

PROGRAM

38TH NORTHWEST TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 17-20, 1984

Sheraton Hotel
Spokane, WA

Monday, September 17, 1984

- 9:00 a.m. Men's Golf Tournament, Manito Golf & Country Club, Spokane
3:00-6:00 Registration

Tuesday, September 18, 1984

- FIRST SESSION CHAIRMAN—Ray McElhoe
7:30-8:00 Registration
8:00-8:15 Welcome
8:15-8:50 "Politics of Pesticides", Dave Dietz, State Director, Oregonians for Food and Shelter, Salem, OR.
8:50-9:25 "Physiology Of Mowing On Turfgrass Performance", Tom Cook, OSU, Corvallis
9:25-9:40 "Chemical Control Of Moss In Turf", Russ Vandehey, OSU Turf Student, Corvallis, OR
9:40-10:10 "N Source, Rate and Timing On Blue/Rye Performance", Dr. W.J. Johnston, WSU, Pullman
10:10-10:30 Break

SECOND SESSION CHAIRMAN—Gary Sayre

- 10:30-11:15 "Pressure Washers and Cleaning Agents", James Blanscett, Landa, Inc., Portland, OR
11:15-11:45 "Turfgrass Response To New Slow Release N", Dr. S.E. Brauen, WSU, WWREC, Puyallup, WA
11:45-12:15 "Soil Drainage Systems That Function", Carl H. Kuhn, P.E., C.H. Kuhn & Associates, Mercer Island, WA
12:15-12:55 "Winter Protection of Turfgrasses", Dr. John Roberts, Extension Turfgrass Specialist, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH
1:00 Adjourn
7:00 Commercial exhibitors evening

Wednesday, September 19, 1984

- SPLIT SESSION A—Golf Course Superintendents
FIRST SESSION CHAIRMAN—Mike Nauroth
8:00-8:40 "Golf Carts and Cart Paths", Larry Gilhuly, Western Director, USGA Green Section, Tustin, CA
8:40-9:00 "Shattercore vs. Hollowtine Aerification", Dr. Roy L. Goss, WSU, WWREC, Puyallup, WA
9:00-9:30 "Some New Approaches To Annual Bluegrass Control", Dr. S.E. Brauen, WWREC, WSU, Puyallup
9:30-10:05 "Influence of Amendments In Sand On Bentgrass Establishment", Dr. Jeff Nus, Research Associate, WWREC, WSU, Puyallup
10:05-10:25 Break
SECOND SESSION CHAIRMAN—Mark Snyder
10:25-11:20 "Tee and Bunker Design and Construction", Ronald Fream, Ronald Fream Design Group, Ltd., Golf Course Architecture, Santa Rosa, CA
11:20-12:00 "Fairway Mowing With Triplex Mowers—Present and Future", Roger Thomas, Jacobsen Textron, Racine, WI
12:00-12:15 "Effects of Endothal, Ethofumesate, and Fenarimol (Rubigan) on Annual Bluegrass Seedlings", Jeff Gullikson, Turfgrass Management Student, WSU, Pullman, WA
12:15-12:30 Merging of Split Session Groups
12:30-1:00 Northwest Turfgrass Association Membership Meeting. ALL MEMBERS SHOULD DEFINITELY ATTEND.

SPLIT SESSION B—Schools, Parks, Grounds Managers

- FIRST SESSION CHAIRMAN—Dennis Pagni
8:00-8:50 "Involvements of a City Parks Foreman", Bob Teufel, Park Foreman, City of LaGrande, LaGrande, OR

(Wednesday Program continued)

- 8:50-9:25 "Understanding and Using Nitrogen",
Dr. Roy Goss, WWREC, WSU, Puyallup,
WA
9:25-10:05 "Choice of Reel or Rotary Mowers For
Large Turfgrass Areas", Roger Thomas,
Jacobsen Textron, Racine, WI
10:05-10:25 Break

SECOND SESSION CHAIRMAN—Jim Connolly

- 10:25-11:00 "Sand Topdressing Soccer Fields",
Lowell Snyder, Whitman College, Walla
Walla, WA
11:00-11:35 "Slit Injection of Sand For Improved
Surfaces", Keith Hopkins, Hobbs and
Hopkins, Portland, OR
11:35-12:15 Panel of Speakers, Questions and Answers
12:15-12:30 Merging of Split Session Groups
12:30-1:00 Northwest Turfgrass Association
Membership Meeting. ALL MEMBERS
SHOULD DEFINITELY ATTEND.

- 1:00 Free Time
6:15-7:00 No host cocktails
7:00 Banquet and awards

Thursday, September 20, 1984

FIRST SESSION CHAIRMAN—Bill Campbell

- 8:00-8:40 "Irrigation Installation—Do It Right The
First Time", Don Hogan, P.E., D.A.
Hogan and Associates, Seattle, WA
8:40-9:20 "Transplanting Trees and Shrubs and
How To Encourage Rapid Growth", Dr.
Ray Maleike, Extension Horticulture
Specialist, WWREC, WSU, Puyallup
9:20-9:55 "Performance of Fine Leaved Tall
Fescues", Dr. G.W. Pepin, Director of
Research, Pickseed West, Inc., Tangent,
OR
9:55-10:10 Break

SECOND SESSION CHAIRMAN—John Eby

- 10:10-10:35 "Status of Investigations On Take-All
Patch-Like Disease", Dr. Gary
Chastagner, WWREC, WSU, Puyallup
10:35-11:05 "Drought Resistance (Osmotic
Adjustment)", Dr. Jeff Nus, WWREC,
WSU, Puyallup
11:05-11:40 "Successful Weed Control With Pre-
Emergence Herbicides", Dr. Robert
Parker, Extension Weed Specialist,
IAREC, WSU, Prosser, WA
11:40-12:00 "Exciting Things About Tall Fescues",
Dr. R.D. Ensign, Agronomist, University
of Idaho, Moscow
12:00 Adjourn

LADIES PROGRAM

The ladies program here in Spokane promises to be a fulfilling one for everyone who attends. We will have a champagne brunch with a tea room style fashion show on Monday. Tuesday calls for golf or for those not playing, we have a CPR class scheduled. On Wednesday we will be taking a tour of the city and to complete our program on Thursday, we have a speaker on Time Management. This is something I can certainly use!

The programs will be in the morning so you will have the afternoon free for shopping or whatever!

Be sure to attend each program as we will again have door prizes at each program.

Looking forward to seeing all of you again and to meet those new faces.

Nancy McElhoe

LADIES PROGRAM

Monday, September 17, 1984

- 10:00 a.m. Champagne Brunch/Fashion Show

Tuesday, September 18, 1984

- 9:00 a.m. Golf
9:30 a.m. CPR Class

Wednesday, September 19, 1984


- 9:30 a.m. Tour of the City of Spokane

Thursday, September 20, 1984

- 9:00 a.m. Time Management Seminar

The registration fee will be \$25 plus \$5 for the golf tournament. The ladies will have to be registered to receive an I.D. card to be presented at the golf course in order not to be charged green fees.

Please indicate below which activities you wish to participate in so we may plan accordingly. We need a minimum of 30 ladies for the city tour.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ray McElhoe

The 1984 NTA Conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Spokane will be a great opportunity to broaden your knowledge of all aspects of the industry. This holds true for the new members as well as those who have been a member for many years.

As your president, I encourage all members to attend this conference. A lot of time and effort has been put into it to make it an exceptional conference with many fine programs for all concerned. A quick look through this program will indicate this. A great number of these programs were from members' suggestions as to the topics they wanted to hear about.

The cost of attending such a conference to some seems unjustifiable. I would like to point out a few of the benefits that you can achieve from attending this conference.

Consider this - you have the opportunity to sit and talk to the speakers after the program about your problem areas. Not only one, but many. You will be able to obtain a vast amount of information in a short period of time. If you were to try to obtain this information separately, think of the time that would be spent. This also holds true for the research reports. The people who present these reports are there at your disposal throughout the conference. Confer with them and let their knowledge help you solve a problem.

This year we are trying something new which we felt would benefit everyone. On Tuesday evening there will be a supplier's open house. You will be able to talk to these people and probably will see things new to the industry. Take advantage of this opportunity of having these people together to gather your needed information.

I am looking forward to seeing each of you this September in Spokane. Remember, if you learn one thing at this conference, it will be money well spent for your organization. Attend the meetings and see for yourself!

COMMERCIAL EXHIBITORS EVENING

A commercial exhibitors evening will be held on Tuesday, September 25, 1984, from 7:00 until 10:00 p.m. Everyone should plan to attend since this promises to be not only an educational opportunity but a fun evening as well. The exhibits will be held in the ballroom area of the Sheraton Hotel and doors will open at 7:00 p.m.

Many of you have the opportunity to attend trade shows at various locations around the U.S., but many of you do not. Everyone should get acquainted with suppliers of various products for conducting turfgrass maintenance programs, whether you are a school, park, cemetery, golf course or other. Frequently, you need an item or product but don't know where to go looking for it. The major suppliers around the Pacific Northwest will be on hand to tell you what they have or how to obtain machinery, products or even services.

The commercial turfgrass industry obviously is a vital link in our maintenance and management programs. A great deal can be gained from keeping up to date on new machinery, changes in machinery, new herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, fertilizers and other products necessary to grow quality turfgrasses.

The following is a list of commercial booth exhibitors current as of August 30, 1984, which is press time for Turfgrass Topics.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Pickseed West | Hunter Industries |
| Evergreen Turf | Mallinckrodt, Inc. |
| Fran-Cher Chemicals | Turf & Toro |
| Pacific Agro | Turfgo Northwest |
| Emerald Turf Farms | O. M. Scott & Sons |
| International Seeds | Lofts, Inc. |
| Jacklin Seed Company | PBI/Gordon |
| Evergreen Turf and Truck | |
| Rayco Distributing Inc. | |
| Wilbur-Ellis Co. | |
| E. I. duPont de Nemours & Co. | |
| Northwest Mowers | |
| WSU-OSU-U of I Educational Booth | |

Let's make it an all out effort for everyone to attend this evening and to show our appreciation to the commercial people who are helping to support your organization. We think you will find it to be an informative and fun evening.

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ALOHA

Hawaii is calling on Monday evening poolside at the Sheraton in Spokane on September 24. Although the function is called the golf awards dinner following the golf tournament on Monday, anyone who wishes can pre-register and attend.

This promises to be a fun evening and everyone should come prepared in your favorite 'aloha attire' for an informal and relaxed social hour and dinner at poolside. The Sheraton has just completed refurbishing the covered pool area and it should be an ideal setting for the Luau dinner. It is claimed by the catering staff that they do a nice job on their Luau so we believe that you will have a fine dinner. To make the evening doubly enjoyable, sign up for the golf tournament and get involved, and who knows, you may walk off with some prizes as well as a wonderful dinner. We'll see you at the Luau.

NOT TOO MUCH PEPPER, THANK YOU

By Keith C. Barrons

For dinner last evening my wife and I had sauteed shrimp with mushrooms. In addition to the arsenic that came with the shellfish, the mushrooms provided us with hydrazine, the baked potato with solanine and the celery with furocoumarin. All three compounds are carcinogenic.

The carrots in our mixed vegetables contained carotene, which converts to vitamin A in the body. This vitamin, essential in the amounts we ordinarily ingest, is a teratogen and harmful to the liver at highly excessive levels. The alfalfa-sprout topping on our salad contained canavanine, which is associated with defects in the immune system. The black pepper carried the mutagen safrole. Chocolate cake provided theobromine, which can activate various carcinogens, and in addition to caffeine, the coffee contained about 250 mg per cup of the mutagen chlorogenic acid.

The world around us abounds in nature's toxic substances, and our food is no exception. The scientific literature lists many natural components of foods that are known to be harmful to laboratory animals, but only at dietary levels considerably in excess of likely human intake.

Nonetheless, many Americans have succumbed to a new fear — and one that could in the long run lead to an ever-lowering quality of life. I refer to the current epidemic of 'microchemophobia', or the fear of minute traces of chemicals.

Grains and Nuts: In defining a poison my old biochemistry teacher told his classes, 'a poison is too much.' Yet my wife and I have not consumed too much of nature's chemical oddities. How, pray tell, have we each passed three score and ten while ingesting a myriad of natural toxins, including aflatoxin, an exceedingly potent carcinogen sometimes found in grains and nuts as well as nitrosamines formed in the curing of meats? The answer: our natural defense mechanisms. Were it not for these remarkable biochemical systems we would long since have succumbed.

In tests with laboratory animals some of nature's toxic substances have proven more poisonous than any man-made chemical, and their concentrations in food are generally much

(Continued on Page 5, Column 1)

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(Continued from Page 4, Column 1)

greater than the synthetic impurities that have generated so much fear. In a notable paper in Science, Dr. Bruce N. Ames, chairman of the biochemistry department at the University of California at Berkeley, concludes that our intake of natural toxins is '... probably at least 10,000 times higher than the dietary intake of man-made substances.'

If our built-in defense mechanisms can handle relatively large amounts of toxic chemicals that happen to be synthesized by the most accomplished chemist of all, a living plant, there is every reason to believe we can cope with the far lesser amounts of man-made compounds, traces of which occasionally find their way into our food. Our fears should be quelled by the fact of our ever-increasing longevity — now more than 74 years compared with 50 years or less before chemicals were used to help assure an abundance of food.

Microchemophobia has multiple origins. There is the antichemical 'lobby' that nurtures and magnifies each report of a real or speculative risk. Parts per billion are often equated with an imminent hazard regardless of the magnitude required to harm laboratory animals. There is never a reminder of the minuscule nature of one part per billion.

A recent examination of an overblown pesticide episode contributing to microchemophobia was the flap over EDB residues in grain. Today's knowledge of the carcinogenicity of this compound may well support the cessation of its use as an insecticide. Some food samples analyzed exceeded current safety guidelines, but the destruction of foodstuffs because they contained lesser amounts was uncalled for. With few exceptions, the contaminated samples had less than one thousandth the level of EDB that was found to cause cancer in rats. Add to this margin of safety the fact that grain-derived foods are only a portion of the human diet, and further, that much of any EDB present would be reduced on cooking or baking, and the risk fades into insignificance.

Also contributing to the fear of minute traces of chemicals is an overly cautious interpretation of the so-called Delaney clause in the law dealing with safety of foods. It states that no substance will be permitted in food '... if it is found after tests which are appropriate for the evaluation of safety of food additives to induce cancer in man or animals...' Note the word *appropriate*. Is it not appropriate to consider safety margins or the spread between likely human exposure and the amount required to induce cancer in the laboratory when analysts interpret toxicological data?

Potato Blight: If we are to avoid pest-induced food shortages and vector-transmitted diseases, mankind must defend itself by one means or another. In spite of much progress with non-chemical controls, pesticides are still vital to most integrated pest management programs and, indeed, are often our first line of defense. For example: we can control potato late-blight, the same disease that caused the great Irish potato famine of the 1840's.

We will continue to ingest nature's toxins, including, no doubt, many yet to be discovered in our everyday foods. But if we are to continue to have the abundance we have been blessed with in recent decades, traces of man-made chemicals will certainly find a way into our food — from pest control, packaging, protection in storage and other sources. Given today's highly sophisticated analytical techniques, these minuscule

amounts can be detected, even at the parts-per-trillion level.

The only sensible course is to follow the recommendations of authorities and eat a varied diet with less fat than is now commonly consumed and include plenty of fruits, vegetables and fiber-rich cereal products. I would also put some faith in our laws and our regulators. On the whole, I think they have served us well. Remember, never have people lived as long and amid such abundance as in the technically advanced world of 1984.

Barrons taught crop production at Michigan State and worked for the Burpee Seed Company and the Dow Chemical Company. Taken from Newsweek/April 9, 1984.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is most timely and will be modernized for the Pacific Northwest when Dave Dietz, State Director of Oregonians for Food and Shelter, elaborates on "Politics of Pesticides" at the Turfgrass Conference on September 18, 1984.

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THE NEEDLESS COST OF BEING THE FASTEST GREENS IN TOWN

Is faster better? When it comes to putting greens, many people seem to think it is. We're not so sure. In fact the super-slick and firm greens that are glorified in the U.S. Open may be a double-edged sword for the average club or course; not only do they slow down play, but they make a big dent in the maintenance budget.

"When the USGA or PGA Tour gets greens up to 10 or 11 on the Stimpmeter (the device used to measure green speed) people see that and come home and complain that their greens are not fast enough," says architect Pete Dye, a staunch foe of fast greens. (Bless you, Pete, ED.) When combined with tricky pin placements and severe contours, fast greens can make getting the ball into the hole, as was said of Oakmont last year, like putting down a marble staircase and trying to stop the ball on the bottom step.

Sherwood Moore, the co-superintendent of this year's U.S. Open site, Winged Foot, argues against fast greens for most clubs. "If you want those kinds of greens, you have to mow them every day, top dress them more frequently, water them more carefully," he says. "We have to educate people that if they want fast greens, something is going to be sacrificed — and it might be the turf itself."

Dick Haskell of the Massachusetts Golf Association also is concerned about the trend toward what he calls 'Bo Derek

greens' (those rating a perfect 10 on the Stimpmeter). "If the greens are really slick you can add 15 minutes to a round in additional strokes and maybe another 20 minutes worrying about putting them," he says. "This might be well and good for Merion or Oakmont, but I'm not sure it's ideal for Saturday and Sunday play at Happy Knoll." A common sense viewpoint should prevail on such matters. There must be a reasonable relation between the size, slope and speed of a course's greens; a course with extreme undulations should be especially careful about making the greens too fast and thus unputtable. Adds Dye: "The more contour in a putting surface, the less speed you can have. If a green has a lot of bumps and rolls, it can't be played much quicker than 9 or 9.5. I'd rather see more severity in the contours and slower greens. It puts a greater premium on shot-making." We agree, The 'fast is best' greens committee should slow down a little bit this season.

(Reprinted from Golf Digest, June 1984).

EDITOR'S NOTE: We need more articles like this and a solid commitment from golf course superintendents nationally so that we can return to sane management of putting greens. Another article in this issue identifies some areas where close mowing is hurting us badly.

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OVERSEEDING JUST PART OF THE STORY

By Roy L. Goss

Nearly every turfgrass manager dealing with grasses propagated by seed is familiar with overseeding and overseeding practices. The reasons for overseeding can be enumerated as follows:

1. Re-establishment of turf after losses from diseases, insects, summer drought, winter desiccation, etc.
2. Increasing plant density in thin turfgrass stands.
3. Changing botanical composition. We frequently overseed to change the genus, species or even cultivars to suit specific needs of mowing height, wear tolerance, disease resistance and to avoid stresses from various causes.

By and large, these are the major reasons for overseeding. And, it is an art and science that has been practiced for many years, frequently with dubious results.

Many fine articles have been written within the last few years of successes on fairway renovation and re-establishing bentgrasses, ryegrasses, and perhaps other grasses as well. Everyone in the southern states are totally familiar with both reasons and methods of overseeding for winter use on the southern warm season grasses.

It has been a long standing recommendation of turfgrass consultants and all sorts of turfgrass managers to overseed nearly any conceivable turfgrass area. We know the successes on sportsfields, home lawns, golf course tees and fairways, but what do we really know about overseeding golf course putting greens.

I sincerely believe that the most fundamental aspect of establishing a new seeding, seedbed preparation, has been flagrantly violated about 9 out of 10 attempts. I personally know golf courses that have overseeded putting greens as a standard practice for 30 years. If all the seed could be accumulated that has been spread on each green, it would perhaps form a mulch 6 inches deep, and there hasn't been 1% increase in bentgrass over this period of time the greens are still 98% *Poa annua*. Although there may be many reasons for this zero increase in bentgrass on overseeded greens, I will list two or three reasons which I feel are the cause of failure:

1. Inadequate seedbed preparation which involves extensive verticutting and aerification to place the seed in as good contact with the soil as possible.
2. Extensive competition from vigorous *Poa annua*. Weak bentgrass seedlings have small chances of survival against vigorously growing *Poa annua*, not to mention possible allelopathy of *Poa annua*.
3. Mowing height.

Let's take the last item first. I have never yet met a golf superintendent (who is still employed) who mowed newly emerged bentgrass putting greens at a height of 1/8 or 3/16 inch. Any mowing height less than 1/4 inch will significantly reduce the establishment of bentgrass seedlings. According to investigations conducted by Roberts and Goss in 1978, significant differences in turf density were favored by mowing at 5/16 inch compared to 1/4 inch.

This information is not intended to discourage overseeding of putting greens but to stress the fact that mowing heights must be increased during the first 4-5 weeks after seedling emergence. Topdressing immediately before the first height reduction will

result in less seedling mortality from closer mowing. Mowing heights should be reduced in very small increments until the bentgrass is established.

In order to reduce the competitive effects of *Poa annua* on germination and development of bentgrass seedlings, endothermal applications will severely retard or kill established *Poa annua* and enhance the development of bentgrass. Keep in mind that turfgrass stands that are severely thinned or weakened from various causes will putt faster than dense turfgrass stands and slightly elevated mowing heights during the establishment period will not severely reduce the putting speed.

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AN OLD FASHIONED SUMMER

As the weather runs in cycles, so do many of our management practices on turfgrasses. The summer of 1984 with over 60 days of essentially no measurable precipitation in most areas of the Pacific Northwest was a good test of the management skills of most turfgrass managers. Management of water and the efficacy of irrigation systems was evident in most areas. Many hydrophobic areas developed in every kind of turfgrass area due to improperly designed irrigation systems, malfunctioning sprinklers or failure to use wetting agents before problems became acute. Turfgrass managers who started their wetting agent treatments as early as mid-April to May 1 and practiced judicious application of irrigation water have come through the season with few problems of hydrophobic areas. It is difficult to play catchup after surface tension has developed and the turfgrass has browned out, especially on sloping terrain. Wetting agents are still effective even under these conditions, but it takes a great deal more of hand watering and coring to induce wetting agent movement through thatch layers and to rewet the soil. Many wet spots and muddy areas have been observed through efforts to rewet these dry areas and over-irrigation has occurred in many of the low spots. Take-all patch-like disease (recently named by plant pathologists as Necrotic Ring Spot), caused by *Leptosphaeria* sp. has been observed to be significantly more devastating on Kentucky bluegrass turf where daily watering has been practiced.

NUTRITION AND MOWING

In our efforts to reduce nitrogen applications, many putting greens have been observed to be under nutritional stress resulting in excessive yellow mottling and various rings of Basidiomycetes integrating with anthracnose in many areas during this summer. When you add mowing stress to extremely low nitrogen applications and heat stress, many strange things happen. In most instances, small applications of soluble nitrogen masked the visual appearances of Basidiomycete rings. June applications of fungicides, in general, kept anthracnose under control. Although most golf superintendents like to have moderately fast putting surfaces during the summer period, isn't it about time that we employed a little common sense and raised our mowers on true settings somewhat over 1/8 inch during these stress periods.

Pythium has apparently put in a small appearance in eastern Washington during the summer of 1984. This is one of the rare occurrences of this fungus in the Northwest. One sample came in from Walla Walla, and it is reported that Pythium caused some minor losses in the Spokane area. It appears that our weather was right, at least for brief periods this summer, for this organism to express itself.

Several reports have filtered in and some personal observations have been made on the effects of endothal on re-establishing bentgrass on putting greens during the summer of 1984. Don Clemons from Cody, Wyoming and Bob Lee from Stoneridge Golf Course at Blanchard, Idaho, have reported good successes with their endothal programs this year. Wally Staatz from HiCedars Golf Course in Orting, Washington, was so pleased with the results obtained in the summer of 1983 that he is treating additional greens in the summer of 1984. Upon recent observations of his treatments, the *Poa annua* was yellowing beautifully and the bentgrass was essentially untouched by the endothal. Therefore, his overseeding program will be most

effective. Lake Josephine Riviera Golf Course on Anderson Island, Washington, had a very successful *Poa annua* kill with endothal and an excellent overseeding establishment during early August. A few other golf courses are seriously considering endothal programs for the future while some commercial applicators and sod producers have been most successful with this program for several years.

Considering the severe winter conditions and an extremely cold, wet spring, most golf courses, parks and sportsfields have really come on strong since the end of June and it appears that their managers have done a super job in coping with a long, warm, dry period.



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NOT EVEN A GOLD WATCH

Current evidence indicates that there is a wide spread lack of pension plans for superintendents. Many superintendents, upon retirement, are finding themselves with nothing to show for their years of loyal service.

By Fred V. Grau

Having concentrated on helping people grow turf for so many years, I must confess that I have not given adequate attention to the very important consideration of pensions and retirement benefits for golf course superintendents. Only recently have I become painfully aware of serious deficiencies in the "system". I now ask the rhetorical question, "Is there a problem?" just for openers.

In developing a background for an honest answer to the question, I have contacted leaders in Pennsylvania and across the nation by letter, by telephone and in face-to-face conversations. My real contact with golf course superintendents started in 1935 when I began my 10-year travels in Pennsylvania helping the "greenkeepers" to understand the basics of producing better turf. I've made a lot of friends, many of whom now are about to retire or have retired. Some, of course, have preceded us into eternity with little or no recognition. Those whom I first knew have now been in the business for 40 years or longer.

Most of us recall a man who was a loyal employee of a railroad or some industrial firm. At retirement time, he was given a testimonial dinner, an engraved gold watch and many admonitions to "stay healthy". At that point he was considered unemployable and, in many cases, when forced into unaccustomed idleness, he just "dried up and blew away". I knew one who died the day before his "retirement party". As I receive reports from friends in turf, I gain the distinct impression that many long-time superintendents have been summarily retired or released, often without the customary dinner, watch and admonitions. What a pity!

At this point, I will answer my own question unequivocally and without hesitation or fear of contradiction. *Yes, there is a problem.* The problem is not just in Pennsylvania or in Kansas or in California. It is very nearly universal. Details are not a part of this editorial. They will be documented in a later article for GOLFDOM. In the meantime, it is my hope that club officials will have read this piece and will make a meaningful start toward establishing an adequate pension retirement program for the golf course superintendent. It is later than you think! WHAT? NO PENSION?

A good friend of long standing, a retired golf course superintendent now living in Florida, wrote to me recently. After 26 years of devoted service to his club (and he had many good years of service left) he was 'retired', actually dismissed, without a pension of any kind. I know the man and I know the club. He introduced innovations in equipment, fertilizers, ground covers and many other things. What I don't understand is how the businessmen for whom he worked could so callously turn him out to pasture without the thank you and the courtesy of some sort of pension or endowment. It is a bit like unharnessing the horse, opening the pasture gate and giving him a slap on the rump.

This friend is understandably bitter, soft-spoken as he is. It is too late to turn back the clock for him, but his experience,

which is shared by many, should guide present and future negotiations between club and superintendent. Surely there must be some guidelines that can help the new or old superintendent achieve a just and honorable contract, which will help to sustain him when he retires. Club officials should bow their heads in shame if they do not insist upon some such stipulation in the contract. One may safely assume that nine out of 10 businessmen in the club have made sure that they will have a retirement income. Shouldn't they also do the same for one of their most devoted employees?

I have just talked with another good friend who has been at his club since it was built in about 1952. He has tried to negotiate a retirement benefit for several years, but each time he is told that he is being selfish in wanting something just for himself. These short-sighted officials one day will wonder, 'Why can't we attract good men?' The horse is not likely to be drawn to an empty feedbag.

You can help Dr. Grau by writing him directly at Drawer AA, College Park, MD 20740. Tell him what kind of pension plan you have, or if you presently have no plan, let him hear about it. Individual letters will be kept in the strictest confidence.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Well done, Fred. This is only part of the problem. Another relates simply to "job security". Due to the Committee structure and frequent turnover within most clubs, apathy and neglect on the part of these Committees may be the fundamental problem.

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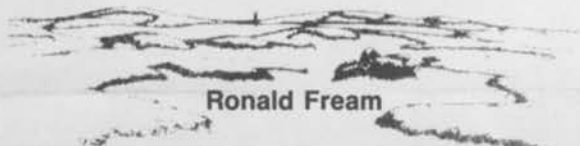
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SEPTEMBER SONGS

Karen A. Lynch in GRIT

Sing a song of crabgrass
In a lawn of rye;
Dandelions and chickweed,
Enough to make you cry.
When the summer's over
And thistles catch and cling,
That's the time you'll start to wish
You'd weeded in the spring.

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