



MID-ATLANTIC News Letter



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Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents to aid in the Advancement of the
Golf Course Superintendent through Education and Merit

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NEXT MEETING

The June 3 meeting of the Mid-Atlantic GCSA will be held at the Suburban Club of Baltimore County in Pikesville, Md. The golf course will be open to anyone wishing to play after 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be served in Kneipe at 12 noon. Cocktails will be served from 6 to 6:45 with dinner at 7 p.m. Guest speaker will be Bob Harvey and Dan Austin of Johnson Communications Co. giving us an insight into the value of radio communications on the golf course.

OUR HOST

Bob Miller came to the Suburban Club in 1964 as the assistant to now retired Jim Reid. On April 15 of 1967 when Jim retired, Bob took over as superintendent. Bob is a director in our association and is the present membership chairman. In past years before coming to Suburban, Bob worked at the Woodholme C.C. and Talbot C.C. Bob and his wife Donna have three children, Tommy, Debbie and Bob Jr.

THE CLUB

The Suburban Club was organized in 1901 and the course measures 6191 yards long with a par of 70. The club has two pools and 15 tennis courts.

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GOLF TOURNAMENT

On your return card please state if you are going to play golf. Pairings will be made for an A-B-C-D tournament. Prizes will be awarded to the foursomes with the winning scores. Golf carts will be allotted one per foursome due to the number of carts available for use.

FROM THE EDITOR

Here we are well into a very unusual spring - unusual in as much as we have had a certain semblance of one with warm days, cool nights, some rain, though not enough, and a lack of help.

Last week (while I was mowing fairways) I had an idea. What about some form of government supported training programs in groundskeeping and related fields in our area? After all, we do live near the Nation's capital so it seems that this could bear some looking in to.

With all the government "handouts" going to organizations like VISTA, HEADSTART, JOB CORE and others, why couldn't some of those funds be spent right here? After all, there are just as many people supposedly looking for jobs right here as in the places where all these Federal funds are winding up.

These students could be trained in all phases of groundskeeping with golf course maintenance being included as one of the first items. Seemingly enough, it is certain there wouldn't be enough students to fill all the jobs that do now and will continue to exist, but this is at least a thought for a potential source of labor.

Going one step down the ladder, if these funds after examination were not found to be available, then what about going to the state or local levels? There is a school in California which is municipally supported where the curriculum entails exactly this kind of training. After graduation, the students are placed in jobs and according to officials, all are well versed in their labors and satisfied with their training.

Even within public schools is a good place to start. In Virginia and Maryland, there is an area in student training called Distributive Education, where students learn the ins and outs of the business world by being able to participate actively to see how it really feels to earn a living. And at the same time they are getting school credit for this on the job training. But right away we find our line of work doesn't qualify because of one reason or another.

Why this injustice? Within Fairfax County, there is a training class in the evenings during the entire year where a person can learn bricklaying, plumbing, welding, even basketweaving, all which can be used to his advantage. But what about grounds keeping and related studies? Nothing! Absolutely nothing appears other than one class in how to landscape your backyard.

Naturally then one wonders "Why"? The answer looms again - money. We are all too familiar with the same old saw about paying more money to the help, and it is really beginning to look like the two must go hand in hand before help is going to arrive in one way or

another.

Although we can't claim much in the way of benefits, we can offer a job with full time employment, at least a 40 hour week and no discrimination. Any super who claims these things don't apply to him isn't kidding anyone but himself. As the population increases by leaps and bounds, the golf course is more and more becoming a place for a nerve taut businessman to take out his anger and frustrations. But where do we go? The tensions and troubles we all share would surely be relieved a great deal if we could tell how many men would be at work tomorrow and that they could and would do their jobs properly.

DR. DEAL REPLACED

Word comes from the University of Maryland that Dr. Elwyn Deal, recently promoted to the position of Assistant Director of Agricultural Programs, has been replaced in the Turf Management Department by Dr. A.J. Powell.

Dr. Powell will be doing research and extension work in turf management as well as teaching the course and advising graduate students.

His B.S. and M.S. degrees in soils were earned at the University of Kentucky, his home state. The Ph.D. degree was earned at V.P.I. in turf and biochemistry. After working as a research and teaching assistant for seven months at Tech, Dr. Powell entered the service at Ft. Bliss in Texas and after another seven months was moved to the Fort Bliss Golf Course as the club officer. This gave him some excellent experience in growing turf on a solid rock caliche in a semi-desert climate.

While he was there, he also helped organize the Rio Bravo Turf and GCSA with nearly 50 members. We welcome Dr. Powell and extend to him our help whenever he might need it.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The following article is reprinted in part from the March 1969 issue of the USGA Green Section Record. It was written by Dr. Fred M. Adams whose personal resume follows the article. The article is excellent in content and it is being reprinted in the hopes of giving some moral encouragement to other superintendents who are becoming disenchanted in their jobs for one reason or another. The article is entitled "Committees: Their Role in Course Economy."

In the past 12 years as Chairman of the Green Committee at Orchard Lake Country Club, a family club of 600 members in Michigan, and for the past six years having served in a similar capacity with the Golf Association of Michigan, I feel that I have made enough mistakes to qualify as an expert. I would like to share with you some of my observations regarding this Committee's functions, malfunctions, pitfalls, trials and tribulations both from the Committee's and the green superintendent's point of view.

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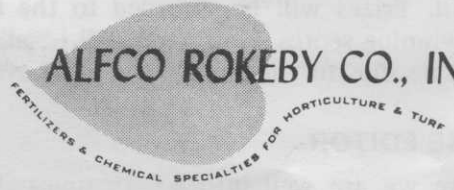
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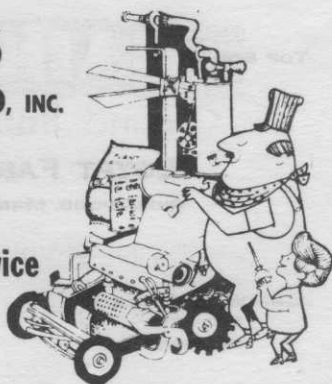
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Committee responsibilities in a country club have always been an enigma to me. We have, in general, a real paradox; the Boards of Governors hire competent and generally well-trained club managers, golf professionals, and green superintendents and then appoint committees composed of poorly-trained, thoroughly inexperienced club members who are eager to run the operation. This obvious paradox in many instances leads to undermining the trained personnel with resultant confusion, inefficiencies and utter chaos.

This reminds me of a parallel situation involving parents and their children's education. All parents, and more recently the students, believe they are born educators, and they don't mind letting the teachers know it.

Similarly, all golfers seem to be born agronomists and have no reluctance to let the superintendents and Green Committee in on all their knowledge.

Human nature being what it is, most individuals when appointed to the Green Committee wish to make a contribution. Unfortunately for most of us, this contribution must represent change. After all, the new committee member has played golf for many years, and, therefore, he's had an opportunity to play most of the different courses in his area, as well as many of the fine courses throughout the country. With these experiences he has drawn conclusions of what he personally thinks makes a great golf course, both from the architectural point of view and from the maintenance procedures he has seen. Now, with an appointment to the Green Committee he finally has an opportunity to implement all these long sought after changes, and he can hardly wait for the first Committee meeting to express all his ideas for improvements.

THE GREEN CHAIRMAN'S LAWN

Now let's stop a minute and objectively analyze our committee's preparedness for this job. While many of us have lawns at home we fertilize regularly, water irregularly, occasionally spray for weeds, and mow about once a week with surprisingly good results, we still can't consider ourselves agronomists. The chances are we have no concept of plant morphology in relationship to what the fertilizer requirements might be; we have never heard of the types of subsoils or their makeup in relationship to maintenance procedures; we probably think *Poa annua* is a rare exotic potted plant and dollarspot must have something to do with the Internal Revenue Service.

Let's face it, we are ill prepared to offer much in the way of constructive criticism to a superintendent's maintenance procedures.

What then, we may ask, should the Green Committee's functions be? How can these truly interested individuals make a significant contribution without jeopardizing the beauty and playability of the

course, the maintenance practices of a superintendent or the superintendent himself?

First of all, it becomes necessary for the Board of Directors to choose a Chairman who has enough maturity and self-discipline to recognize that he really doesn't know much about agronomy. He will therefore be happy to leave the enormously complex problems related to growing grass up to the man who has been trained for this job — the superintendent.

It's surprising how much more cooperative the superintendent will be if this philosophy is understood and conveyed to him from the start.

A GREEN CHAIRMAN'S TENURE

Of equal importance is the projected tenure of this Chairman. Nothing is more devastating to the efficient operation of the Green Committee than the common practice of changing the Chairman every year or two. The confusion that arises from this frequent changing of the guard can't help but disturb a smooth running operation. It takes at least two years for the Chairman to begin understanding the complexities and uncertainties of managing turf. Therefore, just as our man has his and the committee's responsibilities in proper perspective he retires — a sad state of affairs.

In my opinion, no one should be offered this job unless he is willing to serve at least five years and possibly longer. He also should have an indoctrination period of two to three years as a committee member before being offered the Chairmanship. In this way the superintendent will have had an opportunity to make his own observations of the possibility of a potential personality clash. The club President would do well to consult and heed the superintendent's feelings concerning the appointment of a prospective new Chairman.

The superintendent should take it upon himself to introduce his entire crew to the Green Committee, and the committee members should familiarize themselves with the crew's names and their jobs. Nothing motivates a man to do a good job more than recognition. If he has previously been complimented on his work, he is much more likely to tolerate criticism for a subsequent mistake.

ADVISORY OR SUPERVISORY ROLE?

This committee should act primarily in an advisory rather than in a supervisory capacity.

Even the best trained superintendent needs help with many problems related to turf management.

Communication is one area that should be the prime responsibility of the Green Committee. It should act as a buffer between the membership and the superintendent, thus saving him valuable time and thereby increasing the economy of the operation. In addition to planned construction projects, many unforeseen problems arise that inhibit the playability of

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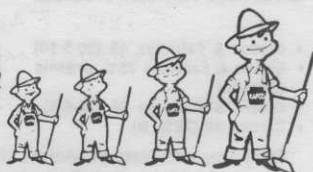
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the course. Unless the membership is appraised of these contingencies as they arise, they will be all over the superintendent, making his life miserable.

If, however, information is given to the membership, it will soften the blow. Most people when presented with the facts will accept the inconveniences, recognizing that the end results could further their enjoyment of the game.

The superintendent must initiate this flow of information to the Committee so that the word can be properly disseminated. Nothing is more embarrassing or frustrating to a Committee member than being asked why certain procedures are being carried out when he himself doesn't realize what they are or why they are being done.

He should also be reminded to advise the club manager and golf professional staff of his plans. It is very important that these three departments coordinate all their activities, preferably in writing. How ridiculous it looks to have the greens aerified the day before a special tournament is being held, simply because the superintendent wasn't notified of the event.

It is becoming increasingly more important to have a Committee member who has had experience in personnel management and labor negotiations. While all costs are constantly rising, the biggest increase in green budgets have to do with the labor force. In order to forestall union activity, country clubs had better be aware of competitive wage scales and be prepared to include fringe benefits of health and life insurance, plus pension plans for the green crew. Most superintendents are generally unfamiliar with the complications and ramifications of these plans and they welcome help from the appropriate member of the committee.

Similarly, it is logical to have an individual very familiar with machinery to aid the superintendent in making an inventory of all his mechanical equipment and prepare a long range plan for an orderly and sensible replacement of these items. Such planning obviates having to go before the Board of Directors with the ridiculous request for four new green mowers, two new tractors, and one seven-gang fairway unit, all in one year. Silly as this statement may seem, it is all too common a practice.

ELEVATE THE SUPERINTENDENT

Continuing with the philosophy of elevating the status of the superintendent in the membership's eyes, it is a good policy to have him periodically appear before the Board of Directors at their regular meetings. Doesn't it make good sense when attempting to obtain Board approval for a major capital expenditure either for equipment or renovation procedures to have the man most familiar with the ramifications of the proposals make the presentation? Valuable time too frequently is lost by the inability of the Green Committee Chairman or his appointed representative to answer pertinent questions relating to this expenditure. However, if the

green superintendent makes the presentation to the Board, all questions can be promptly and correctly answered. Further, by appearing before the Board his status will be enhanced. He will then be, in fact, the boss of the operation.

Built into the framework of the organization and primarily to protect the entire club membership from either an overzealous Green Committee or an equally ambitious superintendent, I would like to recommend that every club take advantage of some of the other services that are available.

In summary, it has become rather obvious that in the years that I have served as a Green Committee Chairman my basic ideas have changed as to the true role of the Green Committee. In any efficiently-run, successful business, appropriately trained individuals are given the responsibilities of the many facets of the operation. Why can't our golf courses be managed with a similar philosophy?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As past President of Orchard Lake Country Club, Orchard Lake, Michigan (1962) and Green Committee Chairman for 12 years, Dr. Fred M. Adams is well versed in country club administration. A pediatrician by vocation, golf has become his avocation. He has been a member of the USGA Green Section Committee for the past eight years and Green Committee Chairman of the Golf Association of Michigan for the past six years.

BOARD MEETING NOTES

A Mid-Atlantic GCSA meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Monday, April 28 at Beltsville, Md. The items discussed were as follows:

Doug Hawes, instructor at the University of Maryland, submitted a letter explaining his latest experiment on Penncross bent as related to the growth habit of the grass with varying temperature and fertility levels. In his letter, he asked if it would be possible for our Association to contribute some financial assistance to help with this project. His feelings coincided with those of the board that this experiment would be of great aid to golf course superintendents not only in this area but in all areas where cool season grasses are prevalent. The board felt that since there had been no scholarship contribution made to the University this year that \$100 would be donated for this project under our Research and Scholarship Fund. Copies of this project, its purposes, set-ups and parallel evaluations are available from any board member for examination.

A letter was read from Mr. George Quigly, the Director of the Institute of Applied Agriculture at the University, asking permission from the Association to add to the Turf Mgmt. Curriculum booklet a phrase reading "A summer placement and management report is a pre-requisite for Turf III. This is arranged in co-operation with the Mid-Atlantic GCSA."

The board authorized Mr. Quigly to go ahead

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with this since we felt this could do nothing but benefit all association members. This would mean turf students at the University would be required to work on a golf course in our area during his summer vacation and at the end of the summer, he would be required to submit a written management report. Good show!

It was brought up at the meeting that several members were classified wrong or now met the reclassification requirements needed for a change. If you fall into this group, notify Bob Miller or any board member in writing of your desire to change classification.

New member applicants were discussed and they are as follows:

Raymond F. Loving, applying as a Class E. Buddy is an associate of Algie Pully and his application was the last of the Class E's up for consideration before we enacted the applicant freeze on the E category.

Elias Oliver, the superintendent at the Hawthorne Country Club in LaPlata, Md., was also discussed. Elias is applying as a Class A member.

We had to make an exception to the freezing of the Class E memberships to allow consideration of prospective members as E's who are supers but don't have sufficient time in to qualify as A's or B's. This exception was made so we would not have to deny membership to fellows who are interested enough to want to join. If a man expresses an interest in joining with other supers, he should not be discouraged from doing so.

The two fellows who fell into this category were:

Robert Bingham, super at Montgomery Country Club in Montgomery County. He is applying for Class E pending Class A membership.

Thomas Comalli, new super at Crofton Country Club in Crofton, Md. Tom is also applying as a Class E and after his one year as super will resubmit as a Class A.

It was also brought to the attention of the Board that only Class AA, A or B members are allowed by the by-laws to sponsor a new applicant. Please keep this in mind when talking to prospective members.

LADIES NIGHT

Paul Barefoot, our Ladies Night chairman, informs the members that this year's show will be held on July 30, a Wednesday night. We will be going to see the Jack Benny Show at Shady Grove Music Fair. Further details will be forthcoming in next month's newsletter.

Ladies will also be invited to the October meeting at Woodmont Country Club. Our host, Bob Shields, reports although this will not be our ladies night function, all ladies are invited and welcomed. Any reasonable suggestions as to activities for them at the meeting should be submitted in writing to Bob.

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY

Conduct of some of the members at the last meeting was noteworthy, to say the least. Several people remarked that they were quite embarrassed, upset, and in general disgusted with the complete lack of courtesy shown to our speaker, Dr. Sartoretto. The Board advises that we should all at least have common decency to show respect and gratitude to our guests and speakers. It does little to better our image when one or two people louse up an entire meeting at the expense of the majority.

NEW PARENTS

A rather belated "Congratulations" to Sue and Sam Kessel on the birth of their pretty new daughter, Elizabeth Ann. Beth was born March 17 and weighed 8 pounds, 11 ounces. Hope she gets her mother's looks!

SCHEDULED MEETING PLACES

June 3 — Suburban Club of Baltimore — Host Bob Miller

July — Picnic meeting Family outing — Tentative Host Bob Martino.

August 6 — USDA Field Day at Beltsville — Host Dr. Felix Juska.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS — WHO AND WHAT

Our board is made up of six members, each with a particular job to perform. As a matter of information, let's take a look at what each one is doing.

Lee Dieter, the super at Washington Golf is in charge of finding places for us to hold our meetings each month. Along with this, Lee has to make sure that our financial records get audited at the end of the year. Finding and setting up the place for the Baltimore Conference is also under Lee's jurisdiction, and he is looking at one or two new spots for this annual gathering. This is his second go-round as a board member, his first turn being spent editing the early editions of the first few newsletters.

Bob Miller from Baltimore's Suburban Club is a new addition to the board and he is doing an excellent job as membership chairman. Bob has read, re-read, and practically memorized the by-laws and classification requirements and is really screening all new applications

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George Thompson, the man from Columbia C.C. is our program chairman, in charge of arranging speakers for both the monthly meetings as well as the Baltimore Conference. He has already contacted several people for the meeting next January which proves you can't start any too soon.

Paul Barefoot, the old soldier from the Old Soldier's Home in D.C. is the man in charge of the Ladies Night program as well as being our flower chairman. Paul's job is no easy task, since he is the one who must select the program for all the ladies to watch each year. Chosing something like that for so many people must be to most everyone's liking, but even the best won't please everyone.

Bert Yingling from way up in the mountains of Maryland at Beaver Creek C.C. is our golf chairman. It is Bert's job to organize and carry out all the tournaments here at all our monthly meetings and to make sure we have representation at the golf tourny each year at the National. Bert has to figure all scores, handle entry fees and arrange for prizes with the host pros, and with some of the handicaps he has to work with, his job is anything but easy!

Denny McCammon, the newshound from Springfield C.C.? Well, enough said. The newsletter keeps him busy from one issue to the next. Luckily, plenty of nice people keep those cards and letters coming in so that news isn't too scarce. Could always use more though!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"No More Bogeys"

As a professional golf associated organization, it is about time we retire the blind bogey. Bert Yingling, our Golf Chairman, is prepared to handicap the association members and conduct the monthly golf on a medal play handicap program. Our guests and new members will be welcome to play in a bogey flight as usual. The handicap assigned each member will

supersede his home club handicap for our tournaments, as our handicap will be based on his performance at our outings.

The Golf Committee is also preparing a standard set of rules for our annual tournament, and a novel match is planned by Bob Miller for our Suburban Club meeting. Later in the year in October, we will have a mixed tournament at Woodmount. This will be our first regular meeting with ladies invited.

Bob Milligan

Published monthly by the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents to aid in the advancement of the golf course superintendent through education and merit.

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MID-ATLANTIC News Letter

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