



**MID-ATLANTIC**

# News Letter



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

VOLUME XXVI

MAY 1975

NO. 5

## May Meeting

Maryland Golf and Country Club

*From Ron Hall*

I have been employed at Maryland Golf and Country Club for 6 years. Previously at Belair Golf Course in Bowie, Maryland, of which I'm a native, I worked two years (1960-61) under Bernie Heilig and was assistant for Charles P. Nason one year before becoming superintendent in 1963.

Most of my knowledge has been acquired from fellow superintendents brought forth by Mid-Atlantic Association and the GCSAA.

I attended Dr. Deals' Agronomy Short Course in 1968. I would have to say the highlight of my career was becoming certified in February, 1973.

Our course was built in 1959-60. Front nine designed by William F. Gordon, back nine by Russell Roberts. Construction was done by local contractors and supervised by Ed Morse, who died in January, 1969. Course measures 6,658 yards, par 73. Greens average 7,000 square feet and are C-1, C-19 and penncross, cut 3/16". Tees average 4,500 square feet and are windsor, A-34 pennstar, manhattan rye and colonial bent, cut 3/4". Fairways - non-watered, bluegrass, tall fescue, manhattan rye and poa, cut 3/4" spring and fall, and 1" to 1 1/4" in summer.

We are currently on a program of reseeding our fairways with manhattan rye. The result speaks for itself as you will see if you play the course.

We are also on a blacktop cart paths program. The installation is being done with our golf course crew. We install approximately 3,500 feet @ \$1.50 per square yard. Pretty good savings in these inflated times.

Paul Haviland is our golf pro and has been with the club since its existence, which is 14 years. Paul was born and raised at the Baltimore Country Club Five Farm Course. After a hitch in the navy he served a four-year assistant apprenticeship with Johnny Bass of Pine Ridge Course in Baltimore County.

Russ LaGreca is our club manager, coming from the Duponts Wilmington Country Club, where he was assistant for two years.

Golf: Between 12 noon and 2 p.m. Lunch available.

Cocktails: 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Dinner: 8:00 p.m.

Plenty of golf carts are available.

*Directions to Club:* North on 95 to Exit 4, US 24. Left on Rt. 24, approximately 4 miles to MacPhail Road. Right on MacPhail Road, approximately 2 miles to Club.

### 3rd Annual Superintendent-Pro Tournament Maryland Golf and Country Club Bel Air, Maryland 21014

This tournament will be played best ball of twosome with professional sweeps and superintendent gross and net prizes with an added purse of \$300.00.

If your head pro is not available to participate, invite your assistant pro.

There also will be gross and net prizes for supers with or without guests.

Team entry fee	\$15.00
Member or guest	3.00

## President's Message

It won't be long before we hear the continuous sounds of tractor engines, mowing reels, rotary mowers, etc., on a daily basis as another golfing season starts in the Mid-Atlantic area. Once again we schedule procedures of firm and reliable past practices into our turf management programs. Some of us will no doubt try a few new innovative ideas picked up from other superintendents, or at one of the conferences in the past few months. No matter how we go about making our various management programs workable and effective for our many different country club sites, we all have the same goal, and that is to satisfy the club members.

In the past few years a number of episodes have occurred which we feel might have been prevented or overall results been less severe if certain individuals had availed themselves of aid or advice from neighboring superintendents of our association. We realize that either through embarrassment, ego, or other personal feelings, one isn't prone to ask for help when problems arise. . . . This is the wrong attitude. . . . Read your by-laws, under Article I, Section C. This is what our association is all about, and we would hope that if troubles seem headed in your direction you would ask your fellow superintendents or your association for advice.

*Danish Proverb: "The man who is afraid of asking is afraid of learning."*

*Anon: "The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none."*

Alex Watson



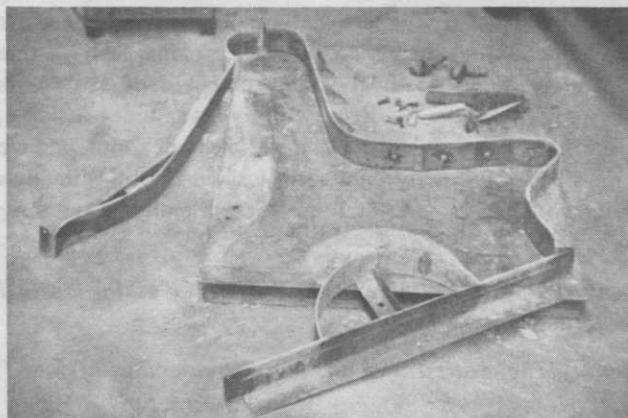
## Thinking Superintendent Constructing Benches

By George Thompson  
Columbia Country Club

Five years ago, I purchased a steel form for park type benches at a cost of \$110.00. This was a good investment because we have made 35 benches with it. We constructed 18 in 1970 (one for each tee) and have been adding about five more each winter.

The form was purchased from R. L. Spillman Co. in Columbus; they are America's largest manufacturer of specialty forms. We also purchase concrete inserts and Phillips bolts to secure wood planks from Spillman.

I had the 2x4's cut 6', however 8' would probably be more desirable on Par 3 holes where golfers generally have to wait; a 6' bench is not quite wide enough for four adults. We have used both kiln dried hemlock and construction grade redwood. The hemlock is a little harder and holds up better under golf spikes. For some strange reason golfers like to stand on benches even where fairway visibility is good. Another factor is cost and the hemlock or fir is one-half the cost of redwood. Most lumber yards will let you pick out your own lumber if you ask. If you don't pick it over, figure on 10% or more unusable.



We use a solid-hide exterior wood stain. This covers well with one coat and holds up for two years. I brought all my benches in this year, disassembled them, turned the planks over and repainted them, most of them look as good as new. It is easier to do it this way than to paint in place assembled.

### Material Cost:

7 2x4's, 6 foot	\$ 5.50
2 80 lb. bags, sacrete concrete mix	4.70
14 3/8", 16 threaded inserts	4.20
14 3/8" x 2 1/4" Phillips bolts	2.10
	\$16.50

The solid hide stain is \$6.60 per gallon and does at least 15 benches, and the white masonry paint for ends costs \$9.10 per gallon and also goes a long way. It is not necessary to paint ends, however. Labor involved is approximately three hours per bench, which would bring the total cost per bench to approximately \$28.00.

The concrete needs to be reinforced. Generally we use old greensmower bed knives or other scrap iron. We also add one gallon of Portland cement to each bag of sacrete for added strength. One bag of sacrete does one end with very little waste.

The benches are heavy (175 pounds) and could be an aid or a hindrance. They are difficult to transport unless you have a forklift; however, they don't walk away either. I did find one fifteen feet off the ground in a silver maple tree

**From one pro  
to another**

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(continued from page 2)

one morning, but this was exceptional. If I had caught these kids, I would have hired them.

Some useful hints:

Let concrete set up for 48 hours before removing sides.

Coat form with oil, otherwise it is difficult to remove without breaking.

Reinforce neck well, where it starts to taper down.

Wait until you have enough material for 4 or 5 benches, and then set up a small production line.

Use caution transporting them — they crack.

The membership has received the benches very well and they add considerably to a tee or club house area. They can be tipped over to facilitate mowing, however a permanent platform is more desirable, otherwise you end up with a sunken bare spot. Other supers I know of who use these benches are Sam Kessel and Mike Claffey; their ideas may differ from mine.

George Thompson, C.G.C.S.

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Grant Pensinger receives certification plaque from President Al Watson at our March meeting at Washingtonian Country Club. Congratulations, Grant.

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## Golf Superintendent Overlooked

by

Herbert Heinlein  
 Superintendent

*Indian Spring Country Club*

The next time you go out to play golf on your favorite golf course, stop and just take a good look around you at the greens, fairways, traps and even the roughs.

Then try to envision yourself being responsible for the appearance and maintenance of this vast area, which stands naked against the unpredictable moods of nature, and which come under the close scrutiny of other players almost all year around.

It's alright, you are not alone. You probably are like most players and club officials — you never give the man credit who is responsible for the beauty and neatness of this vast area.

The golf course superintendent has been overlooked by the vast majority of amateur golfers and golf professionals, who just take for granted that their round of golf will be

played over a course that has smooth greens and close-cut fairways.

If it is just a national tournament or a club outing, the superintendent is always forgotten. I am hoping that the next time you walk out on the course and look around, you just pause for a second and say a prayer for the golf course superintendent and crew.

The Golf Course Superintendent Association of America is taking steps toward making the superintendent a more discernible part of the surface picture of golf courses around the world. I'm excited about this, because this is going to make the superintendent's job more meaningful, and this will make all of us enjoy our work and make a better course to play on. Just remember not to gripe but give your superintendent a good word for his efforts.



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*"He's not just another duffer  
He's chairman of the greens committee".*



## Successful Allied Association Meeting

This past March 24 marked a new milestone for improved relations within the management trio of the country club — the golf professional, superintendent, and club manager. Through the efforts of the National Capital Club Managers Association, a joint meeting was held at Congressional Country Club, at which time presidents of all these organizations, both local and national, united together to form a panel of 12 to discuss what is obsolete within our respective professions.

Representing the superintendents on the panel were Palmer Maples, our National GCSA President, who came up from Atlanta, Georgia, and Alex Watson, our Mid-Atlantic President, from Sparrows Point Country Club in Baltimore, Maryland.

Both spoke of the superintendents of the 70's. Today's superintendent relies upon continuous education instead of learning from experience, he utilizes mechanization instead of manpower, he keeps abreast of new developments that could be of use to his operation, he attends educational conferences, meetings and seminars to remain knowledgeable within his profession, and he works with club officials and community organizations and is generally a well-rounded person capable of performing many functions not typical of the greenskeeper of yesterday. Today's golf course superintendent must combine the knowledge and training of an agronomist, entomologist, plant pathologist, landscape architect, civil engineer and mechanic, as well as public and labor relations. He must be well-versed in business practices in addition to the requirements of managing turfgrass.

While today's successful superintendent recognizes what is obsolete and solves his problems through education, the greenskeeper of yesterday often solved problems using only past experience as his guide. When he encountered problems he had not experienced before, he had no place to turn to for help.

The rate of knowledge in the world is growing so fast that by the time a child born today graduates from college,

# E.&S.

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(continued from page 5)

the knowledge available to him will be four times as great. By the time that same child is 50 years old, it will be 32 times as great, and 97 percent of everything known in the world will have been learned since the time he was born. To survive, the individual must become infinitely more adaptable and capable than ever before.

Other speakers on the panel, the golf professionals and club managers discussed what is obsolete within their operations and how the three of us must work together to achieve the goals of our country club. The other speakers were R. William Clarke, Immediate Past President, Professional Golfers' Association of America; Peter A. D'Angelo, C.C.M., Immediate Past President, Club Managers' Association of America; Walter H. Asche, President, National Capital Club Managers' Association; William Strausbaugh, Jr., President, Mid-Atlantic Professional Golfers' Association; Gerard F. Hurley, C.A.E., Executive Director, National Club Association; John A. Harris, Executive Secretary, Washington Area Tennis Patrons Foundation; Horace G. Duncan, C.C.M., Executive Director, Club Managers' Association of America; and Richard H. Welch, C.C.M., Immediate Past President, Greater Baltimore Club Managers' Association, and Director Region 4, Club Managers' Association of America. The moderator for the panel was Charles E. Smith, C.C.M., Past President, Club Managers' Association of America.

Also included in this panel were Harry Eckhoff of the National Golf Foundation, and Harry Easterly, Jr., Vice President of the United States Golf Association.

This joint educational assembly was the first meeting of this kind held in the Mid-Atlantic, and from all remarks, certainly will not be the last. This panel covered all aspects of management of a country club. This knowledge is necessary to help all of us better understand the whole country club operation.

Over 300 were in attendance, many brought their wives and members of their boards of directors from their country clubs. The panel discussion was followed by a very elaborate French dinner, which included three different wines, the bottles being concealed in brown paper bags and not identified until after dinner.

The National Capital Club Managers Association is to be commended for this well organized and much needed, successful joint meeting of the club managers, golf professionals and golf course superintendents.

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### An Expression of Sympathy

We all express our deepest sympathy to Russell Roberts on the passing of his wife, Dodie, this past March 28th; and to Grafton Lumsden, whose father, Talmage, passed away. Talmage was formerly superintendent of Bethesda Country Club before Grafton took over the job.



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## Potting Soil

It is often better and far cheaper to mix your own potting soil. Since some potting mixes consist almost exclusively of ground up leaves, take the hint. Make potting mixtures by mixing common soil with an equal amount of organic matter, either from composted leaves or peat moss.

Don't depend too much on peat moss, though, as it has no nutrient value. Use it only to improve the soil texture and for its moisture-holding power. You can starve a plant in peat moss, but not in composted leaves. Use 20 to 25 percent sand or perlite to give the potting mix good drainage properties.

Use fish emulsion fertilizers for indoor gardening. They are safe and contain all the essential elements for good plant nutrition; nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, plus all of the trace elements. Fish emulsion fertilizers are also fairly inexpensive.

Contrary to what you might read in some gardening publications, don't bother with sterilization of potting mixes. This process does kill weed seeds, but it also kills many beneficial organisms, such as soil bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi, which form symbiotic associations with plant roots.

Don't use dry hydrated or burnt lime for decreasing the acidity of planting mixes. Use dolomitic limestone instead. One application will supply sufficient calcium and magnesium for one to two years.

Keep in mind that a potting mixture comprised of soil, humus, and sand or perlite in equal amounts will be satisfactory for most plants.

## Country Club Taxes

Maryland's country clubs made the news again. The *Washington Post* (Monday, April 7) featured another gripe article on the tax status of country clubs that take advantage of the tax break if the club "promises to keep their land in open space for 10 years." This agreement can be renewed for succeeding 10 year periods. This state law was formed back in 1966 and next year will terminate the first 10-year period agreement.

Under the present law, country clubs are exempt from annual land assessment increases and pay virtually the same rate of taxes each year, even though the value of land around the country club is continually rising. In 1966 when the agreements were signed, the assessed value for club land was about 54% of the fair market value. Since these assessments have not changed despite inflation, the current assessment value is now only 28% of the fair market value. A bill was recently introduced to increase country club assessments to 50% of the fair market value but fortunately the House Ways and Means Committee killed the bill without a vote.

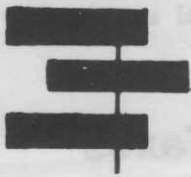
Ralph Nader is behind all this renewed publicity and we can expect to see continued articles in the news until which time the 1976 agreements are signed for another 10-year period. This proposed tax assessment, or any future similar tax assessment increase, is based on poor logic and doubtfully will never gain any more attention than what would normally be dead newspaper space.

Any additional tax assessment will result in a higher dues structure for all country clubs throughout the state. The majority of members are not rich and are already cutting their expenses to survive our inflation. These members would drop their memberships and virtually take country clubs off the map, if they are faced with large dues assessments. What happens then?

The state will be faced with increased overcrowded recreational facilities as country club members turn to the use of state recreational facilities. More park and municipal golf courses will be needed, all resulting in increased expenses for the state.

The old site of the private golf course will become another community development forcing the need for more public schools, libraries, roads, and other state-supported community services, all resulting in increased expenses for the state.

The far-reaching effects of putting the country clubs out of reach of the average income bracket would be disastrous to the state's economy and our legislators know this. They also probably belong to a country club and are not about to cut their own throat! So in the year to come, watch Nader's Raiders closely, but don't be overly alarmed by what the newspapers have to say until the state legislature chooses to show some interest.



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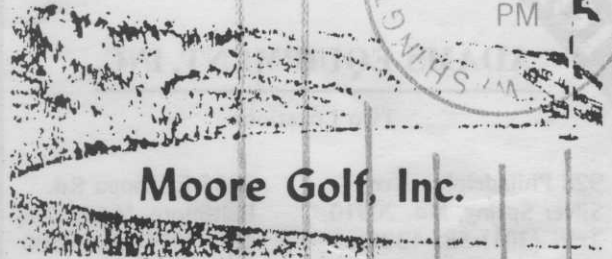
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Published monthly by the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents to aid in the advancement of the golf course superintendent through education and merit.  
Subscription rate for non-members: \$5.00 per year.

