

the turf curriculum.

Professor Douglas Hawes, head instructor, has informed us that this year's students are all squared away for summer placement at area golf courses, either as assistants or as students in their summer golf course work program. "One main prerequisite of all our students is that they work on a golf course during the summer months", says Doug Hawes. The summer placement program provides area superintendents with enthusiastic, intelligent, and very often experienced labor. One important extra - these students must complete a rather extensive report on your course which provides the superintendent with much valuable information on all course measurements, updated equipment inventory, etc.

Professor Hawes says next year's students will come from a wide area; one from North Dakota, five from Virginia, two from Pennsylvania, and one from New Jersey. Only slightly more than half the class will be from Maryland.

Keep in touch with Doug Hawes during the year and get your bid in early for an assistant or summer student for the 1973 season.

NOTES FROM THE CINCINNATI CONFERENCE

One aspect of our conference was quite interesting - one whole day of presentation talks was devoted to the discussion of golf carts. Obviously more and more superintendents are becoming involved in the mushrooming trend of cart use on all golf courses. In our relatively early stage of involvement with golf carts, we find our basic problems still lie with cart path construction and the control of traffic on fairways - at least this was the general conception BEFORE attending some of these talks at the National this year.

Robert Balfour, Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Club Car, Inc., of Augusta, Georgia, made a presentation titled "Golf Cars and Legal Responsibilities". (Reprinted in "The Proceedings of the 43rd International Turfgrass Conference and Show" - Read it on pp. 27-31).

Mr. Balfour stated that the increasing number of golf cart accidents is causing serious concern in all parts of the country. Safety standards, both state and nationwide, are being considered. For example:

Annual golf car inspection with state stickers attached to each.

Golf car routes inspected and approved by

state engineers.

Bridges reconstructed with safety of golf carts in mind, including side rails, etc.

Present bridges modified where necessary to meet safety requirements.

Three wheel golf cars eliminated because of instability. Only the use of four wheel golf cars will be permitted.

A prediction of some 60,000 golf car accidents during the 1972 golf season certainly illustrates the critical need for adequate safety regulations.

Now down to some serious questions. Would the golf course superintendent be held responsible when a golf cart accident is related to the condition of the golf course? "The superintendent opened the course to carts today" says the injured party "but I skidded off the wet bridge and lost control of the cart".

Can the cause of such an accident be attributed to the superintendent?

Is the superintendent personally liable when the club is sued by the injured party?

Does the club have accident insurance, and if so, what does this insurance cover?

In an article in the "Wall Street Journal," April 20, 1971, it was stated, "More and more, golf cart accidents are winding up in litigation. A broken ankle recently won \$97,500 from the golf course involved in an out of court settlement. A Pittsburgh lady is suing her golf course for \$75,000. The average damage suit awarded today is \$11,473, with an average award on product liability suits of \$25,000."

Personal injury litigation is a multi-billion dollar business. A golf cart accident can stem from faulty cart path construction to just plain poor driver perception or "lack of common sense". Mechanical failures, ground under repair, hilly terrain, etc., are also common causes for accidents resulting in long drawn out expensive law suits, all of which could conceivably involve the superintendent. The idea that some people have of "sue one, sue all" is rapidly catching on since the law is changing in favor of the plaintiff.

Keep in mind how you as a superintendent are involved with the decision of whether to allow cart use after rainy weather. You have to protect the cart user from areas under construction, washed out spots, sunken drains, and irrigation lines. You must check the stability and width of cart bridges, the state of repair of cart paths, and carefully plan cart paths on steep slopes so as to eliminate long straight downhill runs. If you are also in charge of cart maintenance, point out to your mechanic the importance of day to day

service of the steering and brakes and the consequences he could be faced with as well as yourself if a lawsuit should come about and be traced back to the mechanical failures of the cart.

Last but not least, talk to your greens chairman and check on the club insurance policies to be sure that you are personally protected in any legal action involving cart accidents. Find out if each cart user signs a release of liability for any personal injury incurred during the use of the golf cart on the golf course. Get your protection program started now while the season is still early.

Contact the AGCMA for their safety suggestions and safety decals for carts.

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Craig Spottswood
Editor

COMMENT

While reading the many press releases and publicity we received from the Cincinnati and national newspapers concerning our conference the following in the National Observer struck my attention - "Courses are Becoming too Manicured".

According to the insert the majority of the superintendents feel courses will become even more manicured because that's the way the golfer wants them. Now I ask you, what's wrong with that? One veteran superintendent stated, "We're going to do what those players want 'cause if people aren't playing golf they're not going to need us around much longer." Isn't the golfer right in his quest for perfection, but how about the superintendent? One could get the impression some of us manicured our courses because we have to, not because we want to. The days of the "cow pasture course" are over and if a man is satisfied with that type of condition his dreams and visions, if he ever had any, have come to a halt.

First the golfer only demanded good greens, then greenlike tees, fairways and now some are demanding perfect roughs. Under the heavy traffic and adverse conditions we face today maybe he is asking too much, but how about our sense of pride and accomplishment?

Superintendent Sherwood Moore once had a member tell him, "I wish I loved my job the way you do yours." Most of us can relate to the above so shouldn't we strive for that perfection. Let the golfer set the goal and we can perfect it.

What would your reply be if one day a crew

member came to you and said, "Mr. Jones, ever since you came here why are we always tearing something up on the course?" If you say, "As long as I'm here there will be something torn up" you are striving to reach that goal of perfection as professional turf men.

Ed Heath
Editor

COMMON COMPLAINTS

Now that another season is upon us, maybe it would be a good idea to check the common complaints of the golfer, superintendent and worker so a better relationship can be achieved.

THE GOLFER:

1. Tees are not level, not smooth
2. Tee markers are not moved often enough
- grass cover too sparse
3. Tee markers are placed too close to one another
4. Tee markers are not squared away with the correct line of flight
5. Pin placements are unfair at times
6. Pin placements (cups) are moved too infrequently. Grass is sparse around cups or long and scraggly at perimeter of cups.
7. Cups are not replaced properly - sometimes too low, or too high or too near last cup placement
8. Greens bumpy - not perfectly true
9. Too much grain, mat, or thatch in greens
10. Greens too soft or too hard - ball marks numerous and repaired badly - wonder whose responsibility that is!
11. Traps raked inadequately or not at all
12. Traps edged improperly or unfairly - traps constructed so that they restrict backswing are most unfair
13. Roughs too lush near edge of fairways
15. Roads through course too numerous - made by constant traffic or course equipment
15. Clean towels for ball washers not replaced often enough

SUPERINTENDENT & WORKERS:

In return, the superintendent and the workers ask primarily for understanding and appreciation from the membership which