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The value of a master plan

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Green is beautiful - Winter / 93

GREENS

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Winter issue, 1993

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Cover

In the first week of December, Santa cuts the final hole of the season; and, inset, Gord Barnes prepares to do grinding work.

Right

Forty-eight hours after playing Santa Claus, Tim Coates inspects a solid cover installation proving that winter has finally arrived.

Photographs: GOLF IMAGES

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Green is beautiful

Presidential fairways It's been a great year

OGSA

New office highlights year

As my tenure as President of the Ontario Golf Superintendents Association comes to an end (at the Annual Meeting in January), I can now reflect on the accomplishments our Association has achieved in the past year. Certainly, one of the major highlights has been the move of the office to the Guelph Turfgrass Institute. This move will provide our membership with a direct link to the finest turfgrass professors in Canada. This unique relationship will no doubt be expanded in the future by the incoming President - Bruce Burger - along with the current and new Board of Directors.

Symposium generates important revenue

Next to membership dues, the greatest single source of revenue for our Association continues to be from the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium (this year in early January at the University of Guelph). One must not forget that the origins of this annual event resulted from the hard work and vision of superintendents, like ourselves, over the past fifteen years. This year's conference promises to be even greater than 1993 with attendance expected to reach over 1,000 participants. This symposium is Ontario's largest turfgrass exhibition.

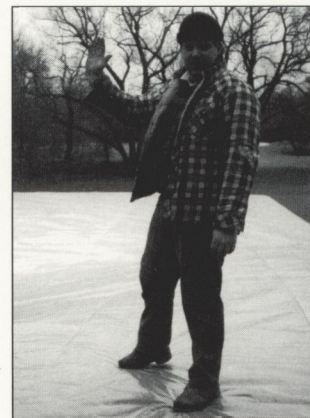


Thank you is in order

In closing, I would like to take time to thank a couple of special individuals in our Association for their inspiration and support during my year as President. I would like to thank my good friend Rhod Trainor who will be leaving the Board after the Annual Meeting. His refreshing personality and leadership on the Board will truly be missed by all of us. We wish him the best in the future. I would also like to thank Cindi Charters for her tireless devotion and dedication in the successful operation of the OGSA. Cindi's nine-year position as Office Manager has provided the Association with a sense of stability. Today, the members benefit from these efforts.

My personal thanks to you, the membership, for your continued support over the years and hope that this continues for our incoming president, Bruce Bruger. Bruce brings great vision to the Board and under his strong leadership the Ontario Golf Superintendents Association will continue to be one of which we all can be truly proud.

DAVID W. GOURLAY
President



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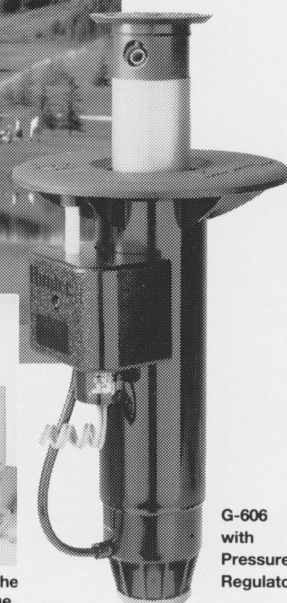
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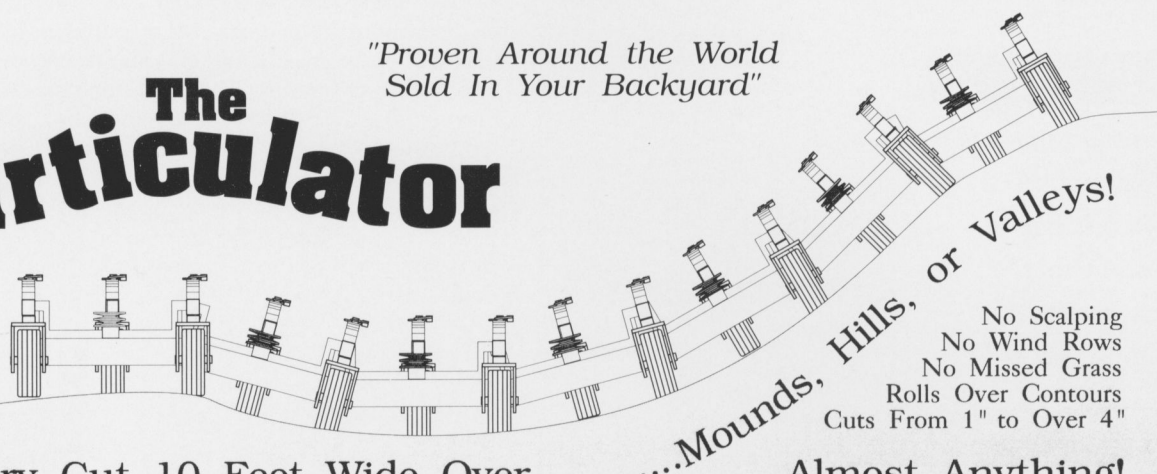
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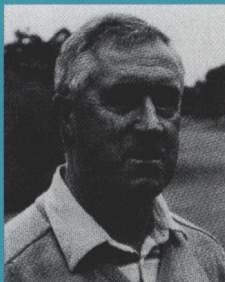
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During the past year, I was appointed newsletter editor with the mandate from the Board to make our magazine an award winner. In the first two issues we were able to publish original stories which was the first step in achieving the objectives.

Now, the second step is underway which is a complete re-design of the magazine. Thus, after four issues, I am confident that the mandate is being met. I am particularly pleased about being able to provide you with original material. To all of you who have made editorial contributions over the year, your efforts are appreciated and welcomed.

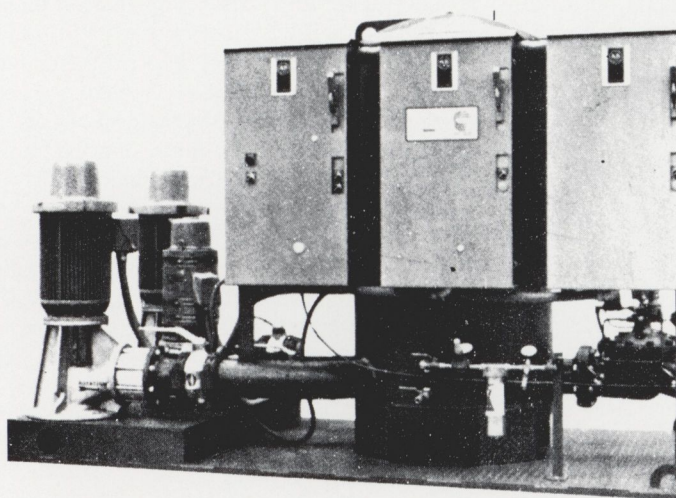
In particular, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Association's Office Manager, Cindi Charters, for her work in over-all organization and with the advertisers. Thanks Cindi for a job well done.

Profit from revenue is down from the previous year, but this was expected as we increased the number of pages and, thereby, the printing cost. The upgrading will continue and for 1994 we will continue to make editorial and design refinements. This will include strong definition for each of the different sections. As well, we will be looking at the use of four-colour throughout the magazine.

From your magazine group, best wishes for the season and, needless to say, for a prosperous new year.

DOUG SUTER
Editor

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Ted Baker, principal in Ted Baker & Associates, is an accomplished designer and planner. His recent election as a Fellow of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects reflects this.

Assignments have included innovative solutions for public parks, major corporate centres, municipal landfill sites and master planning for residential and commercial developments.

But, perhaps, his foremost interest is the design of golf courses where he can respect the best traditions of golf course architecture - enhanced by the modern techniques of landscape architecture.

Baker has designed many courses including the now well-regarded Lionhead. Currently, he is working on more than a dozen courses. He firmly believes that a golf course must exist in harmony with nature - giving the impression that it has always been there.

Attempting the **MASTER PLAN**



BY TED BAKER
Ted Baker & Associates

The construction of a golf course is like building a house - neither are ever finished. Always, there are changes and improvements to be made.

For example, the critical list for a course includes: areas of poor drainage, places where grass will not grow, trees to be planted or cut down, greens that settle - the job never ends.

Nonetheless, because a golf course evolves over many years, the business of being involved in design refinements can be exciting.

A plethora of experts

It is the job of management and/or the green committee to keep up with various problems and to use capital wisely to correct the offending areas. Golf course deficiencies, such as those mentioned, are often only symptoms of underlying design or structural problems. And, at most clubs, there are dozens of expert opinions of what the problem is, and how to rectify it.

The ultimate answer is for management and the green committee to work with a golf course architect to develop a master plan. This is usually a phased program of five to ten years during which improvements will be made to the course in a logical, sequential manner to avoid duplication of construction. More importantly, a good plan can avoid replacing one problem with another.

The evaluation process usually started by the green committee, which eventually leads to the preparation of a master plan, starts by defining all the things that are wrong with the golf course. Although this information is critical, I believe it is the wrong place to start.

A home away from home

A golf course has a very special place in the lives of members. It is a property they usually cherish and regards as theirs. The club they have chosen to join, and often at great expense, becomes an extension of their home. The course they love has features which make it unique to them, challenging and ultimately worth their investment of time and money.

Thus, if the deficiencies of the course are the factors that lead to the exploration of a

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Establishing the right criteria is the first step

master plan, it is the amenities of the course that should become the foundation of that plan.

I believe very strongly that prior to tackling the problems of the course, or even identifying those issues, the golf course architect - in consultation with the membership - should record those holes or features found on the property that make it special to the membership.

Finding the features

The identification of these features will also start to define the original style of the design. This is important given that each property lends itself to a particular architectural approach. Assuming the first attempt correctly captured the spirit, a good master plan should identify the particular signature of the original designers and reflect these characteristics in any changes made to the course.

Typically, the style of berming, contouring and shaping must be consistent. It is only through discovering the merits of the golf course that the plan can ultimately be judged.

On completion, the master plan should ensure that those features that were found to be exemplary in the beginning remain, and, perhaps, are reinforced. As well, the design recommendations must be in keeping with the heritage of the property.

Thinking it through

Every golf course generates many positive thoughts. Think about yours. Here is a check list I often use in the pre-design process. Certainly, it is a kind of mental gymnastic I go through to describe my own course during conversation.

Get all these thoughts in your mind - or better still, write them down. You are now in a frame of mind to constructively discuss the master plan.

To paraphrase an old song, 'concentrate on the positive, eliminate the negative'.

Thinking about your own course.

- **Think about the holes** that make you comfortable.
- **Think about the greens** you wait with anticipation to hit into.
- **Think about the places** where you will find yourself turning in a slow circle to take in the full panoramic view.
- **Think about the sounds** of water or wind slipping through the trees.
- **Think about those warm, protective places** in early spring or late fall and the cool shaded areas that are a welcome relief during hot summer days.
- **Think about the hole** which, every year, is the turning point in the club championship.

Ted Baker, like so many good Canadian architects, has links to Stanley Thompson, Howard Watson and Robbie Robinson.

The natural approach to design, as practised by Ted Baker, began with a job acquired during summer university days when he worked for one of Canada's dean of architects, Howard Watson.

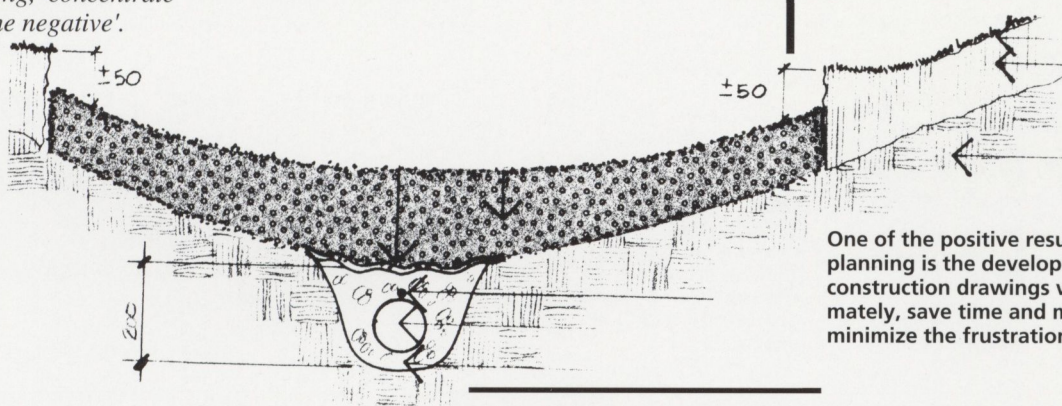
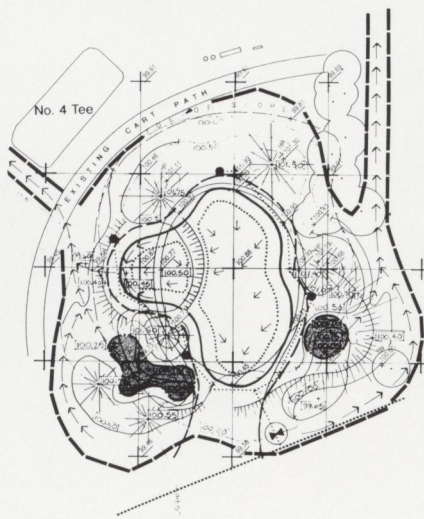
Over two decades Watson continued to be his mentor. For example, Ted learned from Howard that counting empty fertilizer bags was one way of checking a supplier's invoice.

Baker also tells the story related to him by Howard about the early work days under Stanley Thompson.

Apparently, the young Watson and a fellow worker, Robert Trent Jones, came to an agreement. Jones was anxious to learn more about the back-room studio techniques that Howard had mastered. At the same time, Watson was keen to become a better golfer. (Jones was an accomplished amateur out of upper New York State.)

They struck a deal - Watson would teach Jones more about the technical aspects of architecture and Jones would teach Watson to play better golf.

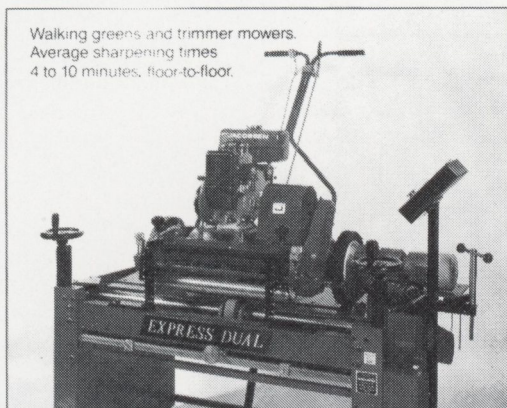
Watson, many years later, confided to Baker: "Obviously, I did a better job than Trent."



One of the positive results of master planning is the development of good construction drawings which, ultimately, save time and money and minimize the frustration of error.

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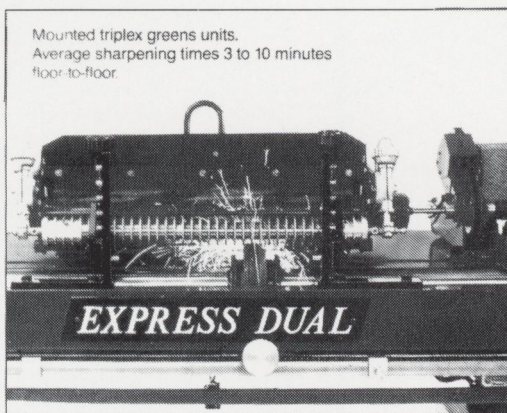


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Greens spring to life with minimal damage when properly covered

In last month's issue Hugh Kirkpatrick reported on the trials and tribulations of discovering the proper material for a winter green covers. The story also dealt with methods of laying the cover, securing it and preventing excessive water from penetrating the edges. He, and his colleague Bill Fach, perfected these principles and techniques.

Now, the installation of covers have become almost commonplace. Here two workers lay and peg a cover over a 9,000 square foot green. Cost of material is about \$1,500 and elapsed time to complete the job is about five hours.

GOLF IMAGES



Bayview Country Club

Architect, Thomas McBroom Assoc. Ltd.

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BY BARRY ENDICOTT
Nobleton Lakes Golf Club

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On the move: **Rhod Trainor**, Chippewa to St. Thomas; **Ron Heesen** (Assistant), The Board of Trade to Beach Grove; **Mark Hagen** (Assistant), Greenhills to Wyldewood; **John Smith**, Wyldewood to Kawartha; **Dave Chapman**, Victoria Park to Glendale; **Kim Hanley** (Assistant), Brooklea to Blue Mountain; New members: **Donald Gefucia**, Barrie; **Rhod Trainor**, St. Thomas; **Doug Meyer**, Cedarbrook; **Gord Walkinshaw**, Toronto Ladies; **Paul Weidmark**, IBM; **Tom Kenyon**, Southern Pines; **Robbie Robinson**, Hidden Lakes; **Manny Figueredo**, Richview; **Arthur Trumble**, Katchiwano; **John, Lockie**, Lockwood; **David Gurd**, Maple Ridge; **Howard Anyan**,

Bowmanville; **Peter Creighton**, Castlemore; **Joseph Hahn**, Delhi; **Lloyd Thatcher**, Victoria Park; **Gary Gavett**, Saugeen; **Robert Dioxin**, Pine Crest; **Bruce Jones**, Belleville; **John McCallum**, Strathroy; **William Kivi**, Glenview; **Dave Suter**, Richview; **Ken Green**, North Bay.

The 13th Annual Management Symposium was January 11 at the University of Guelph - 260 registered. **Jim Wylie**, Bayview; **Rusty Warkman**, Oshawa; **Professor Sheard**, University of Guelph; **David Gourlay**, Thornhill; **Professor Lee Burpee**, University of Guelph were speakers.

November 25, **Gord Witteveen** hosted the William Samson Day. **William Samson** was the founding father and first president of OGSA. With **Bert Hawkins**, Lakeview and 'smiling dad' **Howard Lloyd**, Rosedale, they laid the cornerstone at a meeting October, 1924 at Weston. Also present - **Joe Stanfield**, Mississauga; **Chris Freeman**, Toronto Hunt; **Jack Abbot**, Islington; **Frank Hamm**, Royal York; **Bill Austin**, Humber Valley; **Jim McCullough**, Scarboro; **Fred Haines**, Summit and **Bill Chinery**, York Downs. The CGSA Turfgrass Conference was held in Edmonton, March 13-16. Before the conference, **Ron Heeson**, **Bob Heron**, **Gord Witteveen**, **Ken Olsvik**, **Dave Keith** and **Barry Endicott** skied in Banff. The Eskimo cheerleaders led the hospitality party. East hockey beat West 7 to 5 at Edmonton Coliseum. Wayne Gretzky and other

Oilers visited after the game for tips. **David Gourlay** was Score's top superintendent.

GCSAA Conference was February 19-25 in Atlanta. **Jim Wylie**, Bayview and **Gord Witteveen** were speakers. An OGSA/OTRF meeting at Thornhill March 31 was hosted by **David Gourlay**. The winning curling team of **Bob Cherry**, **Tom Murphy**, **Jack Austin** beat **Paul Scenna**, **Paul Dermott**, **Paul White**. Meetings were held at Kawartha with **John Smith**, St. Catharines, **John Piccolo**, Roseland, **Randy Hooper**, St. Claire Parkway and **John O'Rae**. The Galt Field Day was held and a set of golf clubs was presented to **Clay Switzer** by the OGSA. **Stew Picken** and **Blake McMaster** won the Clayton Switzer Trophy; low individual scores **Bruce Burger** (73), Dalewood; **Bruce Vollet** (75), Conestoga; **Warren Vout** (77), Whitevale; **Bill Bowen** (78), Peterborough. The Superintendent-Pro Tournament was at Islington hosted by **Thom Charters**. Winning team **Ken Wright**, **Ben Kern**, National; low superintendent **Robbie Robinson** (78), Hidden Lakes. 10th Annual President/Superintendent/Greens event was at Essex hosted by **Bill Fach**. Winning teams **Blake McMaster** (105), Brampton; **Rhod Trainor** (104), St. Thomas; **Bob Heron** (103), Mississauga. OTRF held its 4th tournament at The National with a barbecue hosted by **Gord Witteveen**. **Bruce Calhoun** low gross with a 75.

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Association cuts

Winter calendar

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OGSA and charities

The Association carried on its tradition of supporting charities by making donations this year of \$500 to The Hospital for Sick Children and \$500 to the relief fund for superintendents flooded by the Mississippi River.

Super moves

- Bob Burrows from Cornwall Golf & Country Club to Highland Golf Club in Montreal.
- Warren Vout from Cedar Brae Golf and Country Club to Brampton Golf Club.

Association display

A display has been developed by the OGSA for use at various trade shows. It provides strong identity in these locations. Look for it at Guelph.

Seminars / workshops

Pesticide Safety Training Seminars

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February 19-20, 1994 - Guelph

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Annual Ohio course

Ohio State Short Course

January 17-21, 1994
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The eighth annual Ohio State University Golf Course Maintenance Short Course will be conducted January 17-21.

- The course will provide current information about turfgrass maintenance.
- Emphasis will be on principles of soils and fertility, weed control, entomology, plant pathology and course setup for tournaments.
- It is designed for all golf course personnel including management seeking more formalized training in turfgrass maintenance.
- Attendants will qualify for recertification credits from the Ohio Department of Agriculture for Licensed Pesticide Applicators.
- Certified superintendents will qualify for continuing education units from the CGSA.
- Registration is \$350. Deadline to register is December 27, or until 60 applications are received.
- Lodging is available at the Holiday Inn, or other local hotels.
- Contact Barbara Bloetscher at (614) 292-7457 for more information, or call the Department of Conferences and Institutes at (614) 292-4230 for course registration.

GSCAA seminar report

Sixty people from Ontario and New York State attended the CGSA seminar - *Golf Course Construction: Renovation and construction projects* - which was held at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute, October 18-19.

Instructors were Brian Silva, a golf course architect with Cornish and Silva; and Jan Beljan, a golf course architect with Fazio Golf Course Designers.

The topics in this informative session were: *Renovation and construction methods on greens, tees, fairways, bunkers and ponds and Architectural history and style*. The OGSA co-hosts an educational seminar with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America every fall.

Important dates

Ontario Turfgrass Symposium

January 5-7, 1994
University of Guelph

OGSA Annual Meeting

January 7, 1994
University of Guelph

64th Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference

January 18-20, 1994
Holiday Inn
South Convention Center
Lansing, Michigan

CGSA Annual Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show

March 5-8, 1994
Calgary, Alberta

OGSA curling meeting

March 25, 1994
North Halton Golf Club

OGSA ski meeting

Sometime in February
Watch for details

Border Cities Tournament

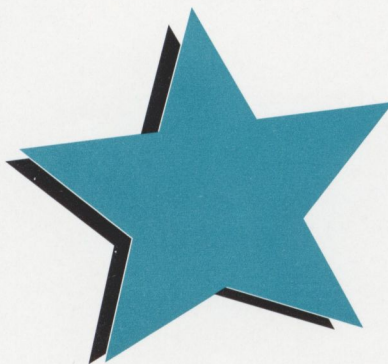
April date to be confirmed
Point West Golf Club

Dallas trade show

More than 634 exhibitors are expected at the Dallas Convention Center when the GCSAA opens its 65th International Golf Course Conference and Show January 31.

Although the official opening is not until February 5, the previous three days include seminars, registration, reception and workshops.

Regarded as one of the world's most significant turfgrass industry shows, the Dallas event has become an annual tradition.



Golf Foundation news

Scholarships in agronomy and landscape architecture

The Canadian Golf Foundation will be introducing two new academic scholarships next year for students working towards postgraduate degrees in agronomy and landscape architecture.

The intent is to put something back into the game of golf. They will be awarded to qualified individuals intending to pursue a career in the golf industry, either in the areas of turf agronomy or golf course design. The scholarships, valued at \$3,000 each, will be awarded annually to Canadians studying in Canada or abroad.

A generous contribution of \$50,000 from Export 'A' Inc. enabled the Foundation to establish the scholarships. Funds were donated from the Export 'A' Skins Game held in July at Devil's Pulpit.

These new awards will complement the CGF's existing scholarship program begun in 1982. Since its inception, more than 220 Canadian students have received scholarships valued at up to \$4,000. In 1993, 24 scholarships were awarded totalling more than \$70,000.

1994 golf research planned

The CGF will be conducting two new research projects in Canada for 1994:

- a nationwide golf course operational survey with questionnaires sent in the spring to general managers, professionals and superintendents; this is a continuation of the operational studies being conducted since 1981; results should be ready sometime in June; in addition, the Foundation hopes to publish a report summarizing important trends and analysis since 1981 from all their operational surveys.
- Bill Frisbee, an Associate Professor at the University of Guelph, is working on the second project regarding the demand for and expenditures on golf in Canada; this is a long-term project analyzing the demand for golf and the factors effecting it from 1986 to 1994; results will be available in January.

American trivia

On September 13, 1926, 60 greenkeepers met at the Sylvania Country Club in Toledo, Ohio to form the National Association of Greenkeepers of America. Its purpose was to inform and educate its membership and strive for the betterment of the greenkeeper's future.

Today, that organization is the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and it serves more than eleven thousand members worldwide.

Like many organizations it has suffered through difficult times, such as World War II. But, perhaps, its most perilous moment was during the Great Depression. In 1933, the Association's Cleveland bank closed its doors taking all of their \$16,000 deposit.

Now, a thoroughly progressive organization with its national headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas, its modern mission of professional education has its roots in the charter of 1926.

However, it is interesting to note that two years prior to the inaugural meeting of the NAGA in 1926, the OGSA was formed. It was October, 1924.

Audubon sings out

The RCGA and USGA are committed to increasing environmental awareness and enhancing wildlife habitat through proper golf course management programs.

These two organizations and the Audubon Society of New York State are working together on a cooperative program called the Audubon Co-operative Sanctuary Program (for golf courses) under these principles:

- enhancing wildlife habitats on existing and future golf courses
- encouraging active participation in conservation programs by golfers, superintendents, officials and the public
- recognizing golf courses as important open spaces
- educating the public and golfing community about the benefits of golf courses and the role they play in the environment.



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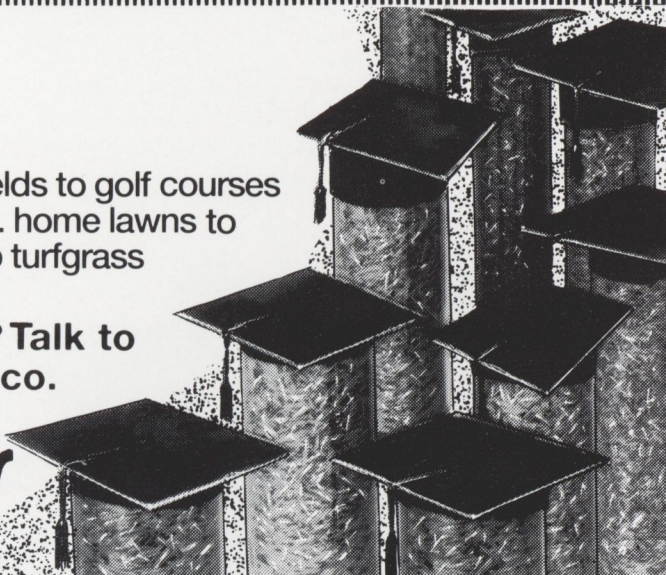
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The changing of the guard

BY WILLIAM NEWTON
Golf Images

The renaissance caretaker

Greenkeeper was one of Old Tom Morris' many titles. He was also a featherie ballmaker, clubfitter, architect, club manager, professional golfer and, of course, holder of seven Open titles. In many similar ways, the modern greenkeeper has evolved - as Tom did - as a master of all trades.

Typically, the post-Second World War superintendent was responsible for more than grass growing. Duties often included general purchasing, blade sharpening, fairway cutting, construction, flagpole surveillance. This property manager was also a plumber, small engine mechanic, electrician, carpenter, painter, tree planter, and, sometimes, golf professional.

The greenkeeper became an important member of the club hierarchy. His was a strong and equal voice with the manager and professional. Sensible advice about golf course matters was usually unquestioned by members as their recognition of knowledge and authority. But is this so today? Perhaps, not.

A new sentry emerges

Lately, there has been a visible changing of the guard at golf club gatehouses. For the new greenkeeper, male or female, there are different issues for the nineties and specialization is now as prevalent in their profession as it is in others.

Arguably, because of a changing business, the superintendent's job has become more onerous, more difficult, more stressful. Those chores once achieved with a small seasonal crew, now often require staff with special qualifications. And since new equipment is expensive and sophisticated, expert assistance is necessary for proper use and maintenance. Legislation now demands that chemicals be mixed and applied only by licensed personnel.

The high cost of annual maintenance for a quality course, along with shrinking budgets, requires long-term planning and monthly vigilance. High-tech literature needs review to provide for important self-education. These are typical of the new responsibilities confronting the greenkeeper of the nineties.

But, perhaps, the area of greatest change is membership make-up and personality. No longer a passive participant, modern members are more involved in club matters - and investment - than their predecessors. This, in turn, can become a demand for better and improved performance by all staff. One reason for this increased expectation is, obviously, the high cost of joining and playing.

Members, having paid a substantial amount (and now mostly in personal funds), expect good value and quality. As well, apparently comes the privilege of complaint. "Why is the rough so rough? Why haven't the geraniums been watered today? Number twelve green is too slow. What are you doing about the yellow spots on my fairway?"

This type of comment, while often harmless, is, one suspects, symptomatic of the belly-aching society we live in. In much the same way, special interest groups have made their voices heard: "Why are you spraying now when national butterfly week begins Tuesday? Or, "You better start cutting the greens shorter to be ready for our tournament."

The boomer generation

One theory for increased member involvement might be labelled - 'a little learning'. For example, we have entered the greatest boom period in golf since the end of the Second World War. During the fifties

(Continued on page 16)

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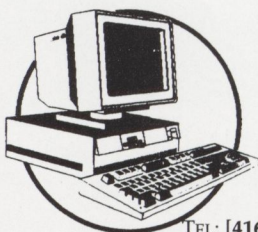
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Spinning your reels

BY GLENN BURGESS
Skyway Lawn Equipment

It is probably the oldest piece of equipment in your shop. In fact, research indicates that its average age is 15 years for this essential tool. It's your reel grinder. If you have recently purchased a spin grinder, then your mower maintenance practices have probably changed for the better.

New mowers are a grind

The change to spin grinding occurred at about the same time as lightweight mowers touched down on the fairways and 11-bladed reels hit the greens. This was no coincidence. However, these new mowers put more pressure on the mechanic than ever before given that lightweight mower heads require a higher level of maintenance than the gang mowers they replaced.

They went dull faster, had to be backlapped more frequently and went through bedknives quicker. The 11-bladed greens-mower heads were harder to sharpen accurately and as grass on greens was cut shorter, topdressing frequency increased. Consequently, it was difficult to keep these mowers sharp.

If you have introduced a spin grinder into your maintenance practices, problems mentioned should have disappeared.

Backlapping finds relief

Mowers can be sharpened more frequently with a lot less time and effort than before. In many cases, this has eliminated backlapping altogether. By doing this, bedknife and reel life is extended since backlapping causes the most wear to these parts.

The big relief angle needed in the reel for backlapping can also be reduced. Although the relief angle makes it easier, the thinner blade will damage more easily and will be weaker when it hits foreign material on the playing surface.

By reducing the angle in the reel, the blade will be stronger and will dull less frequently. This will mean lapping intervals of one week will be lengthened to sharpening intervals of 6-8 weeks.

Better bedknife contact

The bedknife is as important as the reels. The purpose of the bedknife is to position the grass at the same height so the reel can cut it with a clean, slicing action. When working properly, reel mowers are not cutting with a scissoring action, but rather with a slicing, scything motion.

When a mower is sharp, it will cut with no reel to bedknife contact. As an example, try to get a pair of scissors to cut with no contact. It cannot be done. The bedknife positions the grass so the reel can slice it.

When the relief angle in the bedknife becomes very important. The bedknife relief angle allows the grass and any other material to pass between the reel and the bedknife with minimal damage to the two surfaces.

The angle that is required in the knife will change for the different cutting conditions. For greens, bedknives should be 3-6 degrees; tees and light fairways, 5-9 degrees; and trim and gang mowers 10-15 degrees. The larger the material that has to pass through the mower, the greater the angle.

Maintaining a competitive edge

When backlapping is eliminated, an edge can be kept on the bedknife by filing or using a small hand grinder to touch up the front edge of the knife. Doing this instead of lapping will allow the bedknife to wear straight rather than wavy. Now, the reel can be sharpened at the 6-8 week intervals while touching up the bedknives with the file as required.

By adopting these mower maintenance practices you will be able to significantly change the way equipment is handled. Eliminating backlapping will lower labour, reel and bedknife costs. Sharpening more frequently will provide a cleaner cut which results in a healthier playing surface.

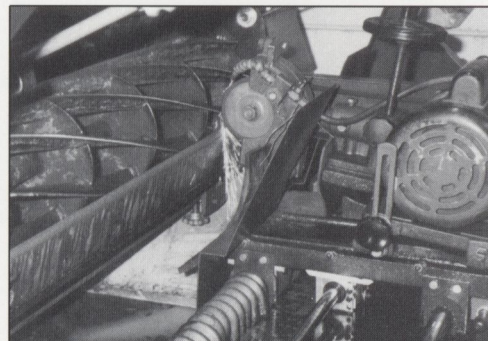
Reely.

A grinding episode

One of the most dedicated and important members of the superintendent's team is the mechanic.

This specialist often answers telephones, checks sparkplugs for colleagues, or provides friendly advice on demand.

He keeps the oil change records, tightens fanbelts, welds broken frames, takes the squeak out of wheels. He is also a grinder - one of the essential winter chores is getting the big cutters ready for the rites of spring.



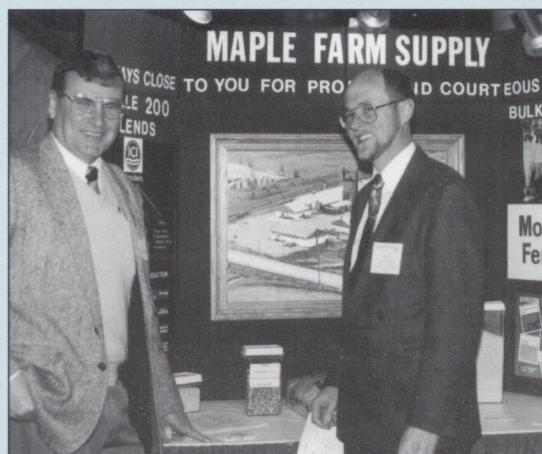
In these pictures, Credit Valley's Gord Barnes makes sparks fly as he puts bedknives and reels through the grinding process.

The 1994 Ontario Turfgrass Symposium in early January promises to one the best events ever held, with expected attendance in excess of 1,000. An important forum is provided for members, suppliers and educators to share their professional interests.



One of Gord's simple acid checks for sharpness, and minimal gapping, is sliding a few slips of the daily newspaper between the turning blades.

Many of the 1993 exhibitors will return, along with displays of new products, ideas and enthusiasm for the business of turf management. Join your associates and friends during the three-day symposium.



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in the United States, three million rounds were played at 5,000 facilities. Last year, five hundred million rounds were played on 14,000 courses*.

Although rounds have multiplied in this period almost 170 times, facilities increased less than three times. This simply means that with considerably more players, each club presents a diverse membership. Consequently, the superintendent is likely to encounter a wider range of opinion than in the past.

Paired with this scenario is the enormous exposure golf gets through television and print. Powerful messages are brought to bear on the golfer. At the same time, turf management has reached state-of-the-art and never has there been such spectacular 'visual' golf architecture. People also travel more frequently to golf destinations. All of this translates into strong, colourful images for the average golfer.

The reality of perception

Thus, it is logical to assume that the new electronically-bombarded golfer of the nineties, and one who has paid record-high fees, will be more demanding. In other words, a sculpted fairway played at a Florida course is compared with the 'home' course. The white sand of PGA West as seen on television appears cleaner and easier to escape from than the dull taupe sand of Ontario. A waste bunker portrayed in a lure brochure appears to make more sense that our typical mix of rough, hardpan and pinecones. This, then, can and does become

potential winter agenda material for the Greens Committee, as members search for golfing equality.

Additional pressure is placed on the superintendent to satisfy these perceived needs. And because of a little learning, the uninitiated member is often unlikely to appreciate this region's unique short-term growing conditions; the real cost of laying in Ohio sand; or the terrible stress turf suffers in a summer heatwave despite the clamoring for high-speed greens in the championship rounds. The incongruity of a waste bunker in established parkland architecture is not usually considered. These are some of the member-fabricated issues confronting today's turf manager. It is a cause célèbre for the onerous job of managing what used to be a straight-forward assignment.

Nurturing public relations

Where is the counter-point? Realistically, in one area only - namely, communications. Part of the new role must be regular member liaison. Finding forums to do this, such as a newsletter, locker room bulletins, special communiques, photographic presentations, sharing of important technical information, or Saturday morning workshops would help to properly inform a membership about common concerns.

Communications might also provide the opportunity to help educate members about the course of tomorrow which, due to economic and environmental pressures, might look and feel a little different than what now is expected. Rough which is less kempt, unfertilized and not weed-free; banks of ponds uncut creating wider hazards;

unchecked pests due to environmental constraints; reduced staffs to meet budgets; greater urbanization of perimeters; shorter, narrower courses based on development and maintenance costs; greater wear and tear on greens due to increased play; weaker turf because of silt buildup caused by acid rain; or, a dozen other facts of life.

Tell them that their greenkeeper has been learning about, and working towards, addressing these crucial turf management issues in order to provide quality, practical playing fields for tomorrow. At the same time remind them that hole by hole, Ontario has the best collection of golf courses anywhere in the world.

Members should be impressed, and thankful. Tom Morris would have been, knowing how his Scottish stolens have been lovingly nurtured by Ontario's guardians of the greens. The changing of the guard ought to be a two-way street.

*Source: An environmental approach to golf course development; October, 1992; American Society of Golf Course Architects.

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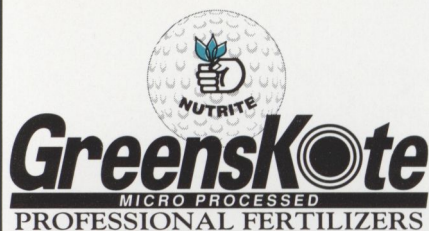
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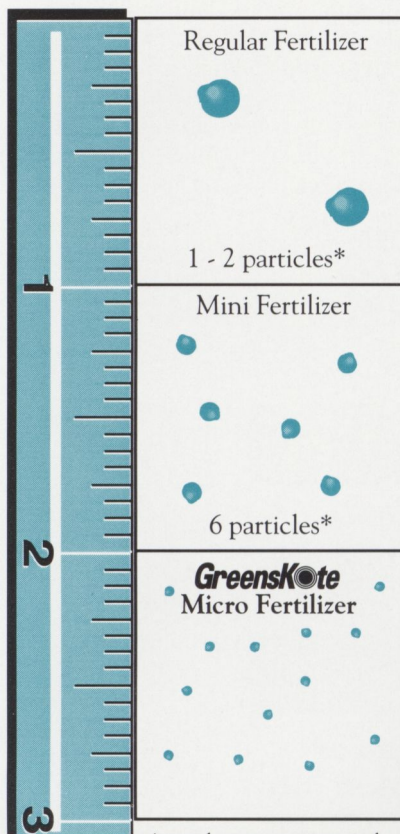
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BY GERRY ECKEL
Islington Golf Club

Not just a pretty face

When ornamental grasses are discussed, the tendency is to only visualize amber or silvery flower and seed heads waving in the breeze. Because of this, a superintendent may question their value.

Although on a golf course the ornamental character of these grasses can be a bonus, their true worth is in other characteristics. These include: disease-free or resistant, pest-free or resistant, no mowing, no string trimming, little or no fertilizing, no fungicides, erosion control, no aeration and no watering except in severe drought. And yes, they can also be very attractive with their amber or silver heads waving in the breeze.

Problem-solving with grass

In 1992, at Islington Golf Club, we began a program to gradually introduce ornamental grasses to areas of the course which, historically, had maintenance or erosion problems. The idea was to determine whether or not they could help improve these areas.

Initially, we concentrated on two areas. A steep, difficult-to-maintain slope beside a

cart path which served three holes; and an erosion-prone hill beside the 18th green which was almost too steep for cutting with the weed eater. Four different grasses were used. The results were excellent. This year the program was expanded to nine different areas using 24 different varieties of ornamental grass.

The grasses are carefully selected for the location and purpose they must serve, as well as their decorative value. There are many ornamentals available and regardless of complexity of moisture, light and soil conditions at the individual sites, it is possible to find suitable varieties. There are more than 200 species ranging in size from a few centimetres to more than three metres tall.

A learning experience

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in getting started on an such a program is becoming familiar with the varieties. There are not too many ornamental grass experts in the Toronto area, and those with experience in golf course applications are scarce.

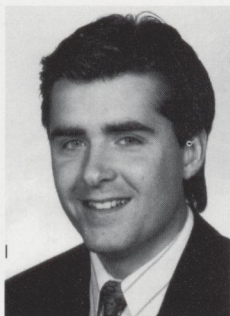
However, with some horticultural knowledge and a willingness to do some research, it is possible to get a program underway and achieve satisfying results. At Islington, our learning curve has been long but we are sufficiently pleased with our progress and we will be expanding the program to encompass several more areas each year.



Ribbon grass (*phalaris arundinacea*) above embankment to Islington's eighteenth green and alongside patio is attractive and assists in erosion control.

To train is to gain

BY JOHN W. GRAVETT
Turfecs



John Gravett of Turfecs provides professional turfgrass educational consulting services.

To survive the 1990s, every superintendent and club manager needs to have a competitive edge.

Generally, many golf course maintenance operations provide some initial and ongoing training of their personnel. But, is it enough?

Successful superintendents have one thing in common - they spend no less

than five per cent of their annual budget on training. They argue that this cost is an investment.

Two-thirds of the five per cent is devoted to management training (superintendent and assistant), the balance to staff. Superintendents recognize that learning is an ongoing process throughout their careers.

Learning benefits all

When training people, training and teaching should not be approached as just a process of correcting or improving deficiencies. People are hired and promoted for what their potential is, not for what they cannot do. And they learn as they are encouraged to develop and maximize their strengths. Thus, learning in the workplace should include elbow room for mistakes. If employees do not make mistakes, they usually never reach their potential.

A funny thing happens when people are being trained. When you teach what you know, you enhance the process of your own understanding - to teach is to learn twice. Frequently, this results in seeing our own shortfalls.

Decrease the information gap

Golf course operations are increasingly becoming an information-based business. It is important to bridge the gap between knowing and not-knowing. Otherwise, there could be serious implications. For example, in many situations there is a shortage of qualified labour in the greenkeeping business largely due to the seasonality of employment.

To help change this, those in leadership roles must encourage and provide information to every employee. There should be a

triangular relationship between operations, the employee and management. By identifying needs, professional seminars and programs can be developed for every segment of the program - spray technicians, irrigation specialists, office and skilled workers.

Choosing the correct medium

By utilizing various sources of technical and professional development, superintendents can achieve their specific training goals. Sources for training information include seminars, workshops, symposiums, trade publications, books and periodicals. Attending seminars can be useful, since material and presentation style can be tailored to individual requirements. In addition, sending key personnel to seminars promotes a tremendous feeling of interest and professionalism. The benefactor is your operation.

Training by degrees

Training can be provided without excessive expense. It provides opportunity to let people know how important their individual contributions are. This assures them that they are receiving more than a paycheck from their job.

A training goal must be the continuing development of each individual - to improve and serve in a way that will benefit others. The results will be measured in the manner in which employees interact with each other and club members. But training is only as good as follow-up in the field. The real secret is in the initial training where the employee's active participation in, and ownership of, an idea is essential to success.

Training with follow-up can separate your organization from others - one that you and your staff can be proud of.

Regardless of the type of training material used, follow the four Ps of training.

P1 People:

- train to the level of your audience
- tell anecdotes • relate your own real life experiences

P2 Planning:

- provide trainees with an agenda or schedule • break technical information into easy-to-understand chunks of information
- (20 to 40 minutes each)

P3 Practise:

- rehearse your material
- practise your presentation

P4 Place:

- have a suitable location for your training sessions • make it comfortable

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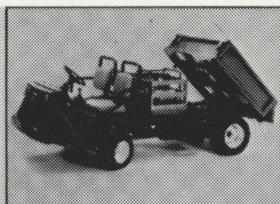
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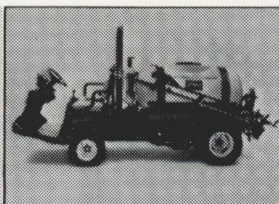
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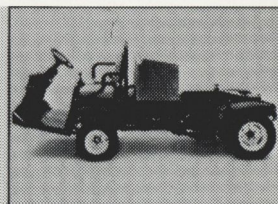
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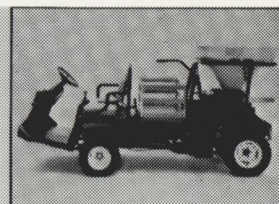
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