

## PROSCAPE

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**Q:** Are there any good textbooks or manuals that describe day-to-day golf course maintenance and management available on the market today? Most turf books do not deal exclusively with golf courses.

**A:** Not that I am aware of, but that does not mean that there are none, and more than likely some readers may send some suggestions. I will pass them on to you in this column if they do. However, there is a reason why there are few, if any, day-to-day turf manuals.

Recently, Dr. Marvin Ferguson, golf course architect, Bryan, Texas, reminded me of an old quotation that said, "Seek to know WHY. The what, where, when and how will reveal themselves." This is the approach that most turf books and schools take.

One important reason is that every golf green, fairway, and course in general is different in each part of the country. Any combination of factors encountered on a golf course could be greatly different from those on a course right next door. These factors include soil types, surface and sub-surface drainage, high sand greens or native soil greens, source of irrigation water, physical and chemical composition of the soil, turfgrass varieties used, amount of play, size of the budget, etc. As you can quickly see, the number of combinations of each of these critical management considerations is astronomical. It would take a large and brilliant book to answer all the questions for all the combinations.

This is why clubs hire a superintendent who has essentially devoted his or her life to seek the WHY and then is able to apply it practically to the what, where, when and how.

**Q:** Is the PURR-Wick system of greens construction well enough established to risk construction of ten new greens using this method only?

**A:** The idea of a golf green wicking water to the surface to supply the grass' needs is not new. In fact in 1916, F.W. Taylor was issued two patents on an almost identical system. The theory of the system is sound and Dr. Daniel's work has brought it to a level of sophistication that makes it much more practical than in the past.

However, the most important consideration in building a golf green is not the theory; but rather it is the experience, skill and integrity of your contractor, the estimated cost of construction, and your ability to adapt your maintenance procedures to the performance of PURR-Wick.

Your first step is to locate at least two courses with PURR-Wick greens and then take your greens chairman or committee members with you to look at them during the stress part of the summer (looking at them during good weather will not tell you much). Talk to the person charged with their care and find out what he thinks and how he manages them, and what they cost to build.

I have found men who say that the system is the greatest and I have found others who say that they must use three to four times more fertilizer, must still water the banks and fringes of the green, and the greens seem to lack built-in character in the putting surface. You are about to spend a great deal of money on something that is expected to last 50 years, so make sure it is exactly what you want.

