



CHARTER

# Mid-Atlantic Newsletter



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Golf Course Superintendent through Education and Merit

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## March Meeting

The March meeting of the Mid-Atlantic G.C.S.A. is our annual joint meeting with the Old Dominion G.C.S.A. This year we are the hosts and we will be meeting March 8th at the Springfield Country Club in Springfield, Virginia. Our Host Superintendent will be Gene Day.

Gene has been employed by Springfield since the inception of the club in 1959. Gene worked on the golf course all through construction and continued on as a member of the golf course maintenance crew. In 1968, Gene was promoted to assistant superintendent under Dennis MacCammon. When Dennis moved to Colorado in 1973, Gene was again promoted, this time to golf course superintendent.

The program for the day will be as follows:

Golf: Anytime after 12:00 Noon

Cocktails: 6:00 P.M.

Dinner: 7:00 P.M.

Speaker: Dr. Doug Hawes

*Sand topdressing of bluegrasses and creeping bentgrasses.*

*DIRECTIONS TO THE CLUB: I-95 to the Springfield exit. Southbounders will exit onto Keene Mill Rd. and continue through Springfield to the club on the left. Northbounders will exit at Springfield and turn west on Keene Mill Rd. to the club.*

## 1977 Maintenance Survey

By now all class A and B superintendents have received their 1977 Maintenance Surveys. The reason for these surveys are to help each and every superintendent determine how he and his golf course stack up against other Mid-Atlantic courses. These surveys are of great value at budget time. Many clubs are able to make decisions on expenditures by understanding that other courses are spending equivalent dollars on comparable golf course maintenance programs.

This year instead of taking a cross section and determining the average golf course, we will study these surveys and try to show what is spent on golf courses in relation to their income, number of holes, and mode of club operation.

In order to make this a viable study, we need all of these surveys returned as soon as possible. Please help us by filling out these surveys and returning them to:

Wayne Evans

1804 Ironton Drive

Oxon Hill, Maryland 20021

Your prompt response will be appreciated.

## President's Message

March in the Mid-Atlantic area annually triggers the beginning of the outdoor recreation season. During March the winter efforts of mechanic and staff are given a shakedown so that when the bell rings all will be in readiness for the long season ahead.

With the winter of '76-'77 being one of the worst in history, let us pray that its effects on turf were positive.

Club members are also suffering from the worst case of "Fanny Fatigue" in recent memory. With our members in mind I suggest that you brush up on all the reasons necessary for putting up the "Course Closed" or "No Carts" signs. In my files I ran across an article entitled "Winter Golf In Maryland". This article was written and published in February, 1974 by Dr. John Hall. This article gives the agronomic shortcomings of playing golf under less than desirable conditions. This was an excellent piece and I recommend obtaining a copy by contacting Mr. Chuck Darrah, Turf Specialist, Department of Agronomy, University of Maryland.

Looking forward to seeing you at the March meeting.

Bill Emerson

# Thanks Craig

The February newsletter marked the end of Craig Spottswood's tenure as Newsletter Editor. During his tenure, Craig has really added to our newsletter. Not only has Craig showed us how well he can edit a newsletter, but he has shared his and our articles with other editors across the country. He has become very well known nationally.

To edit a newsletter takes much of a person's time. This time is spent for the benefit of the person's peers. Craig has given of his time unselfishly and has done a fantastic job. Thank you Craig, for all of your time and best wishes to you in your future endeavors. You're going to be a hard act to follow.

Your Many Friends

# Welcome New Member

Congratulations to our newest member Mike Mudd. Mike is currently the Golf Course Superintendent at the White Plains Municipal Golf Course in White Plains, Md. White Plains is one of the new public courses in Charles County, Md. Welcome Mike, we hope to see you real soon at one of our monthly meetings.

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# An Open Letter to Young Agronomists

I would like to take this opportunity to review a few comments expressed by some of the speakers at our recent conference in Baltimore.

Being a superintendent for a little less than a year now, I was particularly interested in the remarks of Paul Boizelle and Bob Shields pertaining to the roll of the younger turf students coming into the golf maintenance profession.

I entered the 2-year turf program at the University of Maryland under the guidance of Dr. Hawes in 1971, along with a small group of people who are still in this area today as assistants or superintendents. I can't speak for all of them but I know a few of us were very anxious to complete our studies and jump right into Golf Course Management. The sciences and principals we learned from Doug Hawes and other fine professors was an excellent platform from which to build from, however, I don't believe I or others realized that it was just that, a good platform or scientific background. Upon entering the real world of the golf course you suddenly realize there is a lot more involved basically, good practical experience where you get an opportunity to apply your education to practical usage.

Paul Boizelle expressed his distraught at the fact some of the younger people were taking jobs on their own or working under superintendents who had not developed

to the peak of their potential or ability - this I am quite sure is the case in many instances throughout the country. I wholeheartedly agree that whenever possible one should strive to work for two or three years under an experienced, competent superintendent. I, myself, was fortunate enough to work under Bob Shields at Woodmont, for which in the coming years I will be extremely appreciative. The young assistant on his way up might not realize it at the time but there is a hell of a lot to learn from the experienced men in this profession. Bob Shield's advice to the scholarship recipient at the Baltimore meeting was the same given to me, and numerous others who have been through the apprenticeship of this profession. It was always stressed to me that you had to feel a part of the ball game, give your own ideas to the superintendent, come in and discuss things with him often, stay ahead of things and treat the course you work on as if it were your own. These, and many other tidbits of advice should not be taken casually by the student or assistant because they come from weathered experience and knowledge. The things learned in the first few years of the real world of the golf course might well shape your career more than you will know at the time. The time will come someday when you will jump into the frying pan of your own course and if you haven't listened well, and taken your education, and applied knowledge from everything you've learned from others, it well might be a long road. In the coming years I will see for myself and so will many of the rest of you.

Whoever the young student works for - absorb everything you can, ask your superintendent to take you out to visit the Shields, Bidwells, Cammarotas, Thompsons, Dieters, Heiliens, and many, many other experienced men in this area, or any area in the country. I truly believe what you will learn from these men, and others, will aid you greatly in the first summer on your own. I know I just completed mine, and thank God I had the opportunity to learn from these type of men. I sincerely hope that all young turf students will take the advice of experienced men and profit from it, so they in return can pass it on to others in the coming years.

Joseph Emanuel  
Superintendent Tantallon Country Club

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# Pitch in Members

Many members and all board members have said that we need more member participation.

To make this association more appealing to all, we need each individual to get involved. By doing this, we can truly find just what our members really want and deserve.

In order to get everyone involved, each board member has taken on one committee as a Chairman and will act as a Vice Chairman of a related committee. These Chairmen have listed names of various members from different areas and will enlist their help.

If your name is on any of the following lists, you can depend on being contacted within the next few weeks. If you are not contacted, please offer your help and/or opinions to your Chairman.

### Educational Committee:

George Thompson - *Chairman*  
 Wayne Evans - *Vice Chairman*  
 David Cammarota    Gene Day  
 Gerry Gerard    Mike Larson  
 Tom List    Bob Orazi  
 Craig Spottswood

### Editorial Committee:

Wayne Evans - *Chairman*  
 George Thompson - *Vice Chairman*

### Finance Committee:

Virgil Robinson - *Chairman*  
 Mike MacKenzie - *Vice Chairman*

### Membership Committee:

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 Virgil Robinson - *Vice Chairman*  
 Mike Claffey    John Drew  
 Joe Emanuel    Steve Nash  
 Grant Pensinger    Lou Rudinski  
 Lou White

### Social Committee:

Ben Stagg - *Chairman*  
 Ken Braun - *Vice Chairman*

### Golf Committee:

Ken Braun - *Chairman*  
 Ben Stagg - *Vice Chairman*  
 Paul Barefoot    Dick Helm  
 Stanley Lawson    Ralph MacNeal  
 Bob Miller    Ralph Strouth  
 John Tutich    Buck Whetsell

Any other member not listed above is welcome to help. Pick the committee you like and join in. Let's make 1977 a banner year.



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- JUNE 14**  
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- JULY 12**  
Hunt Valley Golf Club
- AUGUST**  
Ladies' Night still in planning
- SEPTEMBER 13**  
Suburban Country Club
- OCTOBER 11**  
Woodmont Country Club  
Superintendent's Tournament
- NOVEMBER 11**  
Maryland Country Club
- DECEMBER 13**  
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# Managing Bent Greens for Summer Quality

A. J. POWELL, JR.  
University of Kentucky

If you were to survey golf course superintendents concerning their main summer problems, certainly summer disease would rank high on the problem list, and yet, basically we have very good fungicides that are effective against most of our diseases. But the fact is, fungicides are not miracle products. If we control one disease, another occurs. If we control the second disease then an insect or nematode problem may occur and the story goes on. To find a solution, however, we must realize that these outside agents may not be the real problem. The bentgrass plant is under severe stress during the summer. The overall problems relate to a poor summer root system, low energy reserves and possibly lush summer growth. All of these factors relate to the total *annual management program*.

We must stop and ask ourselves what can be done in previous growth seasons to make the turf better or stronger during the summer. There is definitely more to it than just reacting to the problem. Many times we try and manage our greens by the seat of our pants. If the grass is not growing, you fertilize it; if it's wilting, you water it; if it's diseased, you dope it, but taking revenge on the problem will not keep it from occurring again.

We need to look at our management program season-by-season to determine how one management factor will affect the turf during the next summer. For example, eyeballing turf nitrogen needs is not the answer. If you rely totally on this method, you tend to over-fertilize during the spring and summer and do not build or develop a plant that is able to withstand summer stress. The detrimental affects of heavy nitrogen fertilization during the spring are great, but the misuse of nitrogen in spring does not manifest itself until summer. On the other hand, you cannot cookbook a nitrogen program that is always going to give you optimum plant growth conditions. There are too many variables such as weather, soil type and desired use of the turf.

## N fertilization

Fall is certainly the best time to fertilize temperate grasses with nitrogen. Fall nitrogen not only increases color and growth, but also increases root development, tiller initiation and tiller development - all adding to turf density. Likewise, in most climates winter applied nitrogen increases the density and root growth of cool season grasses and certainly lengthens the early spring playing season.

Spring and summer applied nitrogen may result in a big yield, but it also tends to decrease root growth and increase disease, weeds, thatch and wilt problems. Spring nitrogen forces growth but makes the turf weak. The best nitrogen program is one in which you make "planned" N applications during the fall and winter and then follow an anti-spring and summer N program. Obviously, you cannot always eliminate nitrogen in the spring and summer, but you should make N applications only when it is necessary to increase top growth. Some top growth during summer is necessary in order that the turf can repair itself or recover from the normal wear and use stress. Foliar applications of iron can give you necessary summer color if a lack of color is the problem. During the spring and summer, one can easily watch the amount of clippings removed and only make light N applications when growth is insufficient.

(continued on page 7)



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## Managing Greens

(continued from page 6)

### Spring Aerification

One of the main benefits of coring greens is to improve air and water exchange between the soil and atmosphere. This encourages deeper and more extensive rooting. The roots are growing in the spring but the water infiltration problems, that we normally confront, occur in the summer.

If greens are aerified in early spring the beneficial affects may be completely lost by summer and the greens often become very compacted and impervious. If greens are to receive only one spring aerification, then why not delay aerification until late spring. This would maximize water infiltration rates during summer and minimize localized dry spots.

### Irrigation Management

No one can tell you how to water your greens. They are all different. You have control of the irrigation problem in the spring and fall, but the grass itself dictates the irrigation program during the summer. A minimum irrigation frequency is very important to obtain maximum root growth during spring and fall, but during summer when roots are normally short and evapotranspiration rates are high a frequent irrigation program is necessary. If you do not get maximum root growth rate in fall, winter and spring then an excess of

summer irrigation troubles can be expected.

### Mowing Management

The golfers, themselves, greatly influence our mowing heights and frequencies. On some courses the greens must be mowed daily and yet on others the membership seems to be satisfied with 3-4 cuttings per week. In order to get maximum top and root growth, we must remember that a less frequent mowing is usually superior. Anytime the grass is under stress, delayed mowing can be very beneficial. Excessive frequency and very short mowing heights in the spring can result in shorter and less vigorous roots in summer.

In summary, if we neglect or over-manage greens during the cool seasons of the year, we can expect more problems during the summer. Look at each management practice and determine how it may affect the bentgrass as it enters the summer stress period.

## In Memoriam

In January Mr. David Edgar passed away. Dave was a member of our association for many years and had been a retired superintendent for the past 15 years. Dave, who was a native of Scotland and a World War I veteran, was Superintendent at the Elk Ridge Club in Baltimore from 1947 to 1960. He is survived by his wife Ruth and a number of nieces and nephews.

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