The Contract Applicator

IN COMMERCIAL TURF Carl Ripper turned to contract pesticide application to expand volume beyond his 56-acre cemetery operation. He had experienced men and equipment, and he was a turfgrass specialist. His commercial lawn service business now includes 4500 customers which keep his seven 2-man crews (all of whom are state-licensed custom applicators). He services private homes, apartment complexes, factories, hospitals, and motels, plus a mobile home park.

SEE PAGE 12

IN INDUSTRIAL WEED CONTROL Alvin Price runs an industrial weed control business. His accounts—mostly with the oil industry—stretch over a 7-state area of the mid-and southwest. Also serviced by Price are public utilities, parks, airfields, industrial yards, roadsides, and parking lots. He has sold the contract applicator concept by showing customers that he can safely do the job at about one-third what they have been spending with their in-company operations.

SEE PAGE 13

IN TREE CARE F. Lewis Dinsmore typifies the tree care company which has developed a large custom pesticide application business. Dinsmore says that his company plans general tree work around the more profitable phase of the business, which he says for his group, is spraying. When conditions are unfit for spraying, Dinsmore says, crews can pick up waiting tree work. He has been in the business some 40 years, the past 35 as manager of his own company.

SEE PAGE 14

THE CONTRACT APPLICATOR

IN COMMERICAL TURF

RIPPER: "Men stay busy on one project or another, all year; that way I can keep experienced men."

CARL RIPPER owns Resthaven Cemetery at Des Moines, Ia. A short time back he saw little chance for expansion beyond the 56 acres he had set aside for Resthaven. He needed other outlets to utilize his own and his employees' experience in commercial turfgrass management.

For years, visitors to the cemetery, and even neighbors in the vicinity, had queried Ripper as to how he kept the grounds so beautiful. Why didn't he have the same problems they did with dandelions, crab grass, and the myriad weeds and fungus diseases which plague lawns.

He concluded that there would be money in doing it for them on a contract basis. He started small, but with the operation growing faster than the dandelions and other weeds he controls, in 1971 Ripper served 4,500 customers. These include private lawns, apartment grounds, factory lawns, hospital grounds, and motel areas. He even maintained the plots for a mobile home park.

Ripper has developed a streamlined operation which gives prompt professional service at reasonable prices. He has seven 2-man crews. All employees are state-licensed custom applicators. Their rigs are self-sustaining. Each carries tanks, pumps and extension hoses so that truck travel across turf is at a minimum.

"The operators are on commission," says Ripper. "When they go out on assignment, it pays to pick up all the extra business they can." With their experience and equipment, they can do an average lawn — front and back — in about 15 minutes.

All rigs are in two-way radio contact with the office. Marian Boxwell — Miss Turfer — handles all calls from customers, and keeps in constant radio contact with the men on the rigs. If an order comes in from a neighborhood where a crew is working, she radios them and the job is handled immediately. "In the spring and fall, I get as many as 75 calls a day," she says.

In the beginning, the business grew by word of mouth, but now Ripper promotes it with direct mail. Ahead of the spring and fall spraying seasons, he sends out 6000 postcards to old customers and prospective new ones. Each is hand-addressed.

Dandelions, broadleaf weeds and crab grass are the biggest motivators for business. Ripper also offers a fertilization program. "Recently, we have been getting more and more calls about sod worm," he says. "It seems to be invading the midwest."

Ripper gives much credit for his results in the cemetery, and with his new customers, to Dacthal W-75, a wettable powder herbicide produced by Diamond Shamrock Chemical Company. He counts on it to control most annual grasses and certain broadleaf weeds.

His lawn applications are carefully calibrated. He applies Dacthal W-75 at a rate of 16 pounds per acre, mixed in 60 to 70 gallons of water. He also uses Diamond Shamrock's dacamine, a water-emulsifiable and oil-soluble 2,4-D formulation.

Much of Ripper's present spraying is done in the spring. "People are lawn-conscious then," he says. But he is getting more and more fall orders. "I think fall spraying does a better job on dandelions and other broadleaf weeds," he points out. "You have a longer spraying season, up to 10 weeks. There is less wind in the fall, too. And I think the turf is less tender than in the spring. The perennial and biennial weeds are more susceptible. If there is moisture in the ground, or if you get one good rain, you are in business."

Ripper's diversification philosophy extends into still other fields. On the acres set aside for the cemetery but still unused, he has a thriving Christmas tree farm. He is also part-owner of a large tract in Des Moines which is gradually being developed as an industrial park.

Meanwhile, Ripper runs the land as a sod farm. He uses it in the cemetery, supplies it to his lawn customers, and sells it commercially.

He sees an extra benefit in his variety of projects. "I have gone a long way toward solving my labor problem," he points out. "There are no unreliable part-time people around here. My men can stay busy, on one project or another, all year. That way, I can keep experienced men on my permanent payroll. They don't care whether they are working on lawns, the cemetery, the Christmas trees, or the sod farm. They like the work, and they know what they are doing."

Resthaven Cemetery, where his business started, is one of the most beautiful in the Midwest. There are no tombstones at grave sites. Each is marked by a bronze plaque, imbedded at ground level. Ripper has two reasons for using plaques—one esthetic, the other practical. He feels that the absence of tombstones makes it possible to landscape for greater beauty.

On the practical side, the plaques make maintenance easier, require less labor. However, they create an-

(Continued on page 34)

THE CONTRACT APPLICATOR

IN INDUSTRIAL WEED CONTROL

PRICE: "We run a business type operation . . . we train our men."

A PROFESSIONAL contract applicator whose business is industrial weed control uses some solid management policies in upgrading this end of the industry.

He is Alvin Price, president of Kem-Weed Control, Inc., headquartered at Enid, Okla.

Says Price, "Our job is to satisfy our customers that we operate with the best interest of both customer and society. We sell safe pesticide use. We train our own people to understand and safely use pesticides. We run a business type operation.

"Doing this, we have been able to develop a competent company which has steadily grown." Kem-Weed Control began as a single office in Wichita, Kansas, in 1960; today claims a trade territory covering all of Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, parts of Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, and Missouri.

"Unfortunately, this is an industry that has never had a training program," Price says. "There are no technical schools for application of chemicals, so it is a pretty costly experience when hiring a man."

To help his men learn, Price compiles his own training materials. Some are adapted from personal field experience. Other information is obtained from university seminars, Agriculture Department releases, and weed control conferences.

New Kem-Weed employees receive on-the-job training from an experienced applicator. After an extended period, the trainee is given a written test to determine if he has learned enough about chemicals, application techniques, and safety procedures to work alone.

Safety meetings, every six weeks, keep all employees updated on new developments within the industry and on ecological trends.

Ecological awareness within the herbicide industry as a whole is not new, Price says. "Everybody in our business is acutely aware the chemicals used should not be toxic, and if there is any one statement that makes a competent weed control man want to take up arms it is to hear someone say, 'Well, there goes another load of weed poison.' This simply is not true. Most of the chemicals we use today are safe as the salt on the family table, and much safer than aspirin."

Kem-Weed's basic herbicide is Bromosil Hyvar X, which can be formulated as a wettable powder, liquid, or pellets. Nonselective, Bromosil is compatible with most crop protection chemicals, yet remains inflammable and noncorrosive. Sprayed in controlled zones, it attacks weed roots, then dissipates.

"It does not kill the soil," Price says. "After two years, in almost every case, you have a return of vegetation — never know it's been sprayed."

Approximately 90 percent of Kem-Weed's business is related to the oil industry. They also service public utilities, parks, airfields, industrial yards, roads, and parking lots.

"Parking lots are one of the newest things," Price says. "We put the chemical down before the contractor lays his asphalt. The seeds underneath don't sprout and push up the asphalt."

When talking to prospective customers, Price promotes the industry by presenting a twenty-minute slide program. Entitled, "Safety Thru Chemical Weed Control," it points out the hazards of fire, snakes, poison, weeds, holes, and insects for employees and equipment. The value of public relations is an added selling factor for keeping well-kept grounds.

Before the advent of chemicals, weed control was accomplished with elbow grease, Price relates. Roustabout crews spent their summers going from one location to another, chopping weeds in a never-ending and costly job. Chemical control, today, he says, is the least expensive way to adequately control vegetation.

Supporting this, DuPont supplies figures showing mowing costs for a typical refinery average $889 an acre annually. An industrial application of herbicides costs the same plant, on a five-year-contract, a yearly average of $261 an acre.

Kem-Weed's pricing is figured by the square foot and unit. The fee for most tank batteries, wells, and cattle guards costs between fifty to seventy-five dollars the first year. Subsequent years run between thirty-five to fifty dollars.

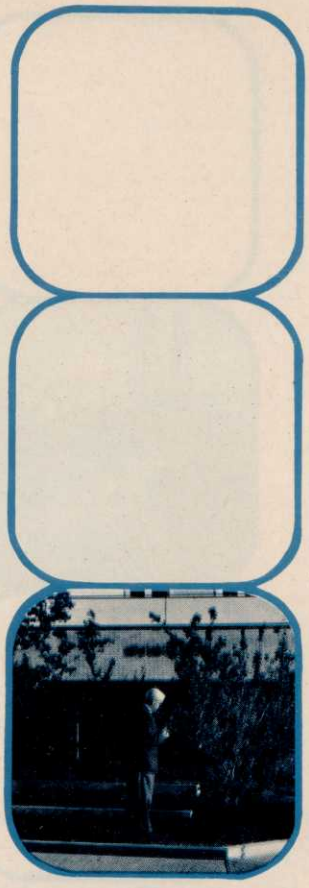
The primary problem in the weed control industry today, as Price sees it, is the instability of prices for services. "A good many people try to get into the business, thinking the entrance is thru cheaper services," he says. "But this usually brings about customer dissatisfaction because of inadequate equipment and improperly trained personnel. It results in the failure of the new company, and loss of business for established ones."

To have a profitable operation, Price considers it necessary to cover a large territory to sustain volume. Kem-Weed Control now maintains company headquarters at Enid, with an office at Wichita, and another at Meade, Kansas.

(Continued on page 37)

IN TREE CARE

DINSMORE: "We plan our tree work around spraying, and keep our experienced men employed."



MOST TREE CARE COMPANIES today depend on their contract application service to keep business on the upswing. Dinsmore Tree Service Company, St. Louis, Mo., offers a good example.

As company president, F. Lewis Dinsmore, states, "Profits in the business today depend on spraying and tree moving. This makes for careful scheduling and timely service.

"We try and plan our general tree work around the more profitable phase of the business, which for us is spraying, and keep our experienced men employed.

"When conditions are unfit for spraying — such as mildly windy days, men can be used to pick up waiting tree work."

Dinsmore has spent 40 years in the business, first as an employee, then a self-employed lone operator, and for the past 35 years as manager and owner of a going concern. With him in business today are his brother, W. T. (Red), and his son, Lew. Normally, they carry about 20 employees.

Management in this firm almost might be called a formula for operation. Regular rules are in effect for keeping down shop time hours. They have come as a result of experience and service to long-time customers. Rule No. 1 consists of zoning the St. Louis area. In short, Dinsmore has laid out his own system of zoning to fit the areas he serves. He covers the greater metropolitan St. Louis area but still finds his business concentrated more in some areas than in others. In determining size and scope of zones, the number of customers and the type of business is taken into consideration. Each foreman is assigned a zone for which he becomes responsible. This works especially well for the usual types of spraying, but tree work is also handled in this manner. By having a zone to work, foremen save travel and route time by careful scheduling. They do very little backtracking. "Jobs are not handled as they come in but by where they are located, that is," Dinsmore says, "if people will stand for it." Spray work, for example, is scheduled in advance to take advantage of the zone system. Customers are assured that their work will be done "at the proper time."

Annual service contracts are perhaps as important as any one factor in reducing unproductive hours. These, coupled with new jobs permit foremen more leeway in scheduling. Summer spraying and dormant oil spraying during late winter or early spring can be scheduled well in advance and an efficient route schedule planned.

Many longtime customers are not on annual service contracts but expect Dinsmore Tree Service to provide them regular service. Dinsmore reaches these people, and others as well, by mail. He uses direct mail service to about 3000 selected customers each month. These mail pieces are reminders to call in for service, aimed at keeping last minute scheduling to a minimum. Just because Dinsmore provides a service to a customer in his prime target area does not qualify that customer for direct mail service. This service is limited to longtime private and commercial customers rather than to the customers who only use a professional arborist for emergency and special jobs. Copy in the direct mail piece usually concerns spraying, tree moving, and general tree care. He also reminds customers that trees are available.

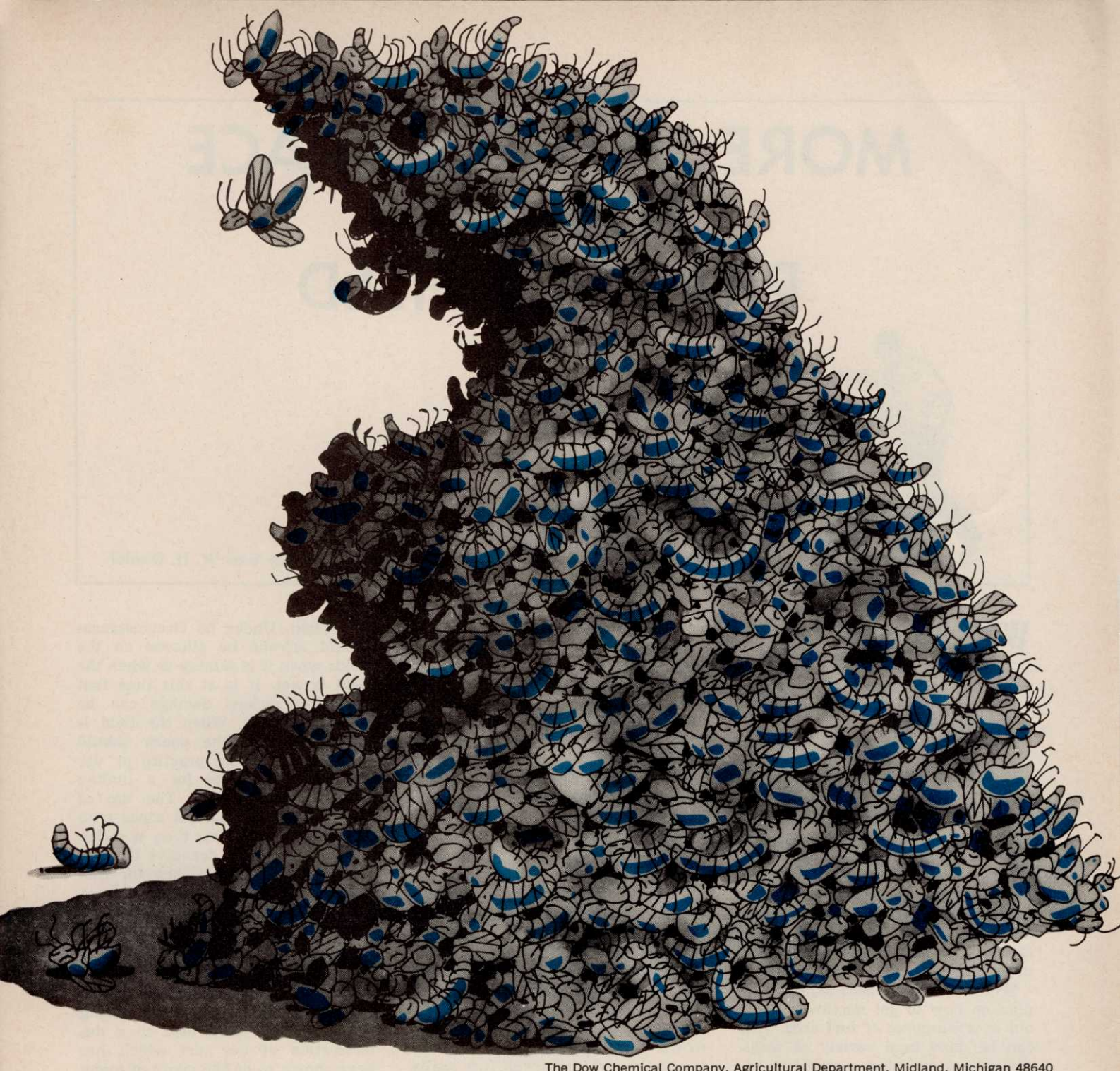
Direct mail is the only type of advertising which Dinsmore uses on a regular basis. Like other businessmen he supports community ventures such as school yearbooks and the like. But general advertising as such has never been a practice of the company. He has found that regular customers and referrals have combined to keep his crews busy through the years. Much of this must be attributed to providing good service at a fair price.

Free coffee also cuts unproductive hours. Dinsmore keeps a big coffee urn full of fresh brew for his crews; has it ready along with donuts or cookies a half hour before they leave on jobs. This, he says, eliminates the lost time crews use by stopping for coffee enroute to the job. Further, it boosts employee morale and saves the worker spending out-of-pocket change on the job. The employee thinks the free coffee and donuts are a good deal, and a favor from the company. Dinsmore believes this practice does more than save time. Along with the banter, normal in a coffee session, he finds that the men exchange job experience and gain from the morning sessions.

Another shop time saver is housing one foreman in a home at the nursery. The foreman does the tree digging with power equipment and is always on hand to help the driver load a tree. This saves sending an extra man along to pick up the tree. Also, if the wind is too high for spraying, the foreman stays on the job at the nursery. Both he and his brother maintain tree nurseries.

Dinsmore follows the practice of keeping well-trained men as the

(Continued on page 34)



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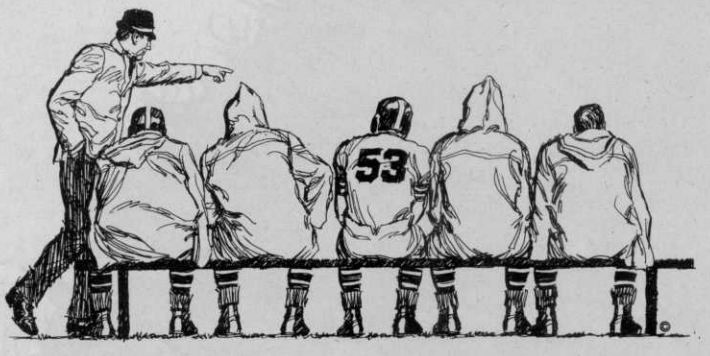


By Melvin J. Robey and W. H. Daniel

WITH todays need for more space for buildings and recreation, it's time for the athletic organizations to take a hard look at the infringement upon their football practice field areas.

More and more, school and industrial administrators are deciding to use one or more of the practice fields for additional classroom buildings or parking lots. With this happening, it often forces a coach to use the regular playing field for a practice area or if he is fortunate, he will have at least one practice field. But he usually has to share it with the band, pep clubs, gym classes and other organizations that need outdoor recreational areas.

What the coach needs is a definite plan on how to get maximum wear out of a minimum of turf area. This can be done in a variety of ways. One way is building portable or removable goal posts which allows the end zone, and areas in back of them, to be used for practice. Purdue University has done this on two practice fields. On both fields an additional 25 yards was picked up beyond the goal posts at each end. This changed the length of each practice field from 100 yards to 150 yards. The additional practice area allows the coaches to spread out more during practice and thus spread the wear and tear which means that the grass will last longer and give a more uniform playing surface.

Robey is superintendent of athletic facilities and Daniel is turf specialist, both at Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind.

Another method of increasing the practice area is to extend the yard lines as far as possible beyond the normal width (160 ft.) of a football field. This can be done easily if there is unused grass on the sides of the practice fields; this not only gives a team additional practice area but helps to keep the team out of the center of the field where wear is heaviest.

The extra practice area is of no value to the team if the head coach does not get the assistant coaches and team to use these areas. The center of any practice field should be used only when absolutely necessary, this being when the team practices kick-off returns, punt returns, full scrimmages, and passing drills. The individual drills should be done along the side lines and at the ends of the practice fields. Save the center of the field for when it is really needed. When possible, run the plays from the side line towards the center.

It is also important to keep the players moving around in designated areas so as not to wear the grass out in one spot in one day. Run four or five plays, or a single drill, then move the ball or players to another spot. The key to maintaining grass on the field throughout the season is not to practice too long in any one spot and to stay out of the center of the field as much as possible.

The use of the stadium field or practice field for band practice or any other event should be strictly controlled. Under no circumstances should anyone be allowed on the fields when it is raining or when the field is wet. It is at this time that the most serious damage can be done to a field. When the field is extremely wet, the coach should consider cancelling practice or use the side line areas for a limited practice session only. The use of tennis shoes, or football shoes with very short cleats (less than ½ inch), would also help to conserve the turf on wet days, or any time for that matter.

The best policy to follow in order to maintain good grass, and for player safety, is never allow anyone or any organization on the fields except at half-time during a game. The heavy use of the fields during the week will only lead to a deterioration of the turf which has been shown to be the cause of many player injuries. If the fields are practiced on heavily down the center and allowed to become worn out the chances of an increase in player injuries is enhanced. With the proper maintenance and player use of the field there is less chance for serious injuries to occur.

Todays coaches and turf managers need to be alert to the problems of maintaining fields which already are too small for their needs. To do so means to use every available square foot of area and to do it wisely. To maintain the grass throughout the season requires a conscientious effort on behalf of all the people involved.

Pollution control:

A corporate responsibilty

Pollution and pollution abatement have become important aspects of every business. They affect budgets, profit and loss, position in the community, corporate image, even the price of stock in some cases.

Pollution is a now problem that is receiving now attention from astute businessmen. Water treatment plants, fume scrubbers and filtration systems, land reclamation, plant beautification, litter prevention, employee education programs, are all types of things industry is doing to help in the pollution fight.

But regardless what a businessman is doing today he must be considering pollution control efforts for tomorrow.

One thing he can do is write for a free booklet entitled "71 Things You Can Do To Stop Pollution." It doesn't have all the answers on pollution. But it might give a businessman a few ideas for both today and tomorrow.

People start pollution. People can stop it.

—FOR GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS—

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

By PALMER MAPLES, JR.

MANY PROFESSIONS have a certification program to measure the performance of their "practitioners" and the general success of their activities.

Whether it is a certification program for physicians and lawyers or for other professions and service groups, the person being awarded this "seal of approval" received it from his peers—those who are in the same field and who, from their own experiences know the problems and standards of performance associated with that particular profession.

And so it is with the newly-announced certification program of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America which was introduced in June.

A "blue-ribbon" nine-man committee, made up of golf course superintendents, has formulated the program, in which those superintendents vying for the title of "Certified Golf Course Superintendent" will be judged by their colleagues. The committee has worked with Dr. Paul M. Alexander, Director of Education of GCSAA, in planning and implementing this program.

Palmer Maples, Jr., is superintendent at The Standard Club, Atlanta, Ga. He has been a member of the Carolinas GCSA for 11 years, serving as president for three years. A member of the GCSA for 10 years, he has served on the editorial, association planning, and certification committees.

Palmer Maples, Jr.

What does the GCSAA certification program entail?

The focus of the program is a written examination, divided into six parts, with each part dealing with the major areas of the experienced superintendent's job.

The six areas are:

1. Knowledge of the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America, including the history, purpose and ethics of the Association, and the profession of golf course superintendency;

2. Knowledge of the game of golf, including the official rules of the game;

3. Turf - management procedures (consideration of practical problems in the major areas of irrigation, fertilization, equipment calibration, soil facts, cost analysis, drainage systems, etc.);

4. Pesticides — comprehensive questions on the selection, usage, safety precautions, and limitations of contemporary plant protectant chemicals are included. This will indicate to local, state or federal pest control licensing agencies that the superintendent who passes this examination is fully proficient and capable of handling and supervising the use of such materials;

5. Business Administration—techniques of record-keeping and application of such information, budget preparation and presentation, etc.;

6. Management: people relationships, recruiting, training, and supervising crews; public relations (officials, members, club department heads, community, etc.).

Members of the GCSAA who have held the Class A classification for three years, and who have been employed as golf course superintendents for that period of time, are eligible to take this examination. In addition, those members who have been employed as golf course superintendents for 20 years or more while enjoying Class A status will be certified without examination if they apply before September 1, 1973.

Applications and examination papers are coded to maintain confidentiality, and these are obtained through the GCSAA headquarters (in the first month following announcement of the Certification Program, GCSAA received more than 450 requests for applications!). The superintendent may take as much time as he desires to prepare for the examination. When he is ready, a date mutually agreeable to him and to an official monitor in his area is arranged. The examination material, identified only with the code number, is then sent to the monitor in a sealed packet and opened only in the presence of the applicant. When the examination is completed, the material is resealed in the presence of the applicant and mailed back to GCSAA headquarters.

A maximum of six hours, all in the same day, is allowed for the superintendent to complete all parts of the examination. Each of the six parts is graded separately, and a passing grade in every part is required for certification. If the superintendent fails any one or more parts of the examination, he will need to be reexamined only in those parts which were failed. The applicant can repeat the failed portions

as many times as he desires, but if the failed parts are not successfully completed within one year of the original examination date, he must repeat the entire examination.

One time is not enough for certification.

The certification program must keep pace with progress in agronomy, equipment and technology — and so must the golf course superintendent. Therefore, the certified golf course superintendent will be required to take another examination within five years of being certified. He must also maintain his membership in GCSAA and remain actively employed as a golf course superintendent. Other requirements for reexamination are completion of one regional GCSAA workshop or successful completion of a GCSAA-approved correspondence course of study.

Other aspects of the certification program deal with those superintendents who leave the profession for several years and their mandatory reexamination if they return to golf course superintendency.

The GCSAA certification program climaxes 30 years of discussion and planning, and the benefits of certification will undoubtedly show that this careful planning has been well worth the time and effort involved.

Certification should also attract many young people into the profession of golf course superintendency, now that they know that there is some way of measuring their achievements in the profession.

Hopefully, certification will also lead to standardization of curricula in the schools offering turf management programs.

With certification, the role of the superintendent will not only receive greater emphasis through all who are associated with him on the golf course, but it will enhance his stature in the community as well. Because of today's great stress on ecology, the expertise that the golf course superintendent has attained in turf management and plant protectant chemicals should make him a recognized authority on these environmental factors within the community.

To summarize then, the GCSAA Certification program is not only beneficial to the superintendent. This program has inherent and potential benefits to club owners, club officials and members, golfers, other agencies concerned with golfing, and the public at large through the certified superintendent's involvement with the community.

Bonsai Teaching Film For Purchase Or Lease

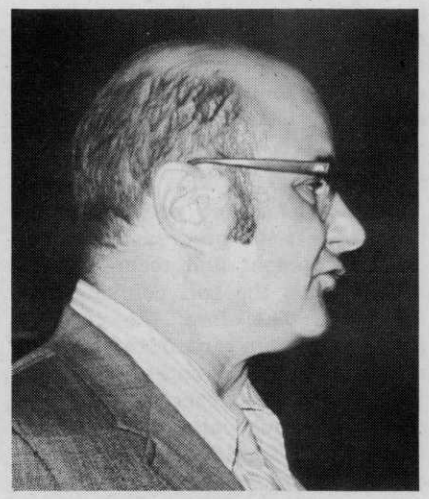
A new how-to-do-it film on growing Bonsai has been developed by The Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn, N.Y.

The 22-minute showing is in full color and 16mm in size. It presents the essential techniques of creating an instant Bonsai from nursery or other stock and includes repotting, trimming, pinching, etc.

It was presented at the recent International Shade Tree Conference at Montreal by Robert Tomson, assistant director at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. He reported to the group that the film has been made available at a rental cost of $15 for one showing, plus return postage and insurance. Purchase price of a print is $250, Tomson said.

In either case, the film is available directly from the Botanic Garden at 1000 Washington Ave. Zip code is 11225, and inquiries should be directed to Mrs. Norman Free, Tomson reported.

Formal procession opened the 47th International Shade Tree Conference.



Outgoing V-P John Weidhaas

International Shade Tree Conference Report
The 47th at Montreal

The 47th International Shade Tree Conference opened at Montreal with the pomp and pageantry which Canadians do well and which statesiders have come to expect. Bagpipers formally piped ISTC President J. A. Kimmel and his entourage to the rostrum where colors were presented by a military squad. Both "O Canada" and "The Star Spangled Banner" preceded Kimmel's formal opening.

Commercial exhibits were down compared to prior years, but this was expected. Fewer companies transported equipment to Canada for the international show. Educational sessions operated in full swing and paid registrations numbering 878 were a new ISTC record. A total of 128 paid registrations were recorded on the final morning of the Aug. 8-12 event.

Next year, for the '72 session, the group will go to Newport Beach, Calif. William T. Bell, Newport Beach city superintendent of street trees, will serve as chairman of the local committee. Conference dates are Aug. 6-13, 1972. Bell said headquarters for the '72 event will be the New Porter Inn at Newport Beach. He said its location is about 15 miles south of Long Beach, Calif., and some 45 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. The Inn is on the beach itself just off Pacific Coast Highway, Route 1, Bell said.

Arrangements this year were handled by Yves Desmarais, director of the Montreal Botanical Gardens and a staff of capable Canadian members of the arborist industry.

Four merit awards were made as follows: John P. Hansel, Waldick, N. J., and executive secretary of the Elm Research Institute; Clarence E. Lewis, professor of horticulture, Michigan State University, East Lansing; J. Irwin Miller, Columbus, Ind., and chairman of the board of the Cummins Engine Foundation; and Noel B. Wysong, Golconda, Ill., former editor of the Arborist News and active in both the industry and Conference activities.

Authors citations went to J. Cedric Carter, plant pathologist, Illinois Natural History Survey, Urbana, and to Theodore T. Kozlowski, plant physiologist at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

An honorary member award was presented Roy M. Nordine, Lake City, Minn. At the time of his retirement this past year, he was

Outgoing ISTC President J. A. Kimmel, director of parks, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, passes gavel to President-elect H. M. Van Wormer, Van Wormer Tree Service, Richmond, Va.

ISTC Conference team, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. (Cal) Bundy, Urbana, Ill. Cal, executive-secretary, is assisted by his wife, Nadine, as ISTC secretary.