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Dow's partnership with lawn care professionals and golf course managers goes far beyond supplying advanced products. We also conduct many types of market and product research, and share the results for your benefit. We produce helpful training materials for applicators, operators and others. In cooperation with the PLCAA, we have prepared materials to answer frequently asked consumer questions concerning the effect of chemicals on the environment.

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WEEDS TREES & TURF

The Magazine of Landscape and Golf Course Management Since 1962



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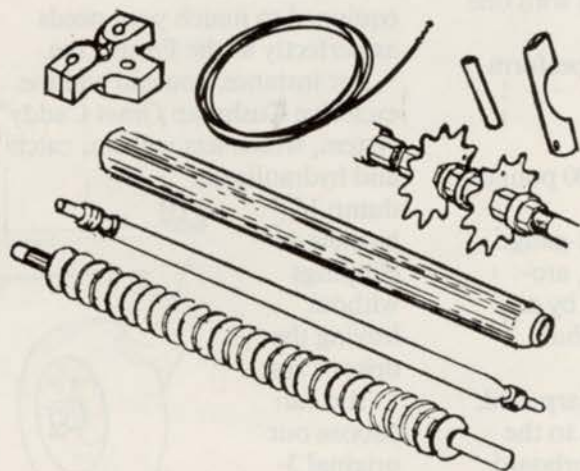
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Circle No. 125 on Reader Inquiry Card

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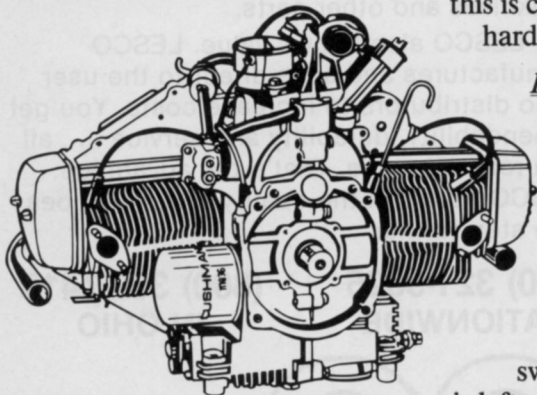
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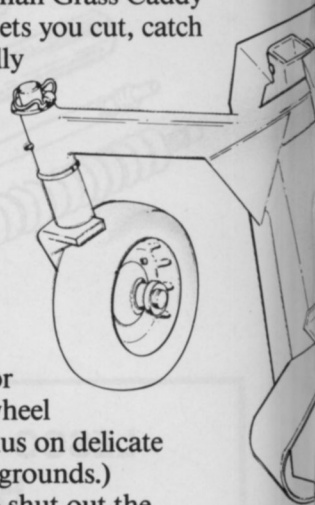
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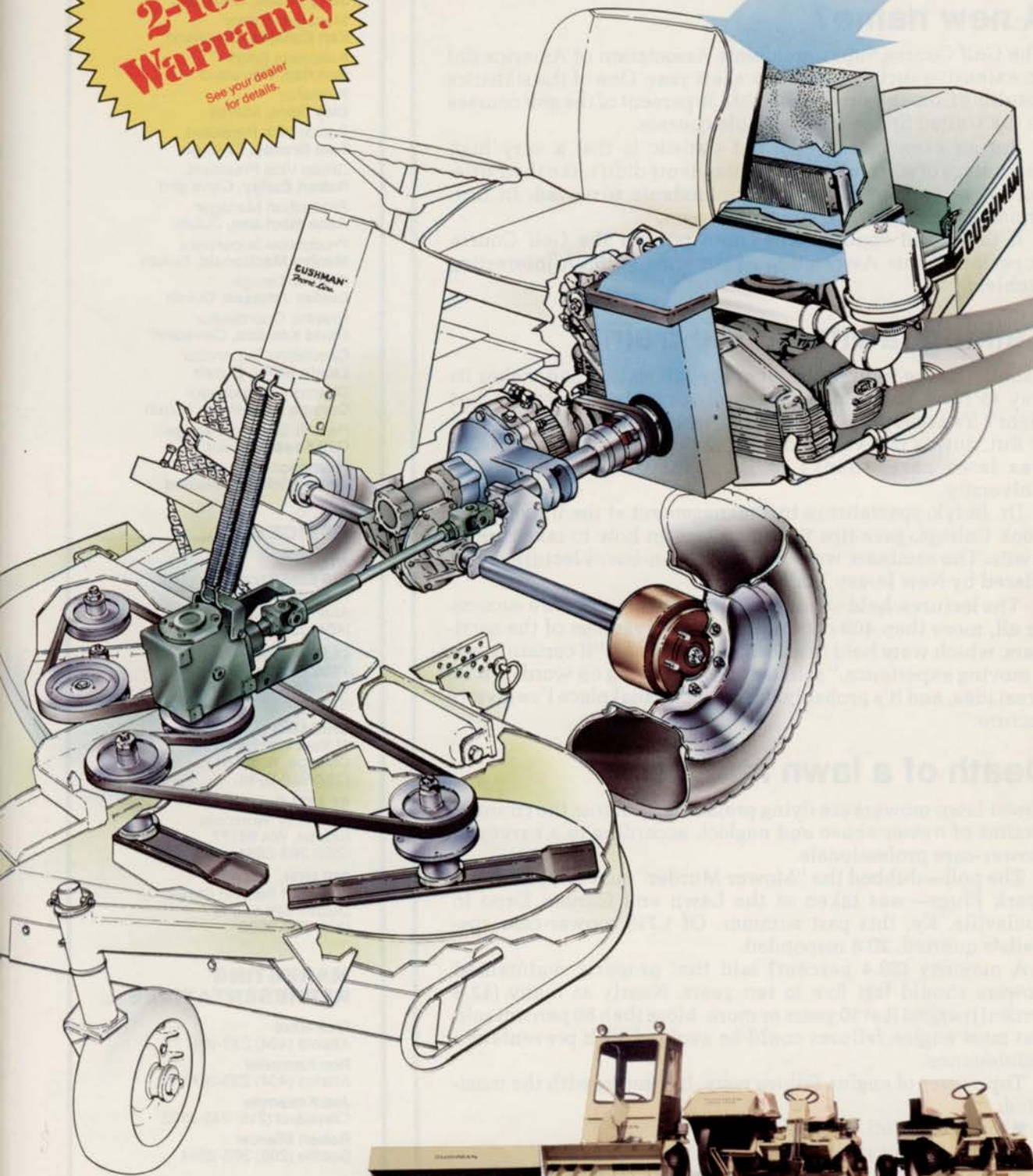
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by the editorial staff, Weeds Trees & Turf

A new name?

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America did an extensive survey of members last year. One of the statistics resulting from the survey was that 36 percent of the golf courses in the United States are nine-hole courses.

But an even more important statistic is that a very high percentage of golf course superintendents didn't like their title. Forty-five percent of the superintendents surveyed, in fact, preferred the title "golf course manager."

If this trend continues, it could present the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America with an interesting problem.

Talking lawns on the train

Usually, as the train pulls out of the rail station and makes its way to New York City, the morning chatter centers on last night's Yankees game or the latest news from Wall Street.

But, during last May and June, the main topic of discussion was lawn care, thanks to Dr. Henry Indyk of Rutgers University.

Dr. Indyk, specialist in turf management at the university's Cook College, gave tips to commuters on how to take care of lawns. The seminars were a part of an on-board lecture series offered by New Jersey Transit.

The lectures, held on four different rail lines, were a success. In all, more than 400 commuters took advantage of the seminars, which were held in a designated rail car. "It certainly was a moving experience," said Dr. Indyk, playing on words. "It's a great idea, and it's probably the most unusual place I've given a lecture."

Death of a lawn mower

Power lawn mowers are dying prematurely across the country, victims of owner abuse and neglect, according to a survey of mower-care professionals.

The poll—dubbed the "Mower Murder" survey by Autolite Spark Plugs—was taken at the Lawn and Garden Expo in Louisville, Ky. this past summer. Of 1,715 mower-care specialists queried, 20.8 responded.

A majority (50.4 percent) said that properly maintained mowers should last five to ten years. Nearly as many (42.9 percent) pegged it at 10 years or more. More than 80 percent said that most engine failures could be avoided with preventative maintenance.

Top causes of engine failure were, beginning with the most-cited:

- insufficient oil (89.4 percent)
- poor air filter maintenance (60.2 percent)
- striking rocks or objects with mowers (51.8 percent)
- old oil in the crankcase (47.1 percent) and
- overheating due to clogged cooling fins (37.5 percent).

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Circle No. 124 on Reader Inquiry Card

GOLF

Firestone gets cosmetic surgery

Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio, looked a bit tattered in September: all that lied at the end of each fairway on the South Course were craters and mounds of dirt.

No worry, says club superintendent Brian Mabie, who oversaw the replacement of all 18 greens after a two-year fight against bacterial wilt.

"You've got to make a mess to make progress. We had a lot of work to do," he tells WEEDS TREES & TURF. But by the spring, "all we should have to do is put on finishing touches."

Work began immediately after the annual World Series of Golf held Aug. 21-25, says Mabie.

And it was more than just replacing greens. At the same time, Firestone employees and independent contractors installed a drainage system beneath all greens where previously there was none.

Spectator mounds were constructed and small, subtle changes made.

It was all part of bringing the course up to USGA specs, he says.

Some of those changes: slope alterations on 10 greens with a severe contour change on No. 17; widening both the pond and fairway on No. 16 (the Monster); shortening No. 5 to 200 yards (from 234); reducing the green at 18 to almost half of what it was; and a general rebunkering.

"We're not trying to redesign things here. We're doing what everyone has suggested doing for years. We're working with a design that was developed in the 1920s," says Mabie.

Tom Pearson, respected architect for Golfforce Inc., suggested the changes after perusing the Firestone layout. Golfforce Inc. is owned by Jack Nicklaus.

"It was a tough thing that Tom did," says Mabie. "We've tried to improve the course without losing the characteristics that make it Firestone."

Mabie called in Tifton, Ga., resident Ernest Jones to shape the greens to specs suggested by Golfforce.



Brian Mabie, Firestone CC golf superintendent.

Those greens were seeded with Penncross bentgrass, says Mabie. No more local bentgrasses for Firestone.

The old Nimisila bentgrass developed bacterial wilt in the spring of 1984 and was effectively controlled with a bactericide over two golf seasons.

"It's funny," says Mabie. "They say the disease is stress-related but I didn't have it in my stress areas."

He continues: "We're one of the few course in northeast Ohio to have the disease, but it's really not that big of deal. I was amazed at the misinformation that came out about our greens."

Mabie says not one media type contacted him during tournament week to get facts on the problem.

Firestone, owned and operated by Club Corporation of America (CCA), will be new and improved by next spring, says Mabie, for both the golfer and spectator.

—Ken Kuhajda

GOLF

Survey lists turf maintenance problems

Annual bluegrass, dandelions and crabgrass are the most prominent problem weeds in the green industry, according to a survey recently released by the Mobay Chemical Co., Kansas City, Mo.

Forty-nine-and-a-half percent of all golf course superintendents who responded to the survey indicated that crabgrass was a major summer weed problem. Fifty percent said that dandelions were a major spring weed problem. *Poa annua* was most-cited as a major problem in the fall and winter.

Leading disease problems, by season, were helminthosporium leaf spot (spring), brown patch (summer), dollar spot (fall) and fusarium patch (winter). Each of those diseases was named as a problem by more than 50



percent of the survey respondents. effective product on the market" by 6.1 and 5.8 percent of golf course superintendents polled.

Cutworms were cited as a major summer insect problem by the most superintendents. Grubworms were ranked first in the spring and fall, and mole crickets were tops (on only 3.4 percent of responses) in the winter.

Most-named "difficult-to-control insect problem because there's not an effective product on the market" was the mole cricket, cited on 4.5 percent of the returned questionnaires.

Approximately 300 responses

were received from golf course superintendents. Questionnaires were also received from three other turf care segments: chemical lawn care, landscape contractors and grounds superintendents. Results of those segments closely approximated those from the golf course market.

Specific to the golf course market, however, was one question: "What trends most affect golf course management?"

Most frequent responses, in order of frequency, were:

- "increased maintenance costs/budget cuts"
- "increased play that is hard on the course"
- "restrictions on pesticide applications"
- "increasing green speeds that require more maintenance" and
- "lower fairway mowing heights."