

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR? (AN EDITORIAL OF SORTS)

A man once needed to conquer worry so he went to a New York library. To his astonishment the library had only twenty two books listed under the subject WORRY, but had one hundred eighty nine books listed under WORMS.

This summer, what do we as superintendents have to look forward to? All the elements at Mother Nature's disposal, and one of our own - WORRY - and oh yes maybe even worms.

...That's a bunch of hogwash, I never worry - Think I'll call the weather - RING - This is the latest weather forecast for Washington and vicinity. Hot and humid today with a high of 95, thunder storms this afternoon and tonight. Thank you for calling. CLICK - Oh God, when did we last spray the greens? Let me see, my records state Friday the 10th. That's a week ago. Boy my stomach hurts - must have been that hamburger I ate for lunch. Better check the inventory of fungicides then check the greens. I've been working a lot of hours this summer - better call the wife and tell her I won't be home for supper again - She's been getting upset lately, especially when she asked me to take the kids to the Windsor Day Nursery and they came home that evening with grass seed in the cuffs of their pants. Wonder if she would leave - Noooo, she LOVES me.

RING - Hello - When are you going to seed that wide maintenance road on number one fairway? Mr. Chairman, that maintenance road IS number one fairway - CLICK - I can't understand people - they're never happy, always criticizing me or the course for something. Boy have I got a headache - where are those aspirin? Oh that's right I gave them to John after the Club President hit him over the head with a 5 iron for not turning the tractor engine off.

KNOCK KNOCK - Who's there? Oh Hell, it's that "Satchmo Salesmn" - HI THERE, here's a great set of pots and pans for the wife - Have you seen our new liquid fertilizer? Look, Satching, I'm too busy to talk to you now - besides I might not even have a wife tomorrow - GOODBYE - They're always trying to sell you something - Think I'll put a sign out front BY APPOINTMENT ONLY - No, they'll think you don't mean them anyway - OOOH there goes that hamburger again. Can't understand why I've had this craving for milk lately - Who's that football coach who drinks all that milk? Wonder why?

HMMM, 7 o'clock already - RING - Hello - WHEN ARE YOU COMING HOME? Honey, I'll be home in one hour - If you're not home in fifteen

minutes I'LL BE GONE - CLICK - Gee, guess she really means it this time. You know something, she's right - what in the world is wrong with me? Slow down - the course is in the best condition ever. I've thought and weighed every decision I ever made, and over half were right - Even the President of the United States doesn't have that good a percentage - I've done the best job I know how, and why worry about criticism - no one ever kicks a dead dog, anyway- Even think I'll delegate more responsibility and authority to the assistant and crew.

As I walked to my car I threw the full milk carton in the trash can. Hey, my head and stomach sure feel better now.

Ed Heath, Editor

MAILBAG RESPONSE

Virgil Robinson, Superintendent of Chantilly National Golf & C.C. sent in the following reply to the editorial in the April Newsletter.

EMPLOYEE SNATCHING" or "PASSING the BUCK"

We as Golf Course Superintendents, create to a large degree the working environment of those men we employ. Therefore, if "employee snatching" quote unquote is a problem, should we be "passing the buck" or taking stock of our own personnel management techniques.

Since between 50 and 60% of our annual budgets (excluding Superintendent's salaries) go for labor payroll, I think it behooves us all to pull a little P.M. (Preventive Maintenance) on our P.M. (Personnel Management). We might have the technical knowledge to grow fine golf turf but if we can't manage the men to maintain it, we might as well have a field of turnips.

If we are creating a really good working atmosphere for our employees, barring possibly a personality conflict, I doubt very seriously that they would even entertain the idea of being snatched. How long has it been since we went to the Board at our clubs and fought to get more or better benefits for our employees? The Board will think no less of us. How long has it been since we put our full effort into getting a good raise for a deserving employee? Do we fight harder for our own raises? How long has it been since we asked an employee to try out that new piece of demonstrator equipment and then ask him for HIS opinion of it? How long has it been since we lauded an employee for a job well done? How long has it been since we really tried to help an employee overcome a personal problem or is it too

much trouble and not our concern anyway? HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

We as Superintendents have two (2) choices: Either we can stand around and cry "employee snatching" or we can make a concerted effort to develop our own personnel management ability. Personnel management is not an innate quality; it has to be worked at and learned. The choice, Superintendents, is ours!

"Employee Snatching" or "Passing the Buck"?

Virgil G. Robinson, Jr.

Jim Lathan, chief Field Agronomist for the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission sent us the following poem regarding the article "Keep Trying" also in the April edition.

THE SECRET OF GOLF A SURMISE

He could loft a ball from the top of his watch straight into his beaver hat.

He could tee a ball on the window-sill and pink the vagrom* cat.

He could putt from the top of the oaken stair to a hole on the floor below.

And niblick the sphere from a baby's ear and the baby wouldn't know.

He could brassie some fifteen hundred feet and clip off a daisy's top.

He could jigger the ball o'er a steeple tall as most men would jigger a cop,

He could stand on his head, to his caddie's dread, and dismay of all hard by,

And then, with the ease with which you would sneeze, lift the ball from a cuppy, lie.

He could drive a ball for two hundred yards to the blade of a carver, keen,

And cut it in two as easy as you could slice up sod from the green.

The bird that flies high up in the skies he'd wing with his driving cleek,

And I've seen him graze as soft as haze the down on a damsel's cheek.

But he never could win in the tournaments, no matter how well he played,

He'd never a cup on his mantle-piece; in medals was never arrayed.

For though his game was the finest golf that ever was witnessed yet,

He never could seem to comprehend a bit of golf etiquette.

He'd cross the putt of the other man, he'd play when nearer the hole,

He couldn't grasp the simplest rules to save his golfing soul.

And that is why this golfer keen is never "up" but "down";

And that is why this King of the Green doesn't wear the golfer's crown.

The moral is clear, oh golfer bold; oh golfer strong and true;

You may be able to whack the ball, and make your opponent blue;

You may be able to do freak things, and play past all compare;

but unless you learn the etiquette, you'd better play solitaire.

Carlyle Smith

From Harper's Magazine of 1899

*a corruption of "vagrant"

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above poem was "exhumed" by Harold Gard while cleaning out a desk drawer. Has anyone else similar gems buried elsewhere? J.H.B.

The following was sent in by Tom Harris of G.L. Cornell Co.

REELS VERSUS FLAILS AND ROTARIES by Stephen Moffett, Grass Cutting Equipment Co. Rochester New York

Reel type mowers are the safest, most efficient and most economical for maintaining turf areas that are cut regularly. Grass is sheared cleanly by an action similar to the blades of a pair of scissors.

Regular cutting prevents heavy stalk formation and permits plant nutrients to go into production of root and rhizome structures, important for effective soil binding.

Rotary mowers should be used for cutting tall grass, weeds and brush.

Many school boards, highway departments, municipalities and other customers having large grass areas do not realize the savings available with gang mowers and are inclined to buy rotary or flail mowers because of the lower purchase price.

Let's imagine an approximate 80 acre area and try to determine the type of mower best suited as to speed, cost, life span and expected maintenance cost. Let's draw a comparison between two basic types of mowers: (1) rotary or flail and (2) 5-gang Blitzer mower. For our purpose, let's use 43,500 ft. per acre.

We assume the terrain is average, and the day is 8 hours long, which actual test is really only 6 productive hours allowing 2 hours for time lost in coffee break, toilet break, long lunch and in going to and from the mowing area (not equipment breakdown), etc.

(A) A PTO rotary type or PTO flail type, cutting a 6' swath and using the following formula:
66" swath (72" less 6" overlap) @ 3 mph x 6 hrs/day cuts a little more than 12 acres per day or 6.75 days mowing time for 80 acres.

(B) a 5-gang Blitzer, using the above formula but having a cutting swath of 11' 10" and a speed of 8 mph cuts a little more than 66 acres per day or 1.2 days of mowing time for 80 acres.