



Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER



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Regan, Kessel Win Championship Trophies



Tom Regan (l.) receives the Ruben Hines Trophy for low gross from Larry Cornell of G.L. Cornell Co., while at right, Sam Kessel is presented with the Bob Shields Trophy by Lynn Matson of the Turf Equipment and Supply Co.

The sun shone brightly and briefly as competitors in the 1986 MAAGCS Championship teed off in a shotgun start at Hidden Creek Country Club on October 14. Then the rains came. After soaking the course, the showers moved along, and play was resumed. Light rain interrupted golf from time to time, but the cloudburst hit just as most golfers had two or three holes left. Despite the flow of water across the greens, every one stuck it out, and when the soggy scorecards were handed in, Tom Regan of Bethesda Country Club had won low gross with a 79 and Sam Kessel of Country Club of Fairfax had taken low net with a 70. Respectively, they received the Ruben Hines Trophy donated by G.L. Cornell Co. and the new Bob Shields Trophy presented by TESCO.

Other prize winners were Virgil Robinson, who was second gross with 81; Joel Ratcliff, third with 82; and Jeff Yingling, fourth with 89; Tom Walsh, who took second net with 71; Steve Nash, third with 73, matching out Walter Montross, who also had 73. In the guest division, Ed Cashman won gross with a 77 and Claud Corrigan took net with 76.

Diamond Ridge Set For Nov. 11 Meeting

One of the busiest courses in the Baltimore-Washington area will be host to the November 11 meeting of the MAAGCS, and Diamond Ridge Golf Course will also be the scene of the final round of the 1986 point tournament. Diamond Ridge, which was built in 1968, was designed by architect Eddie Ault and is operated by the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks; its 6,356 yards (white tees) are laid out on rolling, wooded land outside the Baltimore Beltway.

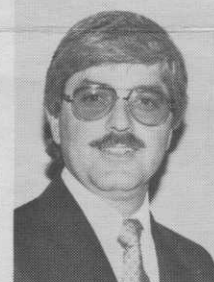
Howard Gaskill, superintendent at Diamond Ridge and the county's other two courses for the past five years, comments that a USGA Public Links Committee member has evaluated Diamond Ridge as the top public course he had played, based on standard criteria of shot value, playability, design balance, memorability, esthetics, and condition. He points out that the courses two major problems are its popularity (some 60,000 rounds a year are now played, compared to 40,000 in 1980) and its

(Continued on page 2)

President's Message

Now, at last, is the time when most of us can breath a sigh of relief because the hot, dry weather is behind us and those glorious, crisp days of Fall with all the leaves in their autumn colors are here. You thought they'd never get here, didn't you?

Recently, I received a letter from an old friend and retired MAAGCS member, Alex Watson. Al wrote to let



me know that he is now classified as a Class AA Life Member by the GCSAA because of his 25 years of national membership, and his CGCS title is a permanent designation. Congratulations, Al, from everyone in the Mid-Atlantic.

A special thanks goes to Dick Gieselman, who was our host at the well-attended October meeting at his course, Hidden Creek Country Club. Our November meeting will take place at Diamond Ridge Golf Course, and Howard Gaskill will be our host. Please make sure you call our office to make reservations, and remember, we have a new telephone number, (301) 381-0030.

Jerry Gerard, *President*

Candidates Picked For December Vote

This year's Nominating Committee has presented its slate to the Board of Directors, and running for office are the following, who are to be voted on at the December 9 meeting at Green Spring Valley Hunt Club: For President, Lee Dieter; Vice President, George Renault; Secretary, Bill Neus and Ken Ingram; Treasurer, Walter Montross; three-year terms as directors, Howard Gaskill and Steve Cohoon. Nominations can also be made from the floor.

**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*

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From The Golf World

One of the features of the GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show starting January 26 in Phoenix will be the release of the 1986 Golf Course Maintenance Report. Based on a survey of every golf course in the nation by the GCSAA and the National Golf Foundation, the report will invite comparison with the 1984 survey report, which disclosed that an estimated \$1.7 billion is spent on golf course maintenance each year and that U.S. golf courses had an equipment inventory valued at over \$1.8 billion.

An interesting development at the Fall Session of the PGA Board of Directors on Oct. 1 is that the PGA plans to go into the golf consulting, leasing, owning, and managing business. The program, which is expected to broaden the association's financial base, promote jobs for PGA members, help educate them in business management, and make them more effective as golf business leaders, will be conducted through a subsidiary with headquarters in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. The PGA is thus following the lead of the PGA Tour, which owns and operates 13 Tournament Players Courses and plans to build or purchase more.

The latest "Best" gimmick is the selection by various magazines and associations of the 18 "best holes" or "toughest holes" in the U.S. or the world. Apparently selection of the world's and U.S.'s best golf courses is getting tired, forcing promoters to come up with something new and, they hope, different.

Memorial Trophy Honors the Late Bob Shields

*By Nick Vance
Golf Chairman*

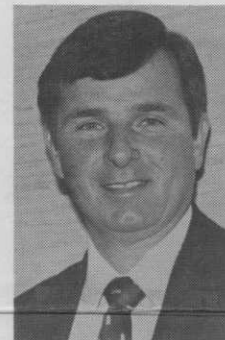
Under our new policy of dedicating the memorial trophy given to the net winner in the annual Mid-Atlantic golf championship to a past member each year, L.R. (Bob) Shields was chosen as the name to appear on the trophy for 1986. That trophy went to Sam Kessel, who had a net score of 70.

Although I did not know Bob Shields as well as many of our members did, I found that everyone who did know him well had their own store of memories and tales about Bob, some of them professional, others about character, but all told from the heart.

In writing about Bob shortly after his death in 1982, Craig Spottswood, one of his close friends, commented that although Bob had been born in 1912, he did not become involved with golf courses until 1946, when he started working at Annapolis Roads Country Club with his brothers, Roy and Ray. He became superintendent at Sligo Park Golf Course in 1948, remaining there for four years until he took over as superintendent at Woodmont Country Club in Rockville, a post he held until his death.

An active MAAGCS member, he was chosen as the association's president in 1951 and was re-elected in 1952, the year he attended his first National Conference; he never missed one after that. Bob edited the MAAGCS newsletter from 1953 to 1963, and in 1964 he was elected to the GCSAA vice-presidency. He became national president in 1965. During this time, he was instrumental in the establishment of the two-year turfgrass program at the University of Maryland. In 1971, he was named Mid-Atlantic superintendent of the year and then served three more years as the local association's president.

In ending his 1982 article, Craig commented that, "Everyone associated with the green industry will miss the presence of this leader." The Bob Shields Memorial Trophy thus has great significance for us all, especially for the man who won it, Sam Kessel, a good friend and "fishing buddy" of the man we've honored this year.



DIAMOND RIDGE MEETING

(Continued from page 1)

lack of a water supply. With no ground-water under the course and municipal water not yet available, water for greens and tees must be brought in by tanker truck starting in July and discharged into the small irrigation lake that during the rest of the year collects runoff water.

The evening meeting will be held at the nearby Ramada Hotel, since the course has neither shower nor dining facilities. For this reason, only jackets and not ties will be required for the meeting. Speaker at the meeting will be Kurt Bluemel of Bluemel Nursery who is a national authority on ornamental grasses, sedges, and rushes, having introduced dozens of varieties of plants from around the world into this country; he has recently returned from his third collection trip to Africa.

The November host, Howard Gaskill, was born in southern New Jersey, graduated from Colorado State University with a degree in horticulture, and stayed in Colorado as a superintendent for 14 years, serving two terms as presi-

dent of the Rocky Mountain GCSA. He was a tech rep for O.M. Scotts for seven years before joining Baltimore County.

Directions to the course are: From the Baltimore Beltway, I-695, take the Security Boulevard exit (No. 17), go west on Security for 0.6 miles to Rolling Road, turn right, go a half-mile to the first traffic light and turn left onto Dogwood Road. Go 1 mile before turning right onto Ridge Road; course is 0.3 miles. The Ramada is just off Exit 17; from the Beltway, take Security Blvd. west for approximately 400 yards. Turn right on Belmont Ave. and go 1 block to the Ramada.

The program for November 11 is:

Lunch - Not available

Golf - 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

(call 944-6607) for starting times)

Cocktails - 5:30 p.m. at the Ramada

Dinner - 6:30 p.m. (cost \$18)

Meeting - 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Schedule 1986

December 9 — Green Spring Valley
Hunt Club, Grant Pensinger, host

Protect Greens From Winter Desiccation

With winter's cold winds only a few months away, the latest Turfcomm from Dr. Douglas Hawes deals with some of the steps that can be taken to prevent loss of turf in bentgrass putting greens from winter desiccation. For better winter survival, he suggests you be sure and apply adequate amounts of potassium and iron to greens in early Fall, including raising the height of cut $\frac{1}{4}$ " in late September and topdressing where desiccation is a perennial problem.

To provide adequate potassium, apply 4 pounds of potassium sulfate per thousand square feet before September is over and water it in; it should be applied again a month before the ground freezes for the winter. Iron sulfate should be applied at 2 ounces per thousand every other week for three applications before the ground freezes. Two ounces of sulfuric acid per 100 gallons of water is helpful in getting this material to dissolve in the spray tank where high pH water is a problem.

Other measures Doug suggests are preventive snow mold fungicide applications, heavy sand top dressing (up to $\frac{1}{4}$ "), occasional winter watering in December, January, and February, and covering the greens. Covers have a number of drawbacks, despite preventing moisture loss and allowing light to penetrate. They promote snow mold attacks, are expensive, do not allow play when in place, and leave the covered grass quite tender so that a length of relatively mild weather is necessary to harden it after the cover is removed in the Spring.

Writing Awards Open

Articles from MAAGCS members are always welcome in this newsletter, but in 1987, a \$100 savings bond will go to the member who authors the article adjudged best. In addition, members who contribute a "Tip of the Month," a short description of some procedure they have developed and recommend to others, will receive a \$25 bond; Tip awards will be made each month.

NEW MEMBER

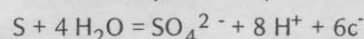
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Gaithersburg, MD

SULFUR: Friend or Foe?

by Tom Lubin

There has been much talk this past year about sulfur and its benefits, but in most cases people have used the two most common forms of sulfur (elemental sulfur and sulfate ion) interchangeably. The problem is not with the materials but with how they have been used.

ELEMENTAL SULFUR (S) This element exists most commonly in S_8 rings which will convert to sulfate at a rate directly related to the surface area of the particles and soil temperature. As a particle of sulfur is broken into smaller and smaller pieces, the surface area increases, and the rate at which the sulfur oxidizes to sulfate ion increases rapidly at a fixed temperature. As the oxidation takes place, sulfate ion is produced, along with hydrogen ion, which can help to acidify the soil.



SULFATE ION: (SO_4^{2-}) This ion, the highest oxidation state of sulfur, is usable by the turf in this form, but *the sulfate ion will not acidify*.

When the sulfate ion concentration reaches 50 ppm, any higher concentration can cause a series of problems on either greens or fairways. As the sulfate ion concentration increases, because it is an anion (negative ion) with a charge of minus two, it will hold or bond various ions such as sodium, calcium, potassium, etc. The main problem is that one of the most used fertilizers in the past has been ammonium sulfate. The sulfate ion seems to move very slowly through greens where the organic content has built up and in clay soils. When the ammonium ion is used up, sodium or other less desirable cations (positive ions) will be held, along with the high sulfate ion concentration that has built up in the soil.

Localized high salt level can also cause the turf to show "water stress" when the water level in the surface of the soil has decreased even slightly. This is because the high concentration of salt is still around the root and, as the water starts to evaporate, the salt concentration rapidly increases to a point where osmosis is actually reversed. When this takes place, permanent damage can take place within hours.

On golf greens, after a number of years of forced growth and the normal cycle of root replacement, the percentage of organic matter will increase. As the percentage increases, then the ability of the soil to hold salts (especially sulfate salts) increases.

If the sulfate levels are high, ammonium sulfate should not be used as a fairway or green fertilizer until the soil's sulfate concentration has been lowered.

The fastest and the most sure method is to physically remove some of the organic (high salt center) material in the greens by deep time aeration. Topdress, filling holes with *pure sand!* This process should be repeated periodically to keep the organic content from building up to problem levels. The process will take some time, but play can continue through the rebuilding process, and the large expense involved in building new greens can be eliminated or postponed.

Through this process, a non-ionic penetrant can be used in extremely low concentrations in a program designed to lower the surface tension and improve the flow of water through the soil profile. No matter what is done, the flow of water through the soil must be improved in order to carry off the excess salts, keeping the soil EC low enough to allow the turf to grow efficiently. The greens have bands of differing particle size built up at various depths; the consistent application of non-ionic penetrant in low concentration will cause the surface tension of the water to be lowered and allow the water to pass more readily from one layer to another. Once the soil is wet through the complete profile, a siphon-like action will cause the water to move much more easily.

In order to determine the sulfate level in the soil, it is suggested that a complete set of soil samples be taken (especially on the greens) so that the nutrient levels can be monitored. The investment is small for the information that can be gained.

Reprinted from *Divot News*, GCSA of Southern California.

MAAGCS Team Takes 4th in Metro Event

Mid-Atlantic golfers traveled to Oak Lane Country Club in New Haven, Conn., in October to play in the Metropolitan Area Superintendents' Association team championship. Of 11 teams, the Mid-Atlantic finished fourth with a stroke total of 337, six shots back of the winning Philadelphia team, and individual low gross honors went to MAAGCS entry Tom Regan, who shot a 78 under windy and difficult conditions.

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