

**Mid-Atlantic Association of
Golf Course Superintendents
NEWSLETTER**

Published by this Association to aid the advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent through education and merit.

Claud Corrigan, *Editor*
Joe Gambatese, *Photographer*

1983 Officers and Directors

- President* Ken Braun
- Vice President* Mike Larsen
- Secretary* Paul O'Leary
- Treasurer* Gerald Gerard
- President-Emeritus* Ben Stagg
- Educational Chairman* Lee Dieter
- Membership Chairman* Robert Lambert
- Golf Chairmen* Walter Montross &
George Renault
- Social & Benevolence* Paul Barefoot
- Editorial & Publicity* Wayne Evans
- GCSAA Chapter Relations*. Bill Emerson

President's Message

Fall has now arrived, I'm happy to say. At our last meeting, held at Bonnie View Country Club (27 die-hard golfers played in a much-needed, day-long rain), we were fortunate to have our national president, Bob Osterman, on hand to explain and justify the actions the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has taken this year. He also outlined the direction in which the GCSAA is headed, in line with the management changes he described.



Ken Braun, *President*

On October 11, we will be meeting with superintendent George Murphy at the Ocean City Golf and Yacht Club. This is our annual tournament, and we should all plan on spending some extra time in the Ocean City area. This meeting is going to be casual – no jackets and ties required.

SCHEDULE OF 1983 MEETINGS

- October 11 – Ocean City Golf & Yacht Club
- November 8 – Leisure World
- December 13 – Belle Haven Country Club

FOR SALE

1967 Locke Power Lawn Mower 70", 8 HP. Call Mike McKenzie, 767-4406.

Those Hard-Riding, Back-Busting Vehicles of Ours

*by Gerry Gerard, Superintendent
Bretton Woods Recreation Center*



As we ride around the golf course on our Turf Trucksters each day, doing our routine checks, little do we realize what is happening to us—until it is too late. We appreciate nature and enjoy being outdoors and not being confined to a desk job, but in many cases we are beating our bodies into destruction, in particular, our backs. By riding Trucksters and other turf-type vehicles with their rigid suspension systems, we are turning our spinal columns into shock absorbers. Over a short period of time, no harm is done, but over the years a certain amount of deterioration takes place and sooner or later, many of us develop back problems. These seem to show up mostly in cases

where the superintendent has been in this business for more than 10 years.

What is the answer to this problem, and how do we protect ourselves and our employees from the occurrence of back problems, other than selling our Trucksters? I know that in some cases superintendents have switched their modes of transportation. They are now spending much more of their riding time in pickup trucks, golf carts, or other type of softer riding equipment.

In any case, the problem should be brought to the attention of the manufacturers of these vehicles. With today's technology, their engineers could certainly soften the ride and provide a better means of back support for the operators of the vehicles. Until such changes are made, more and more of us will be suffering from back problems, now and in the future. We can only hope that manufacturers will recognize the problem and do something about it, very soon.



Keep the (F)Airways Open — To ALL

How important is communication? What good is it? Why have it? These are some aspects of communication I would like to expand on and show the importance of each of these questions to our profession.

The first question, "How important is it?" Without being able to talk and reason with people, our profession is dead. If your green chairman comes up to you and asks you a technical question, you better be able to come up with an intelligent answer or tell him you are not sure but will find out. Nothing turns someone off more than when an employee answers a question with an "I don't know."

If there is a weak link in the chain of command of a club, it stems from lack of communication. If the pro doesn't tell the superintendent that he has 100 players on Friday morning for a 9:00 a.m. shotgun start, the superintendent could be in a real bind. All these type problems could be avoided with a phone call or a memo between the pro shop and grounds department.

Why have it? Without a good line of communication between manager, pro, and superintendent, trouble usually will arise. Maybe the best way to have a good line of communication is through a staff meeting. Include in that meeting the club president, the manager, the golf professional, the golf superintendent, and the pool manager. Let the club president chair the meeting and clear the air of any ill feelings between departments. If all departments of a country club can work together, it sure makes everyone's job much easier.

Another way we as golf course superintendents can improve our own line of communication is through playing with members. I am sure that some clubs will not allow this, but at those clubs that encourage it, the superintendent should make every effort to play at least one 18-hole round per week with a group of members. Get a view of the golf course from a playing standpoint instead of an agronomic one. Let the members question you about why this and that looks or performs the way it does while on the golf course, not in the shop. How often does your green chairman

(Continued on page 3)

Bidwell Cautions On Pure Sand Topdressing

Speaking at a greens seminar in April, Warren Bidwell, superintendent at Olympia Fields Country Club, urged caution for those considering or already on sand topdressing of greens. Working more than 35 years in the turfgrass industry, Warren has made it a point to discuss topdressing mixes with many turfgrass advisors at the Ph.D. level. Research information through work completed on various experimental turf plots has shown that sand topdressing is not all sunshine.

Dr. Elliot Roberts, formerly of Iowa State University, proved in the laboratory and in the field that a healthy and strong root system is directly related to top growth development which can be accomplished without sand topdressing. At a Canadian Conference, Dr. Roy Goss, from the University of Washington said that we haven't seen the end results of this sand topdressing work. When you overlay a sand, soil, and peat mixture (which we all have done going back to the 1920's) with 100% sand it could have end results on our putting greens 20 to 25 years from now.

While on a sand topdressing program you are not to aerify because you do not want to mix the sand topdressing right over already compacted soil and then you expect excellent results. Sand topdressing originated with the touring golf professionals. They are never satisfied with the speed of the greens unless they're as fast as a bullet passing a train. The golf pros want pool table surfaces. When superintendents are preparing for a tournament the putting green cut is lowered to 9/64" in order to increase the speed on the greens. When the tournament is over, the height of cut is back to 3/16" for plant protection and stability. During the tournament the members get used to those faster than normal greens. So when you walk through the men's grill you are likely to hear "when the hell are you going to cut those greens." Top growth and root growth are directly related, and it is very difficult to accept lower and lower cutting heights. The younger generation, however, must please its members. For a superintendent to survive a club for any given tenure, he must follow the directives of the locker room agronomic experts. This is the way of life around our many private and publicly owned golf courses.

Working as a superintendent at two golf clubs where major golf champion-

ships were played, Bidwell said, the putting greens were never toppedressed with 100% sand. The putting speed and turf quality remained excellent.

The Golf Course Superintendent has the expertise, good judgment, research data, and education that allows him to make professional decisions in manicuring turfgrass. Club members have to start confiding in their Golf Course Superintendents and not other neighboring clubs. Soil modification is a solution, but 100% sand could only be a quick fix.

New Job Openings

Superintendent, Jackson Golf & Country Club, Jackson, Tenn.; \$25,000 negotiable; contact Greg Froehlich, General Manager, Jackson Golf & Country Club, 2523 Humboldt Highway, Jackson, TN 38301 (901-668-0981)

Superintendent, Midland Hills Country Club, St. Paul, Minnesota; \$23,000 to \$28,000; contact Richard Kopplin, General Manager, 2001 Fulham St., St. Paul, MN 55113 (612-637-0440)

Superintendent, Hartley Hills Country Club, Hagerstown, Indiana; \$13,000 to \$16,500; contact Michael L. Hensley, 3748 Crowe Rd., Richmond, IN 47374 (317-478-4501)

Superintendent, County Lakes Country Club, Napierville, Illinois; \$23,000 negotiable; contact Paul Shabby, 211 Lawrencewood, Niles, Ill., 60648

Superintendent, Richmond Country Club, Staten Island, New York; \$23,000 and up; contact Greenskeeper Search Committee, Richmond County C.C., 1335 Flagg Pl., Staten Island, NY 10304.

Assistant Superintendent, Big Canyon Country Club, Newport Beach, California; \$27,500; contact John D. Hudson, General Manager, Big Canyon Country Club, #1 Big Canyon Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660

(Summarized from GCSAA Employment Referral Service bulletins)

KEEP THE (F)AIRWAYS OPEN – TO ALL (Continued from page 2)

come into your office and ask you a question about a particular area on a certain fairway? If you were playing, you could see the problem, explain why you have it, and what you are doing to alleviate the problem. Take some of the guess work out of your job.

In summing up "our" problem, I can't express the importance of having an open line of communication between club executives, department heads, and between the department head and his people working for him. One thing to always keep in mind is "a superintendent is only as good as the people working for him." Hire good people, communicate your desires to them, follow up by observation, and the job should be done the way you explained it in the shop.

Be Careful When Using Epoxy Paints

A recent issue of North Central Airlines *The Ungarbled Word* tells about an employee's experience with using an epoxy-based paint to finish a model glider. As he tells it, he spray-painted the bird in his heated garage workshop. He sprayed a tack coat and stepped out; 25 minutes later he came back in, sprayed a finish, and stepped out again. Total time in the spray area was less than 4 minutes. He then proceeded to clean his spray gun. About a half-hour later, he noticed a strong smell of algae — like a stagnant swamp. Within an hour and a half, he was experiencing pains in his lower rib cage which then spread throughout his chest cavity. In short order, he found himself in a coronary intensive care unit.

Here's what the victim said about it: "Even though I suspected possible poisoning from the epoxy and took a can of it to the hospital with me, an educational program followed which should be shared with everyone: 1) There is no antitoxin (as in the case of snake bite) or reversing-type chemical to render the effects of the epoxy formula harmless; 2) If you are going to live, you live — if not, the staff just has to watch you die; 3) The resins and hardeners inflame the tissues in the lungs and surrounding areas near the heart. The effect is like a coronary, but no traces can be found later. The moral is obvious: If you are going to dry-sand epoxy, wear a carbon-activated face mask — the powder or dust is as dangerous as the wet spray. Finally, the effects are cumulative over a period of time, and when your tolerance has been reached, there is no reversing the process."

New Member

Gary L. Angell, Class D.
Assistant Superintendent
Wakefield Valley Golf Club, Westminster, Md.

Reprinted from Bull Sheet, Joe Williamson