

# AREA GOLF COURSE DESTROYED OVERNIGHT

The "Dirty Dozen" played golf yesterday during our first thaw of the season. Yesterday the sun came out, the snow began to disappear, the thermometer hit 65, but the ground was still saturated and partially frozen below the surface. "Unknowingly" a member placed the flags from the alternate greens back on the regular greens and consequently all the following play of the day trampled on the surface of the greens.

The soil went to mud, the mud went to clay, and after the thaw dried out, the clay became compacted. The greens no longer had drainage or air circulation. The grass that was trampled on while frozen either separated from its root system or died from a shattered cell structure.

The greens will no longer support a quality bentgrass much less a well hit golf shot. Soon annual grasses and weeds will infest the suppressed greens and probably a chemical program will be inacted to retard the spreading of the noxious weeds. After much money, nerves and patience is spent, a resolution of greens reconstruction is decided upon. For the next ten years the country club will commit twenty thousand dollars annually to undo the damage on the golf course that was destroyed overnight.

If you as a golf superintendent wish to avoid the above circumstances, but don't quite know what measures to take in a membership education program, you might benefit from a couple of posters or metal signs with the below **Course Closed Temporarily** statement. If you don't feel you are able to close the whole course change the heading to **Greens Closed Temporarily**. This statement was written by Fred Grau in the January, February, March issue of *Golfdom*, 1972.

## Course Closed Temporarily

In the interest of all the members, and in an attempt to preserve the high quality of our greens, the course is closed to play until conditions warrant resumption of traffic.

Foot and wheel traffic on frozen grass causes the grass to turn brown and die. Ice crystals within the grass blades are distorted and rupture living cells, causing death.

When the frost is thawed by the warm sun the surface of the greens remain overly-wet for a short time. In this condition foot traffic can cause severe damage by breaking roots, creating compaction, and footprinting so badly that pleasurable putting is not possible.

Every effort is made to keep the course continuously playable, but when Nature fails to cooperate and brings frost or floods, we have no choice but to limit play. The understanding and consideration of the members are greatly appreciated.

**The Golf Course Superintendent**

## Survey Reminder

This month of March marks the fourth month our survey has been in your hands; it was included within the December newsletter.

As of this date, we have only received a total of 22 surveys, less than 25% participation. How accurate would evaluations be on this small sampling? Granted, our percentage of returns is greater than a Neilson survey but a Neilson survey represents a good cross section of people — we don't!

The purpose of this survey is to benefit every superintendent with information on the high, low and average operating expenses of Mid-Atlantic area golf courses. An analysis of the answers from this questionnaire will provide useful figures to substantiate future expenditures within our own club budgets.

What is the average hourly wage for a golf course mechanic, assistant, or groundman? Is your salary above or below average for our Washington area? What do clubs typically spend annually for new equipment, maintenance of equipment, chemicals, fertilizers, etc. Does the maintenance cost of your irrigation system substantiate upgrading or replacing your old system?

We often justify the cost of new equipment on the present man hours required to complete a maintenance operation. The results of this survey could illustrate to your club officials a potential savings of manpower with an increased equipment replacement program.

The potential values of this survey are all too numerous to mention; for we can all find different applications for figures and statistics. As stated in past newsletters, the identity of each respondent will remain confidential and all questionnaires will be destroyed after the completion of our survey.

In order for these figures to provide us with accurate information every Mid-Atlantic golf course superintendent must complete and send in the questionnaire. A 100% accuracy is only obtainable with a 100% response.

We are conducting this survey for the purpose of our Mid-Atlantic members. Don't short change yourself on obtaining useful information. Please answer all questions and return survey to Mid-Atlantic Survey, 14405 Pecan Drive, Rockville, Md. 20853.

Your signature on the questionnaire is optional.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEAR PINS

Two Mid-Atlantic members were recently awarded twenty five year pins by the GCSAA. Dr. Fred Grau and George Cornell were the recipients. George Cornell is the first commercial member to receive a twenty five year pin. According to George, he joined the GCSAA "when he was 16 years old!"

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underground. I guess I'll just have to leave it up to "the great superintendent in the sky" he'll help me find a way, he always does.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Anthony P. Goodley, II  
Golf Course Superintendent