your brain in neutral and let it think freely. I did this once, picked up the pad and wrote, "This course SUCKS." It gave me a chuckle the next day. You can take this ride at dawn too, but it is not the same, the day is ahead of you, and you will eventually be frustrated by the daily routine and the golfers.

I have written of stress as I know it. Most of it is mental and certainly a lot of it is self-induced. If you think there is a problem, then it is a problem. You always have the option of deciding you will do your best and it is not a problem - then it won't be one.

The stress of a major tournament must be overwhelming, yet I had one of the top men in the country tell me he hated it while it was going on and sort of missed the commotion after it was over. The experts in the field of human emotions say that a certain amount of stress is good for you. Personally, I don't need it, and can live very well without it, thank you.



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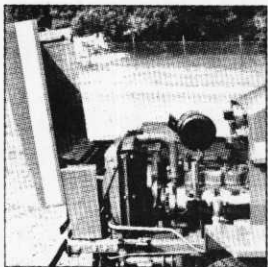
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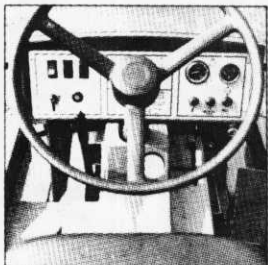
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