

MGCSA President Responds to Various Questions

Questions for the President

So far it's been a busy couple of months for the new president of the MGCSA, Kevin Clunis (and he's only just begun.) I thought it would be interesting for the readers of *Hole Notes* to find out a little something about Kevin and what he feels is important for the organization and the golf industry in general.

After graduating with a degree in education from St. Cloud State, Kevin decided that a career as a golf course superintendent was what he wanted. The five years working under Lyle Cran at Stillwater County Club helped him make that decision with no regrets. Kevin has been superintendent at Stillwater C.C. for 10 years and whatever you hear him preach about responsible maintenance practices, he practices on his course.

Kevin, Nancy and their four children live in Mahtomedi.

What are your goals for the MGCSA during your presidency?

Goals, or Presidential Directives, that I have issued to the Board of Directors of the MGCSA include issuing an environmental impact statement, involving the media at one of our monthly meetings and to increase the membership from non-member golf courses.

Talk about some of the problems that face golf course superintendents in Minnesota through the rest of the century.

One problem is the public's misperception of the positive environmental impact that golf courses have. We as superintendents must continue to communicate to our communities the positive ecological and economic impact the golf industry has. Another problem will be an increased pressure from regulatory authorities on how we operate our

facilities. It will take all of our professional abilities to understand, conform and implement these policies.

What can the MGCSA do to reach out to golf courses that are not members of the organization?

We must show them the value of a membership and insight into educational opportunities available. We must be able to demonstrate need of involvement and the capabilities of improving the prospective superintendent as well as his or her course.

How do you see the relationship between the MGCSA and the newly formed Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation?

The MGCSA is still the lead organization within the newly formed MT&GF. We will remain in that capacity for awhile until the foundation has enough resources to establish itself as an industry leader. The MGCSA will still remain with its own identity, but by being a member of the MT&GF, we can only strengthen our position in the green industry.

Give us your thoughts on the relationship between the MGCSA, MT&GF, MGA and the University of Minnesota's involvement in the turfgrass industry.

The U of M will have to step forward with a significant involvement if the MT&GF is to be a recognized player of the turf world. It will bring credibility to any research or findings from the Foundation. As for the MGA, Ross Galarneault, MGA Executive Director, has communicated to me in his own way how excited the MGA is to work with our association on all concerns of the golf industry. This could open up new resources for the MT&GF to tap into as it gains strength and involvement in the turf industry.

AT THUNDERBIRD HOTEL MARCH 16-17

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Set For 5th Annual Hazardous Waste Conference

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Fifth Annual Hazardous Waste Conference on March 16-17 is designed to help Minnesota generators comply with the state's hazardous waste rules. It is recommended for all managers, company personnel and government officials, and is open to anyone interested in hazardous waste management.

The conference will begin with a general session at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 16. Concurrent sessions will follow Thursday afternoon and all-day Friday. A vendor display area will be set up on Thursday featuring environmental consultants, hazardous waste equipment manufacturers and others involved in hazardous waste management.

The price of the conference is \$75 and the price of a workshop is \$35. The price for both the conference and workshop is \$100. The price covers tuition, instructional materials, meals and refreshments.

For more information, contact Diane Wetzstein at (612) 297-8467. (TTY users call (612) 282-5332).

Topics For Member Articles

- Maintenance tips on your course or equipment.
- Major changes on your course or maintenance area, your role and how things were done.
- Environmental issues on your golf course or in your area.
- A personal goal achieved or human interest story.
- What has worked and what hasn't in maintaining your course.
- Photographs are welcome!

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MPCA Sets Sights On Septic Systems

Many of us take for granted the discharge of vehicle wash-water, shop floor waste, rinsewater and other wastewaters to septic systems or to the surface.

How could this practice pose a problem? After all, it's just water, dirt, grass clippings and maybe a little HIP, solvents, gas and oil.

The problem lies in the accumulation of these and other toxins into the soil. Sooner or later they will migrate to ground water and find their way to domestic wells or public waters. When this happens, the party that is found responsible will get tangled up in the nightmare of environmental remediation.

Until now, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) had no specific limits for many toxic constituents found in discharge waters.*

This may seem strange, but basically the policy was that until a problem manifested itself in soil, wells or public waters, no action was taken.

However, the EPA has given itself until March, 1995 to mandate specific restrictions on wastewater discharge to the MPCA. The MPCA will take these restrictions and either enforce them as is or make them tighter for Minnesota businesses.

For example, "Drinking Water" quality limits are .05 mg/1 (Parts Per Million) Lead, 250 mg/1 for Sodium Chlo-

ride, and .005 mg/1 for Benzene (a common solvent found in gasoline). Image what the limits are for HIP.

There are indications that Drinking Water Standards will be used as a benchmark for discharge of wastewater from industrial sites. This naturally would include golf courses and other businesses in the turf industry.

Solutions

What regulatory people are telling us is that those businesses using on-site systems of discharging wastewater have several options.

1. Stop washing equipment, floors and vehicles.
2. Capture all of the discharge in a holding tank and have a vendor pump the tank.
3. Capture and recycle the water through some type of treatment equipment.

Regardless of the method that is chosen, remember that anything we do to protect the environment not only improves our quality of life, it can also be used to promote a positive image in the community.

—Scott Ender, Ruffride-Johnson Equipment Co.

* * * *

*"Disposal of Industrial Wastewater Alternatives" fact sheets 1-5 are available from the MPCA on request. Contact Gretchen Sabel at (612) 296-0550.

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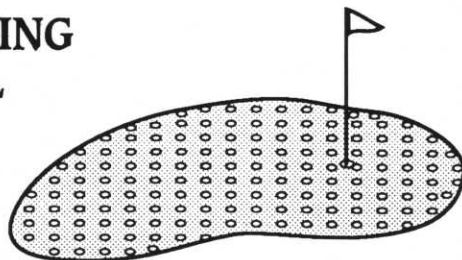
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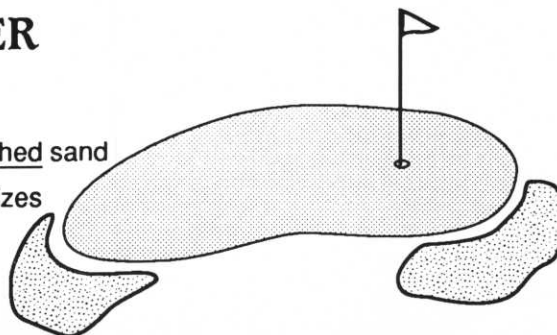
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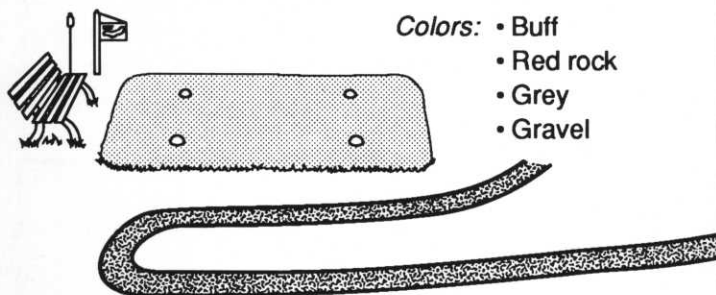
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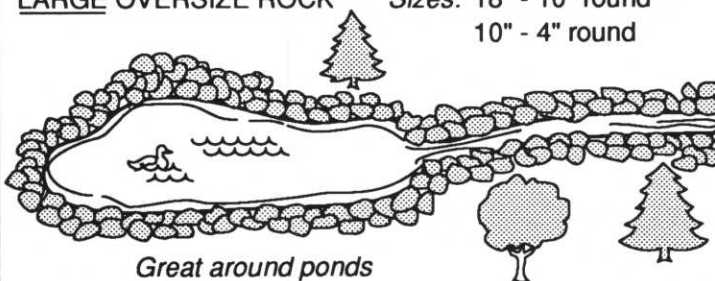
CARTPATH AGGREGATE

- Colors:
- Buff
 - Red rock
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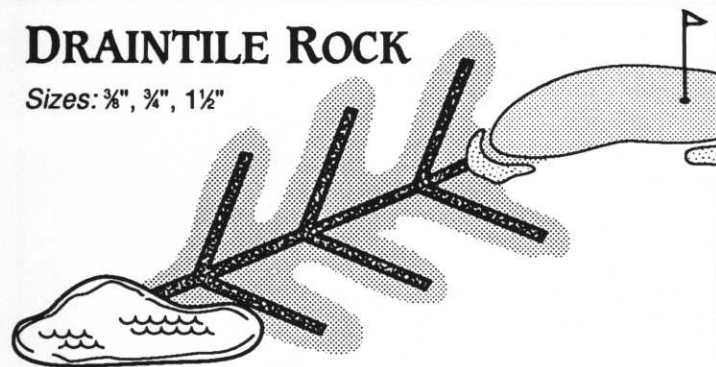
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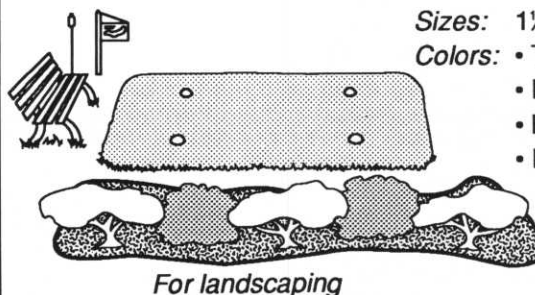
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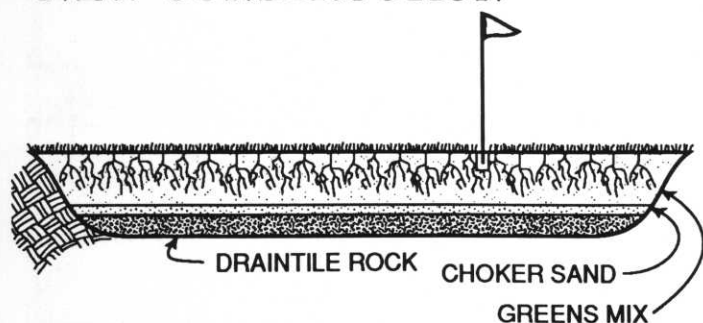


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Jinx At The Links: Eco-Watchers Eye The Greens

I am certain that subsequent generations will shake their heads in disbelief at some of our recreational pleasures. Let's take golf as an example.

I am not a player, but my wife and children are, and they tell me that hitting that little white ball around on meticulously landscaped turf dotted with water-courses, gets them back in tune with nature. And, it is both physically and mentally rewarding.

There is no question of golf's popularity. Worldwide there are at least 50 million golfers (50 percent are American), and golf course construction is the fastest type of land development in the world. In terms of total acreage, the world's 25,000 golf courses would exceed the size of Belgium.

King James, the Scottish monarch who introduced the world to golf in the 15th century, would not recognize modern golf courses. Today's courses are a manicured monoculture that carries a stiff environmental price tag.

Anne Platt, in her article "Toxic Green, The Trouble with Golf," which appeared in the May/June issue of *Worldwatch*, addresses some of the environmental problems with golf. For example, around the world, golf course developments "displace people, destroy habitats, pollute surrounding water and air with their heavy concentration of fertilizer and pesticides and deplete public water supplies."

Water

Golf courses require enormous amounts of water. Consider, for example, that the three municipal golf courses in Tampa, Fla., use 560,000 gallons of water daily. Mining "fossil" groundwater to irrigate golf courses is clearly an unsustainable practice. North Mankato's new golf course is a case in point. They are using water from the Mount Simon-Hinckley aquifer that is thousands of years old, and it is essentially nonrenewable.

Sandra Postel in her 1992 book, "Last Oasis," reports that in 26 countries, water scarcity problems are putting a constraint on food production, economic development and protection of natural ecosystems.

Africa, the continent with the fastest growing population, also has the largest number of water-scarce areas.

In the Mid-east, nine countries have serious water problems. And, water scarcity problems also are evident in Barbados, Belgium, Hungary, Malta, Singapore and the Netherlands.

Ironically, some of the countries with water scarcity problems are the ones with the fastest growing golf course construction projects. In Thailand, a new golf course is being built every 10 days, and golf is the major cause of landlessness among rural people.

Chemicals

Thirty years ago, golf courses were treated with mercury and arsenic to make the turf bright green.

Today, these toxic metals have been replaced with heavy doses of fertilizers and pesticides.

In the United States, golf courses, on average, use about seven times the amount of pesticides applied to agricultural land.

Golf course greens with their largely sand base are a sieve for the leaching of pesticides and fertilizers into groundwater.

How these golf course chemicals may affect people is largely unknown, but the U.S. National Association of Golf Superintendents is currently funding research on the effects of pesticides on the health of greenskeepers, players and caddies.

Eco-golf

Golf as a major recreational sport is not going to vanish, but organizations like GAG'M, the global anti-golf organization, are pushing for development policies that will minimize long-term damage and risks.

Some global environmental organizations are suggesting that we return to golf courses designed not by bulldozers, but by nature. Gen Morita, head of a global anti-golf organization, says, "There is no more room on Earth to destroy nature for the sake of a mere game."

—Don Gordon, *Free Press Columnist Mankato, Minn.*

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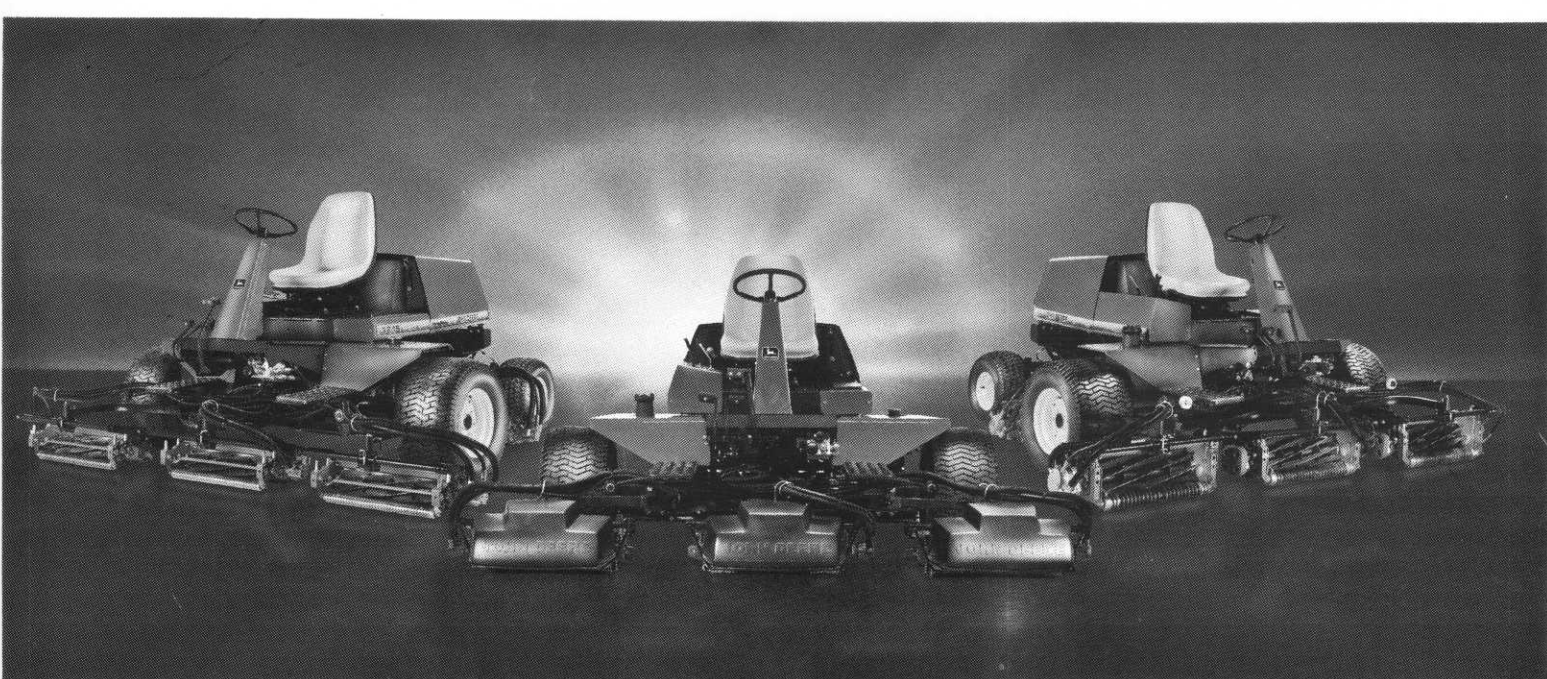
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ADA: Moving Towards A New Reality

By Pat Jones
Director of Communications

The golf industry has reached an important mile marker in the long road to final rules regarding the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to course design.

The proposed rules set forth by the Golf Subcommittee of the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board were published in the Federal Register in late September. A summary is provided below, but you can contact GCSAA Government Relations for a full copy of the proposed rules.

With official publication also comes the opportunity for public comment, so please feel free to forward your thoughts on the issue to "ADA Comments" in care of GCSAA Government Relations.

Readers should note that the proposed regs deal mainly with new construction and remodeling of the physical plant of the golf course. They do not answer many commonly asked questions about how ADA affects the operations of the course.

For example, the proposed language does not address the questions of whether it can ever be reasonable to temporarily deny access to a disabled golfer who uses an assistive device or golf car that is likely to damage soft or wet greens (although this is the subject of a research project at Rutgers that is co-sponsored by USGA, the Association of Disabled American Golfers and GCSAA), or whether lightning warning systems must offer alternative methods of notifying hearing-impaired golfers of risks.

The vast majority of the questions from around the industry deal with these types of operational issues. Because ADA is really a complaint-driven statute (i.e., the rules are formed by the courts as lawsuits and complaints are decided), many questions will remain unanswered until test cases are filed and work their way through the appellate system. For example, recent test cases on the general provisions of ADA have established that people with severe asthma may qualify for ADA protection. Another case is examining whether the statute applies to people with extreme obesity. Although no golf cases have worked their way into the public record, senior Access Board officials confirm that a number of golf-related complaints are already on file.

Even more difficult are ADA-related questions about golf car usage. For example, what provisions should be made for modified golf cars (with swivel seats and/or steering-column-mounted speed controls)? Even if they're not technically mandated under the law, courses might still face bias claims if they're not provided—particularly if use of a car is required. The committee recommended further study of this issue.

It's not a bad idea to step back from the "rules" and consider the issue from a customer service or member satisfaction standpoint. In that context, you might decide that what may not be required by the laws of justice may be demanded by the laws of marketing and public relations. In short, your facility's policies on players with disabilities may be more of an "image" issue than a legal one.

Although the ADA-Golf process is not over, it is a good time to recognize the remarkable contributions made by GCSAA Director George Renault III, CGCS, and Henry Throter, the PGA of America's Director of Special Projects. Over the past two years, Renault and Throter have done a great service to golf by contributing hundreds of extra hours of work (and attending countless government meetings) to represent golf's interests in this issue. It's another good example of how golf benefits by being part of the governmental process. Thanks also to the many others from the industry, including Greg Jones of ADAG and noted architect Dick Phelps, who also participated actively in the process.

Summary of Key Recommendations of ADA-Golf

Important Note: These recommendations were open to public comment until Dec. 20, 1994. Following public comment, the Access Board will review the comments and propose final language. That language will also be subject to public comment and a final review by the Department of Justice. Therefore, the provisions will probably not come into effect until late 1996 or early 1997. Until then, all golf courses—both private and public—continue to be covered under the existing Title 3 requirement to remove barriers to access when easily achievable.

1. **Accessible Route:** The subcommittee's goal was to provide disabled golfers with access to the ball. The assumption was that most players with disabilities would use golf cars or other assistive devices. Therefore, "accessible route"—an important consideration within other provisions of ADA—could not be defined because balls fly unpredictably.

2. **Golf Cars:** The subcommittee recommends that any requirements for providing modified golf cars should not be finalized until statistical research has been done to document what kinds of assistive modifications should be specified to meet the needs of the largest proportion of disabled golfers. The committee also recommended discussions with golf car manufacturers about modifications.

3. **New Construction Design Standards:** The recommendation is that any NEW courses built after the provisions come into effect must offer access to:

(Continued on Page 18)

ADA: Moving Towards A New Reality

(Continued from Page 17)

- a. At least one tee per hole.
- b. All greens, except when extreme safety issues or environmental restrictions prevail.
- c. Practice greens and at least one teeing station (or 5 percent of total stations).
- d. Weather shelters, restrooms and other amenities when cart paths are provided.
- e. Fairways, at least every 75 yards, except where prevented by extreme terrain or environmental restrictions.

Hazards (bunkers) do not have to be accessible under the

recommendation. At least one practice bunker should be accessible if practice bunkers are built in the practice area.

4. Remodeling/Reconstruction: The subcommittee recommends that whenever physical alterations are made to a feature on an EXISTING course, those features would have to be brought into compliance. "Alteration" means changes in physical dimensions (length, width, height). Resodding, seeding or irrigation work are not included in the definition of "alteration." Examples: If you completely rebuilt and/or recontoured a green, that green would have to be accessible. If you rebuilt one or more tees on a hole, at least one tee on that hole (but not necessarily the one you rebuilt) would also have to be accessible. The alterations recommendations did not address fairways.

5. What is "Access"? Generally, the term access applies to the existence of a path of travel to a particular feature, the suitability of the path and the relative dimensions and flatness of the feature. The latter means that the path is wide enough and the feature is flat enough to allow safe access. For example, an accessible tee must have an entry point not exceeding a slope of 1:20, be wide enough for a golf car and not have cross slopes of more than 1:50. (For detailed information on the specific access definitions, contact GCSAA for a full copy of the committee's recommendations.) Note however that the committee did not recommend design guidelines for the actual putting green surface.

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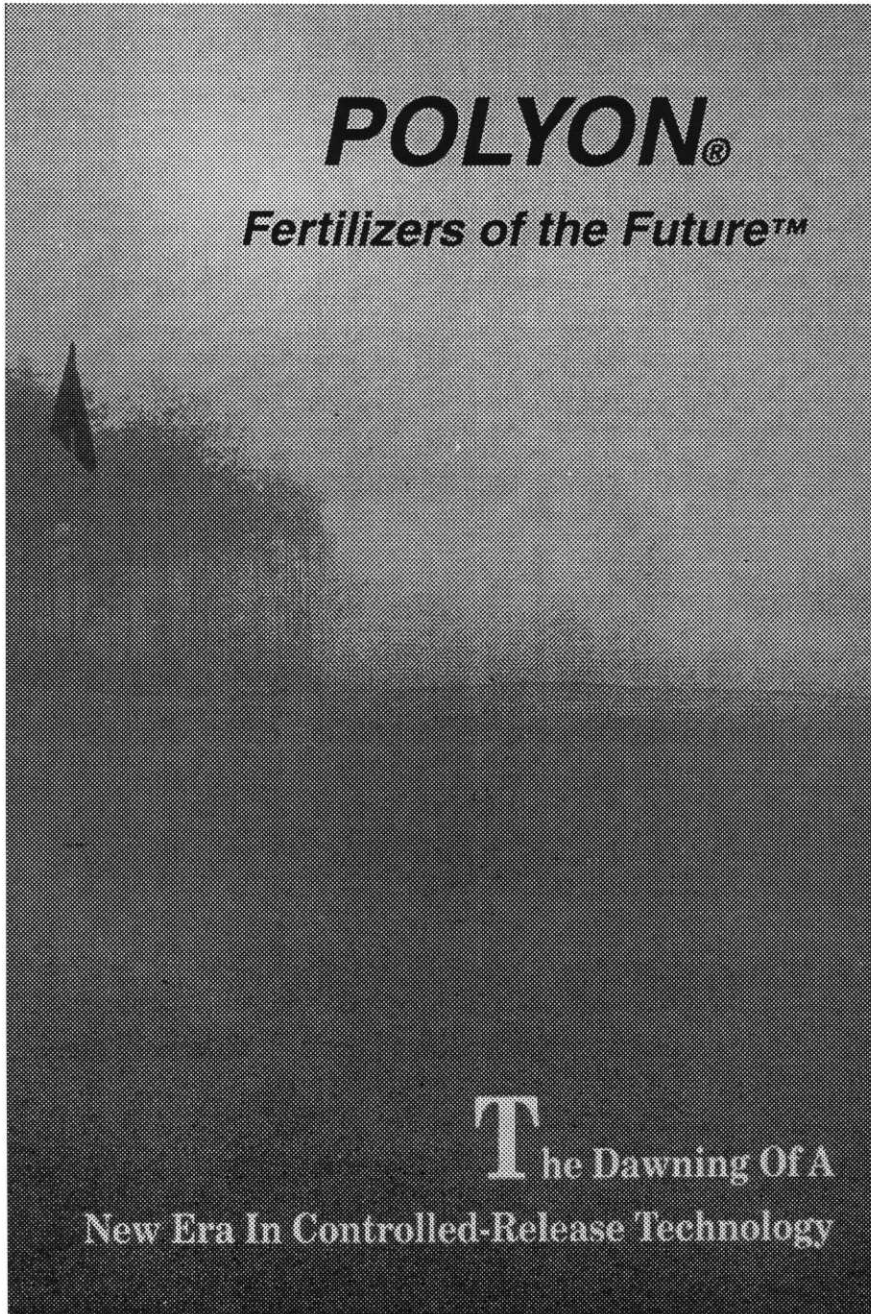
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As Superintendents We Can Build Our Future Together

By Robbie Hellstrom

Who designed the course? Who built the course? Who is the pro? Do these statements sound familiar? If you are a golf course superintendent they most probably do. All too often, unfortunately the question, "Who is the Superintendent?" never gets asked.

I have pondered over this question for many years now. When I became involved in the golf course maintenance business six years ago, I realized almost immediately the lack of recognition superintendents received. Just entering the business I had no concept of the dedication and hard work required of this profession. I do understand now, and this is what has led me to write this article.

The last five to ten years have signalled an enormous amount of growth in the golf industry. More people have taken up the game, equipment has improved and playing conditions have catapulted to incredible degrees. One would think that automatically the job of superintendent is certainly more recognized than in the past, yet the position does not enjoy the spotlight as much as it should. This is somewhat hard to believe when you compare certain other positions in the sporting industry to that of a golf course

superintendent. Let's look at a few jobs in sports maintenance to see just how much different the professions are.

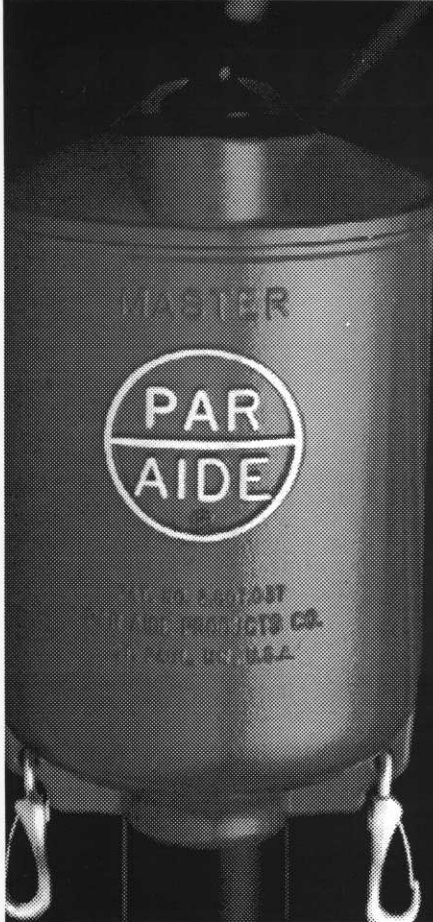
1. Golf course superintendent:

- In most cases a college education or specialized courses are required
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(Continued on Page 21)



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