

GOLF/GROUNDS

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Building a field for St. Louis Rams

In the early days of golf course design, the going rate for an 18-hole layout was \$25. The designers would plot out the course with stakes, leave instructions for the greenkeeper on how to build and care for the finished product, and move on.

That's just one of the many interesting bits of information I learned while researching my segment of the "LM 100" (see page 12).

Toward the end of all the phoning, I was writing notes on envelopes, desk calendars, whatever was handy. The phone would ring, and all other available scraps were filled with barely legible notes from conversations with superintendents and athletic field managers.

And I wasn't going to keep a Joe Hahn or a Mike Trigg waiting as I searched for a new notebook, especially not after protracted sessions of telephone tag.

This was the kind of project that helped me see how little time is available for anything

other than the job. The more messages I left, and the more phone calls that were returned—during brief stops at the maintenance shop, inside of hectic schedules, or with a tournament under way—underscored the large work-load and duties that rest on the shoulders of the modern day turf manager.

To help in my search for some of the most visible golf courses, I referred to *The Golf Course*, by Geoffrey S. Cornish and Ronald E. Whitten. It's a nifty reference book, and it helped me realize the rich history of golf course design (it's also where I got that \$25 figure), and the accomplishments by people such as Donald Ross and Willie Park, Jr. These men churned out hundreds of designs, at a time when equipment technology was still in the Model-T stage!

Fast forward to present day, and I see how the modern day superintendent must keep the turf healthy and green without compromising the original design.

Athletic field managers also nurture turf that is in constant use, for a variety of not-so-turf-friendly sports: football, soccer, moto-cross, tractor pulls and concerts.

Most with whom I spoke, from both industry segments, feel it's essential to be organized, with a positive attitude. You also have to get along with people.

A solid knowledge of turf science is helpful, too, and is what most interests people like Scott Niven at the Stanwich Club. Steve Glossinger of Oakland Hills would agree. He keeps his eye on the basics: greens, tees and fairways.

The work can be tough, the days long and the schedules hectic, but the rewards of lush, green turf, a job well done, and a dedicated crew are all worth the effort. **LM**

Telephone tag: expect it with supers and groundsmen



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