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**COMMENTS FROM THE GAM-MICHIGAN AND BORDER
CITIES GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION
MEETING HELD IN MARCH AT THE PLUM HOLLOW
GOLF CLUB**

As mentioned in the last issue of the magazine we promised to report on the meeting held at Plum Hollow Golf Club on March 24, 1976. This was a joint meeting between the Golf Association of Michigan and Border Cities Golf Course Superintendents Association.

This was the second meeting in recent years between these two organizations and if the attendance was any indication of the interest, we should consider doing this on an annual basis. There are many subjects to be discussed that would benefit the golfing community.

Subjects covered at this years meeting were, "Budget Comparison and Standardization" by James A. Dowsley and "The role of the Green Chairman" by H. Thomas Rex. After a delicious dinner we broke up into two groups and a panel of experts headed by Chairman, Ernie Hodas, of Century Supply Corp. discussed "Water Management - Irrigation and Drainage". This panel was made up of Fritz McMullen, Fred Ellis, Ward Swanson, Gene Johanningsmeier. The other group listened to Dr. Joe Vargas speak on *Poa annua* control.

Fritz McMullen, Superintendent, Forest Lake Country Club on the Importance of Proper Drainage

Fritz commented that he had installed a new irrigation system at the Inverness Club while he worked there and experienced few problems with drainage because of the good sandy loam soil that drained very well. Now that he has moved to Forest Lake as the Superintendent, he finds it very difficult to water his fairways the way he would like. There are two distinct types of soil. Each one is so different that he must treat them separately.

Forest Lake has a very extensive drainage system but they do not have reliable records or maps of the system. This makes it difficult for a new Superintendent.

The turf on the fairways is predominately *Poa annua* and as you know it requires special attention and good drainage. He began getting wet spots that caused troubles so he tied new drainage lines into existing lines that he was able to find after much searching and investigation. These usually

Continued on Next Page

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consisted of French drains capped off with Calcined clay. He was able to use pea gravel in the rough areas with little damage to mowing equipment. Fritz stressed the point that it is very important to bring the pea gravel all the way up to the surface. If you cap off the trench with soil you have defeated the purpose of the trench. The grass grows over the trench lines in a few weeks and they will no longer be visible to the golfers.

When dealing with the heavy soils in the greens he was able to cut a narrow trench with a chain saw and filling the slit with calcined clay. In certain problem areas he utilized "dry wells." These were installed using a tractor mounted post hole digger run off the power takeoff. It is important to try to dig deep enough until you have hit a layer of porous soil. These are backfilled with gravel. Occasionally he will use sumps to collect the water. Tile lines are run into these sumps and automatic pumps are used to remove the excess water.

Reconstruction is only recommended when nothing else works. You must always be mindful of drainage. Topo maps are very important and he feels that an engineers level is one of the most important tools a golf course superintendent has. It is very important that you do a job correctly the first time. It seems that we can always find time to do it right the second time.

Perhaps the most important suggestion from Fritz is to "make certain that you establish good communications with your membership." Set a date for a project, try to stick to the date, and make sure that the job is done right!

Fred Ellis, Engineer from Ellis, Arndt, & Truesdell, Inc. of Flint, Michigan on How Drainage Affects Income at a Country Club

Fred stated that good drainage is one of the most important factors effecting the income of a golf club. Other factors are: number of golfers in club, dues or green fees, types of members, number of spenders and users. The average daily play, weekend play and speed of play.

Such types of services as dining, bar, (carts) locker facilities, and driving range facilities are also important.

Drainage can control the length of playing season by providing a dry course in the spring. Golfers always compare courses when you have a period of wet weather. They always know the well drained courses and will play there when it is too wet at their own club. Traps, fairways, tees and greens that are poorly drained are usually covered with wet spots that afford poor footing and wet feet.

When you are building or rebuilding a green you should always allow for drainage in two directions and never in the area where the golfer will be walking to the next tee.

Some indirect effects of poor drainage control the attitude and pride of the membership. The thought of poor conditions stay with the golfers for a long time even after the problems are solved. It affects guest play also. Remember new members are hard to find when they quit because of poor conditions.

Golfers hate to see these signs: COURSE CLOSED, NO CARTS, CARTS IN ROUGH ONLY. These

Continued on Page 8

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Plum Hollow Cont.

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Ward Swanson, Superintendent, Plum Hollow Country Club on Costs as Related to Water, Electricity & Safety

The installation of automatic irrigation at Plum Hollow has made it possible to cut down the amount of time spent by night watermen from two men for twelve hours per night to one man for eight hours per day. Ward still uses a night man for early evening watering and syringing during the day.

When they were changing over to automatic watering the Superintendent decided to add more heads around the greens to give more control over the proper water distribution. This was a wise decision because they are able to water the entire green surface plus a good portion of the surrounding area adjacent to the greens.

One of the more serious problems facing Plum Hollow is the occasional problem involving water quality. This is a common problem found at many courses that use streams as their source of water. Ward pumps out of the Rouge River and quite often there are pollutants that come down stream that are harmful to the turf grass. It is very important to keep a constant check on the water quality through testing. This seems to be especially

true during prolonged periods of drought when the water level begins to drop in the river and the contaminants become more concentrated.

It was pointed out that several of the area courses use city water and that they must pay somewhere between \$20,000 to \$25,000 per year for irrigation water. Several golf courses are also faced with the cost of using city drains. This cost is determined by a certain cost per acre. We can all appreciate how lucky we are out in the suburbs and the outlying areas where government controls are minimal.

Why Manage Water?

by Gene Johanningsmeier,
Turfgrass, Inc., South Lyon, Michigan

Gene pointed out that water is used primarily to keep grass green. The conservation of water is very important. There is more turfgrass lost to the misuse of water than to the shortage of water. The more you water the greater your chances for mismanagement of watering.

The simple question of: what to water? how much to water? how often to water? and how to apply? are the most difficult questions to answer during the daily decision making process for a Superintendent.

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Continued on Page 10



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They have discovered that the Association's activities, programs and publications can keep them abreast of the latest technological information.

Continued on Page 13

Plum Hollow Cont.

is determined by light intensity, humidity, temperature and wind. A good soil has about 50% pore space. This is where the water and air is made available and also where the roots grow.

When making the decision on the timing and the amount of water, we must take into consideration the water loss for the day plus decide what the weather will be tomorrow. Is it going to be hot? Is it going to be windy? Is it going to rain? Now you can begin to see the importance of good weather forecasting.

How to Grow and Live with *Poa Annua* by Dr. Joe Vargas, Plant Pathologist, MSU

Dr. Vargas asked the question, Is *Poa* a weed? He feels that in most cases here in Michigan, it should not be considered a weed. We all have far too much on our courses to think about eradication. We should be thinking about refining it and making it more desirable for maintenance. Perhaps research money should be spent on finding a strain of *Poa* that will survive the weather and thrive instead of spending money to develop methods of eradicating this old foe.

Many of the so called control programs do not work because of variables in soil makeup and pH.

Here is a program to control dollar spot and possibly Anthracnose on fairways.

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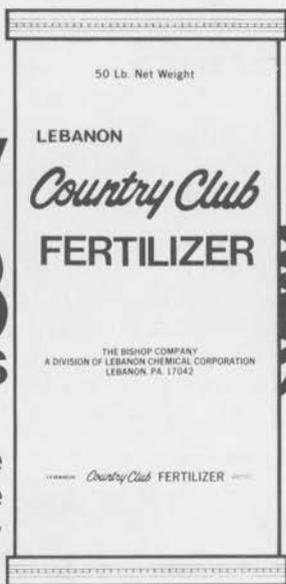
In keeping with Lawn Equipment's policy of quality service, we are happy to announce the appointment of Richard Manahan as assistant store manager in charge of institutional retail sales. Dick has been with Lawn Equipment for the past three years and previously was employed by Century Supply. Dick and his lovely wife Joyce have been married 21 years and have 2 daughters. With his many years of experience in the field, he will be a great asset to our in-store service and sales.



Lawn Equipment Corporation is very pleased to announce the addition of John Kirtland to our sales staff. John is a four year graduate of Michigan State University, and was the first winner of the Upjohn award. Prior to joining Lawn Equipment, he was the superintendent of Fox Hills Golf Club and also was employed at Red Run Golf Club for three years. John will be responsible for the institutional sales in the eastern area of Lawn Equipment Corporations coverage.


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from The Bullsheet, March, 1974

PART II

Proper Use and Mis-Use of Equipment

by RAY GERBER

The height of cut adjustment should be done very carefully. If the rear roller brackets are not set the same on both sides, trouble will soon arrive. If they should be equipped with ball bearings and oil seals, the seal will soon start to wear uneven. When this happens, moisture will get into the bearings and in a short time they will start to rust. Should this occur, it is only a short time before it is necessary to replace the bearings and seals.

Great care should be taken not to run any mowing equipment, tractors or trucks over curbs, into deep ditches, into trees or posts, or into any type of fence. It is always worthwhile to police your areas where you travel and remove any sticks, stones, bottles,

tin cans, or any debris lying around. Failure to do so usually bring on costly repair bills as well as loss of time. It is always more profitable to stop and remove the rubbish before running over it.

In many instances, some of us get a little careless either on the job or at our home or both places.

We always should remember we have a job to do and by cooperating with each other the task will be much easier. We live in the most grand country in the world. This was brought on by our forefathers, many years ago through their cooperation with one another. Let us do our part by helping thy neighbor.

Many times as I was traveling



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around the country, I noticed beautiful trees which required many years to grow and a fair amount of money and care to get them in the beauty that I saw from a distance. After a closer observation I noticed on certain trees, they had been injured by a careless operator using a piece of equipment. When I say a careless operator, in a case of this kind, I can find no other word to use. He not only injured the tree, but certainly did no good to the equipment he was using.

We often find a nice piece of well maintained turf and many times in this fine turf as well as other places, damage done by wheel marks. The reason usually is engaging the clutch too quickly or trying to stop too quickly. . . sometimes making too short a turn on a hill when soil or turf is not a condition for a short turn. At a time like this is when most damage is done. Damage to turf caused by the clutch being engaged too quickly can only be charged to one or two things. If it is due to a faulty clutch it should be repaired. If not, it is carelessness on the part of the operator. The same holds true by stopping too quickly . . . either the brakes grab or a careless operator.

Over loading trucks usually brings on costly repair bills, not only to the truck but also to roads or streets upon which it is driven. A truck is made to carry a certain weight and should not be expected to carry weight beyond the manufacturer's recommendations . . . for the same reason a fighter would not be expected to fight a man beyond his own weight. In other words, never send a boy to do a man's job.

When loading small fertilizer spreaders on or off a truck or trailer, it should be done with the greatest of care. Carelessness on the part of the employee will result in severe damage to the spreader board and wheels. Fertilizer spreaders both large and small should be cleaned thoroughly after each day of use, especially after



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using chemical fertilizers. After they have been thoroughly cleaned, all bearings and moving parts should be lubricated. Failure to do so will result in damage to the hopper and cause bearings to freeze.

Aerifying machines should always be operated with the greatest of care. Running over stones, sidewalks, roadways, sprinkler valves and any other hard objects will injure the spoons or spikes. Should this occur, it will be impossible to get a satisfactory job from the machine. In a case of this kind, there is no alternative other than replace the damaged spoons or spikes with new ones.

When operating a roto-tiller, one should always keep in mind even though this machine is made for fairly rough use, there is a limit as to what it can do without ruining the machine. In fact, there is a limit toward using any piece of equipment and the operator should know where the limit is and stop before it is reached.

Driving over valves that are set just below the surface with a heavy load results many times in broken valves. We often find valves that are above the ground being broken. Everyone knows that accidents do happen but in most instances, it is due to carelessness.

Small tools, such as, shovels, rakes, sod lifters, wheelbarrows, etc. should receive the same careful attention as a more costly item. As we all know that many small repair bills will add up to a large figure.

Fire is dangerous, we all know that, but many of us are careless around our equipment buildings. The loss of equipment from fire during a year is tremendous. We should never do any smoking near open gasoline cans or while filling a gas tank with gas or leave oily rags laying around. There are many other precautions one should keep in mind. It may not only save your equipment, it may save someone's life.

Don't be TRAPPED... Use the **EASY RIDER '76** TRAP MAINTENANCE SYSTEM

Why does Easy Rider '76 do the BEST job maintaining your sand traps?

Because Easy Rider '76 is not just another trap rake. The Easy Rider is a complete TRAP MAINTENANCE SYSTEM specially designed to maintain sand traps. The simplified finishing rake provides ultra-fine top layer raking, superior to a hand raked finish.

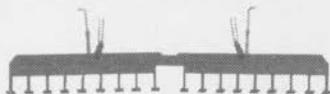
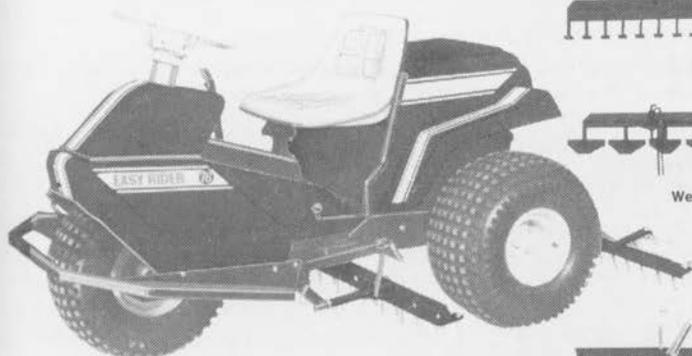
In addition to the rear mounted finishing rake, there are THREE INTERCHANGEABLE ATTACHMENTS: The *Weed Cultivator*, a *Super Scooper* and, for 1976, a *Pre-Rake*, all of which can be operated independently or simultaneously with the rear mounted finishing rake.

The entire body of Easy Rider is molded fiberglass, mounted on a steel chassis. The rear engine hood and fender section is hinged for easy maintenance.

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The Weed Cultivator*—Knocks out weeds and loosens deep, hard packed sand. The operator controls the cultivating depth.

The Super Scooper*—Picks up eroded sand in low spots and transports it back to the desired high locations. The operator controlled hand lever spreads and feathers the sand to a level finish in one easy operation.



Pre-Rake*



Weed Cultivator*



Super Scooper*

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*Patent Pending

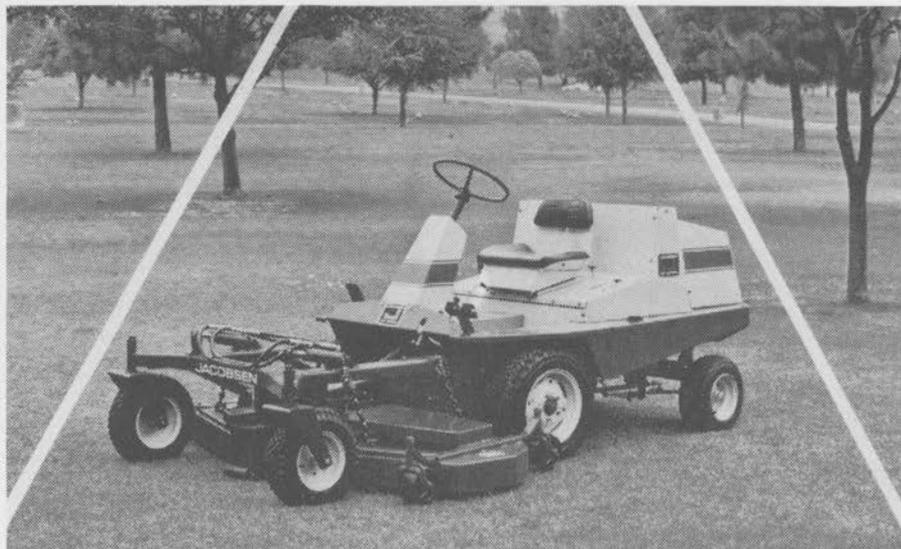


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