

THE FIRST DAY AT ASILOMAR by Robert Livesey, Plaza G.C., Visalia

I do not believe that I have ever sat with a group of superintendents who listened so intently to a group of speakers. The first day of the Superintendents' Institute was that way all day long. Mr. Geoffrey Cornish spoke on the History of Golf Course Architecture and the Architect. The fellows that took his talk down on tape have something that they can look back on with great interest for years to come.

After Mr. Cornish, Bob Graves talked on working with your golf course architect and working with a Master Plan. These two subjects were of great interest. One of the things that Bob emphasized is that he likes to see the superintendent on board when course construction begins. I think most of us agree with this. There is nothing worse than coming on a new job and trying to find where everything is located. It was very interesting how important a Master Plan is when someone is getting ready to build a course. Everything refers back to it. This is one thing you must have before you can file an environmental impact statement.

Along with the Master Plan concept, Fritz Howell, Superintendent at Northridge Country Club, spoke on how they used the Master Plan to develop their long range plans to solve drainage problems, rebuilding programs for tees and irrigation installation. Also, he stressed the importance of getting the club members involved in this concept so they know what is going on. As you can see, the Master Plan not only is for new development but should be used to solve some of our existing problems. It keeps us from running around putting out fires. It is much better to plan ahead.

That afternoon Eugene Begg spoke on "Analyze your Physical Soil Properties Before You Design." Many look at this as taking a one inch probe or a couple of shovels full off the top few inches of soil. We have to do better than that. As Mr. Begg said, a back-hoe will get you down there so you can see what's in the ground. Many of our drainage problems could have been taken care of if something like this was done.

Who is qualified to design your irrigation system? Chet Sarsfield told it like it is. I think it surprised everyone that there are no specific requirements to be an irrigation consultant. If you are going out for a design or redesign, know who you are dealing with; what is his background; will he refer you to other jobs he has done; what looks good on a plan may not do the job in the field. Too many systems have been put in without regards to soil conditions, terrain, wind conditions and water quality. When the job is done and the contractor leaves, we have to live with the system.