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Golf Course Builders

Meet In Boston

"Everything you wanted to know about golf, but were afraid to ask" was the theme of the Golf Course Builders of America when they met in Boston in January.

The second annual meeting, held during the Golf Course Superintendents Association Conference and Show, featured five speakers representing diverse areas of golf course construction.

Col. Harry Eckhoff, USAF (Ret.), facility development consultant for the National Golf Foundation told an audience of about 30 that contrary to popular belief the executive course trend is not increasing. Only 18 new executive courses opened for play in 1972.

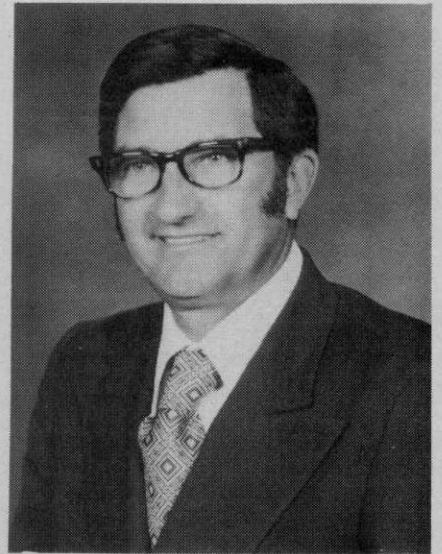
Looking at the overall golf picture, Eckhoff cited potential problem areas. From 1962 to the present, FHA guaranteed loans of \$85.5 million to towns of 5,500 or less population to expand golf courses, he said. About 140 towns are in trouble. They haven't made payments on loans. These towns are scattered throughout 41 states.

The consultant said that another trouble spot concerns housing developers. In some areas the developer requires ownership as a prerequisite to membership in a golf course. This can and has led to complications, Eckhoff noted.

He also said that there was a positive trend in municipal golf course construction. Population growth, urbanization, more leisure time and others were cited as influencing factors. Golf is becoming more popular to people of less financial means. These people cannot afford membership in private facilities, but want to play golf. Thus, the municipal course holds much promise and growth in the future.

Speaking on the importance of irrigation was James J. Kirchdorfer, president, Kirchdorfer Irrigation Inc., Louisville, Ky. He told delegates that planting seed and water must be an almost simultaneous operation. Survival rate is about 90 percent if you water within 10 minutes of planting, he said. Survival decreases to 80 percent if watered within one hour and 40 percent when water is applied within one day.

Kirchdorfer said that one major problem is that superintendents wait until the last piece of pipe is in the



Henry L. Nielsen Jr., Nielsen Construction Co., Warwick, N.Y. has been elected president of the Golf Course Builders of America. He's been in the construction business for 30 years.

ground before testing the irrigation system. Once the pumping station is in the system can be tested. With the irrigation system sound and in operation the golf course will come into play sooner and with fewer problems, he concluded.

Next followed an interesting review of drainage and tile by Eugene M. Witter, sales manager, Hancock Brick & Tile Co., Findlay, Ohio. Golf and drainage practices had their origins in the same country. Both came from Scotland, Witter said. While clay tile has been used widely in agriculture, there has always been problems associated with it. Proper alignment and the weight of the material have made the job of laying tile most unpleasant. However, the advent of plastics have revolutionized the industry. Flexibility in tile and minimum weight can now be achieved, he said. Plastic tubing is currently available in sizes from two inches to 10 inches in diameter.

Profits are the result of volume times efficiency, said Joseph S. Finger of Houston, Texas. He challenged those attending the meeting that "...the future of golf is in the room." We must build better golf courses for less money. "That means efficiency," he injected. "Efficiency is the product of productivity divided by problems."

Finger listed four problems common to golf course builders. Weather was one. Topography is another. He cited the client as a third. "Few are knowledgeable of golf course construction," he said. The last problem area is the golf course contractors.

The golf architect said that it is "time we joined hands — contractors and architects — to get the story across to our clients." We recommend meetings between contractors and builders. Plans and specifications today must be complete and detailed. He said that the need for more detailed plans has grown out of poor construction. Where an architect used to have 20 pages of specs and 20 pages of drawings, he now must have 75-80 pages of specs and 50 pages of drawings.

Finger said many courses today are being built by developers. "It's hard to convince a developer to pay ten percent more to include a golf course builder in the construction," he said. "But the architect and the builder together with proper literature can convince a developer that this is a special type of construction. That's why we must work together."

He noted that even though the total number of golf courses is in-

creasing yearly, the average today is one course per 30,000 people. "At this rate, even with zero population growth, we are going to lose 100 golf courses in 30 years," he said.

A "Dear Abby" for builders chaired by Robert Chakales, Richmond, Va., followed the formal portion of the meeting. This presented an opportunity for delegates to ask questions of speakers.

New officers for the organization are: Henry L. Nielsen Jr., Nielsen Construction Co., Warwick, N.Y., president; Frank A. Underwood, Underwood Golf Course Construction Co., Bowie, Tex., president elect; James Kirchorfer, Kirchorfer Irrigation Co., Louisville, Ky, vice president; Lee A. Bilberry, golf course contractor in Houston, Tex., secretary; and James Shipe, Turf Industries, Bel Air, Md., treasurer.

Valley Tractor & Equipment Named Bolens Distributor

Valley Tractor & Equipment Corporation, 616 Jefferson Hwy., New Orleans, Louisiana has become a distributor for the complete line of lawn and garden equipment from Bolens, Division of FMC Corporation,

Port Washington, Wisconsin.

Valley will handle the Bolens tractor line and the urban/suburban line in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Southern Alabama.

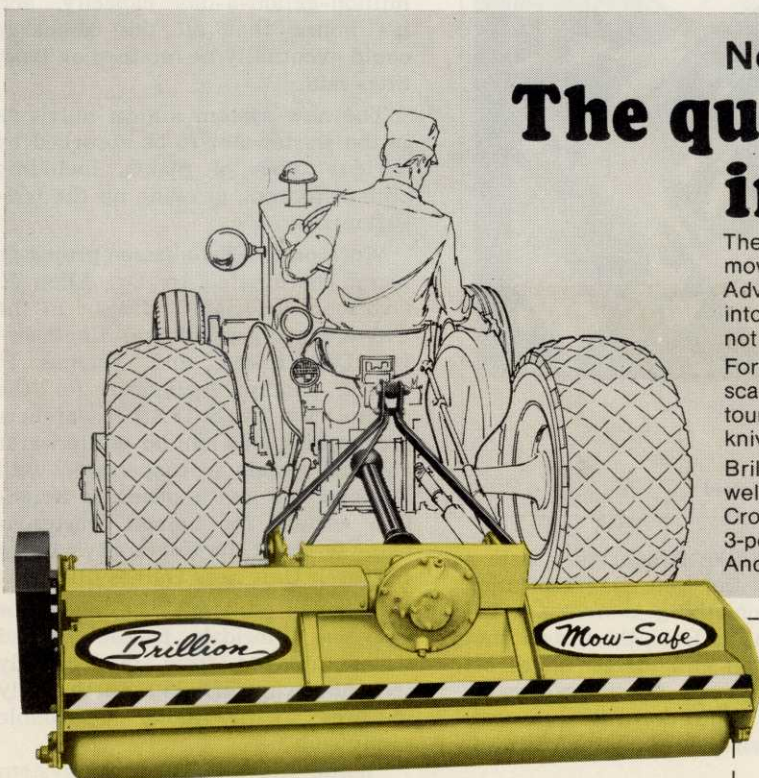
Howard Hampton is president, John Bierbaum is sales manager, Lester Felder is sales manager for outdoor power equipment, and William J. Napier is service manager of Valley, which has been in business in New Orleans since 1947.

In-Line Plastic Valve Component Announced By Toro

The Irrigation Division of The Toro Company, has introduced a new 1½-inch, in-line plastic valve component for its automatic underground sprinkler system line.

The hydraulic, normally-open, piston-type valve is made of high-impact, corrosion-resistant Cyclocal and features a coaxial design for high flow and low friction loss. Both inlet and outlet are regular pipe thread connections.

Toro normally-open valves operate (open) when water pressure to the valve is relieved, and close when a supply pressure is applied from the controller.



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