

Communicate with your course officials!

■ A superintendent's job is hard enough without having to worry about clashes with greens committees.

So Robert Stubbe, grounds committee chairman at Oak Hill Country Club in Fairport, N.Y., wants superintendents to do themselves a favor by telling greens committees as much as possible about the super's job, and how members can better cooperate.

"For 40 years, I played golf with no comprehension of the work required," says Stubbe, who's learned about the conflicts that can arise between superintendents and club officials.

It was shortly after he was named grounds chairman in 1991, says Stubbe, that he realized the superintendent must provide the golfer with a better understanding of what it takes to manage a golf course landscape.

"With the growth of golf, supers need to find ways to educate the new golfers

about how to treat the playing surface," he notes.

Spell out policy—Stubbe says the superintendent and his staff must establish a dialogue with the membership to explain the concepts and timetables involved with topdressing, aeration, and other turf management practices, and policies for special situations.

"If you have a 'frost delay' policy or policy about not running golf carts in wet weather, spell it out." Other tips:

- Invite the greens chairman to attend a Golf Course Superintendent's Association show, or state association show.

- Consider holding a "club official's forum" on a state or local basis.

- Invite your club officials or club president to visit a cooperative extension site or university research department.

- Invite one or more club officers to join monthly crew/committee meetings.

Environmental awareness—With

continued interest in reducing the amount or frequency of control products used to maintain golf courses, Stubbe suggests that players might have to settle for a playing surface that's firmer and more natural looking, and not as green as what they're used to.

More trees are becoming important in some parts of the course, and not so important in others, usually around greens that are less shade-tolerant. Explain the reasoning behind this and other turf care practices.

"We are part of a growing industry and game," says Stubbe, who believes that club officials must in turn make the superintendents aware of all they can about club management which may have a bearing on the super's job.

Stubbe spoke during the latest New York State State Turfgrass Association meeting in Rochester, N.Y.

—Terry McIver

Color, groundcovers work wonders in small spaces

■ Flower color, colorful buds, fragrance and attractive foliage are the key elements in making small landscaped areas look larger, according to Craig Stock of Stock Landscaping & Design, Westfield, N.J.

Stock, speaking at the New Jersey Turf Expo, said that flower color "is the most obvious thing people look at." He suggests you stagger the flowers so they bloom throughout the year.

"One of the great things about using perennials is that you can divide them and use them in different places and save yourself a lot of money," he says. And don't forget about bulbs.

"Bulbs can do a lot in the early spring. They don't cost much, are easy to do, and you get that good early spring jolt," Stock observes. "It's good to mix bulbs in with other plantings. If you have problems with animals, rats and deer, daffodils are better than tulips. I like to see bulbs in masses—not too sterile or too varied. Annuals and bulbs are good complements."

He says that buds are also attractive on a lot of plants, and any fragrances are a plus because "fragrance brings back good memories to people and most fragrant

plants are at least semi-resistant to deer."

Foliage is also important to consider. It's there, in full view, year-round, and "plants can look decent when they're not flowering."

- To give the illusion that small areas are larger, don't cut them up with landscaping.

- Flowering bedlines give an illusion of a larger area and direct your eyes to a focal point, (but) try to stay away from areas with sharp angles to minimize trimming.

- Plantings around decks and fences can soften them. Think about vines around fences, because you don't lose horizontal space.

- When planting, stagger plants to give more depth and natural feeling. Don't plant them in rows.

- Generally, groundcovers should be used more often, sometimes in place of mulch. "I recommend using groundcovers rather than mulch. Finer textured materials make small areas look larger."

- "I use ornamental grasses a lot for texture, vertical height and movement." They are very economical and many have good fall colors.

- Berries help attract wildlife and are good display.

- Plan for fall color.

- In shady areas, use light-colored plants because they show up better. Stick with needle- or deciduous-type plants in the sun because they hold up better. Consult a guide or text.



Stock: stagger plants to give more depth and natural feeling.

- Arbor vitae can be used to separate properties rather than a fence.

- If planting bulbs in annuals, plant in groups and masses.

- If you use smaller material, you can save money and it will fill in, as long as you don't overplant.

—Jerry Roche