

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.

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From The Golf World

You can't help noticing how the TV networks, especially CBS, have been going out of their way to praise the work of the superintendent of the golf course from which they're broadcasting that week's Tour event. It may well be the intensive PR campaign put on by the GCSAA in recent years is beginning to get the point across that immaculately groomed golf courses just don't "happen" but are the result of some responsible person's knowledge, special skills, and hard work.

The CGSAA Executive Committee, by the way, is strongly plugging the new Mid-Year Conference and Show to be held in Indianapolis, September 19-24, complete with educational seminars, equipment trade show and outside demonstrations, turfgrass research sessions, and a golf championship to be played at nearby Crooked Stick Golf Club, an outstanding Pete Dye course.

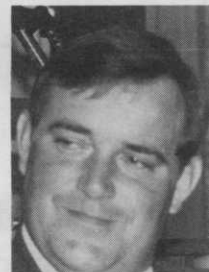
Meeting Schedule, 1985

June 11 — Montgomery C.C., Jeff Miskin, Host
July 9 — Winters Run G.C. (luncheon meeting), John Drew, Host
August 13 — Bretton Woods, Annual Picnic, Gerry Gerard, Host
September 10 — Hobbits Glen G.C., Bill Neus, Host
October 14 — International C.C., Steve Nash, Host
November 12 — Hunt Bailey G.C., Bob Orazi, Host
December 10 — Naval Academy, Mike McKenzie, Host

The President's Message

One of the greatest benefits afforded members of the Mid-Atlantic is the opportunity to attend monthly meetings held at different clubs in our area throughout the year. At these meetings, we are able to play golf, exchange ideas with fellow members, and participate in educational sessions. However, along with these benefits comes a responsibility—to be willing to host a meeting at your club. In that regard, it was brought to my attention at the April Board of Directors meeting that only four meeting locations have been secured for 1986. To correct this situation, I hope that other members will realize their responsibility to do their part. Take the initiative and volunteer to host a meeting next year. The scheduling of meetings for 1986 is being coordinated by our vice president, Gerry Gerard. See Gerry to make your arrangements.

A special note of thanks this month goes to Golf Chairman Dick Gieselman for all his hard work in organizing last month's Superintendent's-Pro Tournament, at which everyone had a great day. Our June meeting will be held at Montgomery Country Club, and our host is Jeff Miskin. Remember to register by calling the MAAGCS office at 964-0070.



Michael J. Larsen, *President*

"Weeping May Endure For A Night"

by Virgil Robinson, *Superintendent*
Burning Tree Club

The rest of the quote for the title of this article is "but joy cometh in the morning." As many of you know, this is a direct quote from Psalms 30:5. I would like to apply this quotation to a subject that is close to my heart and very common to our profession, a subject that most superintendents never broach, that causes many sleepless nights and many bleeding ulcers. That subject: personal trials or afflictions or failures.

As bona fide members of the human race, as golf course superintendents, we are quite willing to talk about our personal triumphs, our accomplishments, our successes. But, what about the real building blocks (a seemingly paradoxical statement) of our character, of our personhood — our failures.

Because of an experience in 1977, a "failure" if you will, and to other personal trials that are even now upon me, I believe I qualify as a specialist, an authority on the subject of failure. I make that statement out of thankfulness and humility, not regret or boastfulness. By relating that experience and what I obliquely learned, I hope to show that probably more is gained through our failures than our successes. In looking back eight years removed from that "failure" I consider it one of the most valuable experiences of my life; at the time, I was asking, no, demanding, why me, Lord?

1977, of course, was my first year at Burning Tree; I had reached a personal goal of mine, a tournament course or very fine private club, fully seven years before I could even dream of such a possibility. At a beautiful club, steeped in tradition, I was going to provide the first conditioned golf course on the East coast. After three successful years at Andrews AFB that seemed to be a reasonable goal at the time.

By August of that year the golf course — tees, greens and fairways — looked as if someone had done a poor job of spraying Round-up herbicide; the only thing consistently green were the leaves on the trees and they turned brown early that year. What happened? I still do not know. When things started going down in May or June, I certainly overreacted with certain management practices but not to the extent that the course was suffering.

If the turf was suffering, I was more so. My personal pride was being ripped out by the roots. For the first time in my life I realized I did not have control over my job situation or my personal destiny. That realization is both sobering and humbling. At the time and during those four months, I slept a maximum of two hours per night — the other 4-6 hours were spent endlessly tossing and turning and worrying; I did not share any of what I was going through with anyone, not even Karen. By the end of the season I was a basket case, even though I managed to put on a good front. Within myself, I got consolation from the fact that I probably would never take my own life since I hadn't already.