



# TURF TIMES

MONDAY, MAY 22nd, 1989  
CRYSTAL DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB, INC.  
FRANKFORT, MICHIGAN

Volume 18 No. 3

In our last newsletter we told you that we would give you the exact date to play Crystal Downs C. C. Above is that date, we will look forward to your playing this outstanding golf course and now the details. Starting times are necessary and due to the number of rental carts available, a limit of 60 golfers will be permitted to play. Starting times will be from 8:00 A.M. thru 10:15 A.M. and these times can be confirmed beginning May 15th, by calling Fred Muller (Golf Professional), at 616/352-7979. Members are requested to not bring more than 1 guest to this event. Cost of playing per person will be \$30.00. This breaks down to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cart, \$2.00 golf prize and green fee. Normal golf fee here is \$100.00 per person including cart. Please bring your handicap as the contest will be low gross and low net. For those who also wish to participate in a special "skin" game, this will also be available for your consideration. If you plan to pay your golf by check, this check should be made payable to Crystal Downs C.C. or Fred Muller. We mention this because dinner and "Happy Hour" will be held at the Frankfort Hotel, on Main Street and that will be payable there.

There may be some of you that will not play golf but will come for our business meeting and dinner. The schedule therefore will be taking place at the Frankfort Hotel as follows:

HAPPY HOUR with cash bar	3:00 to 4:00 P. M.
BUSINESS MEETING WITH Bruce Wilde, Michigan Dep't of Agriculture speaking on "Pesticides"	4:00 to 5:00 P. M.
DINNER	5:00 P. M.

You will have a choice of Roast Sirloin or Scrod. You will be asked what your choice will be when you register for golf. Those coming for dinner only, should register your choice upon arrival. Cost of dinner will be \$15.00 plus tax and gratuity.

Directions? Either from north or south, U.S.31 to Benzonia where there is a 3 way stop light. Here you turn west on M-115 into Frankfort (approx. 8 miles), to flashing intersection light with M-22, Turn right (north) and follow M-22 about 5 miles to Crystal Downs Main Entrance on left of M-22, and on up to parking area and Pro Shop. Coming only to Dinner-Meeting, at flashing light intersection, turn left, one block to Main St., turn right 4 blocks and Frankfort Hotel will be on the corner, right side. Hotel telephone number is 616/352-4303.

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NEXT MEETING will be at the new Michaywe Hills Lake Course and this will be our annual fund raising benefit for Michigan Turfgrass Foundation Benefit on Monday, June 13th, 1989. Further information on this will be forthcoming. Meantime, line up your foursomes.



# NORTHERN MICHIGAN TURF MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

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## Attitude can land a summer job

**D**ear Abby: Will you please reprint that letter you ran beginning "Dear Kid"? It was signed "The Boss"—explaining why he picked "the other kid" who had applied for a job. It appeared in your column several years ago, but with summer here it would be helpful if you ran it again. I am a businessman, and you wouldn't believe what comes in here applying for a job. Thank you.

Portland, Ore., Businessman

**Dear Businessman:** With pleasure. Here's the piece, and well worth the space. It appeared in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, in William Raspberry's syndicated column. It was written by Karen Rak, who teaches English to students at Center Junior High School in Strongsville, Ohio.

Ms. Rak composed a letter (ostensibly from an employer) designed to let her youthful job seekers see themselves as they are seen. With so many young people looking for jobs now, I think this piece deserves all the exposure it can get:

Dear Kid: Today you came to me for a job. From the look of your shoulders as you walked out, I suspect you've been turned down before, and maybe you believe by now that kids your age can't find jobs.

But I hired a teenager today. You saw him. What was so special about him? Not experi-



**Dear Abby**

**By Abigail Van Buren**

ence; neither of you had any. Attitude, son. A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E. He did his best to impress me. That is where he edged you out.

He wasn't dressed like Easter Sunday, but then that wasn't necessary. His clothes were clean, and he had gotten a haircut. He filled out the application form neatly and completely. He did not ask to borrow a pen. He carried his Social Security card, had basic identification and did not ask, "What's a reference?"

He didn't have two friends waiting for him by the pop machine. He didn't start to chew gum or smoke while being interviewed. He didn't keep looking at his watch, giving me the impression that he had something more important to do.

He took the time to find out how we "operate" here, and what his day-to-day tasks would be. I think he'll keep his eyes open and work for me like he'd work for himself.

He was willing to start at that point where I could afford to pay. Someday, perhaps, he'll get to the point where he'll have

more authority over others and a better paycheck.

You know, kid, men have always had to get a job like you get a girl: case the situation, wear a clean shirt, and try to appear reasonably willing.

Maybe jobs aren't as plentiful right now, but there are jobs. You may not believe it, but all around you employers are looking for young men and women smart enough to go after a job in the old-fashioned way.

If you have even the vaguest idea of what I'm trying to say, let it show the next time you ask for a job. You will be head and shoulders above the rest.

For both our sakes, get eager, will you?

The Boss

## A NEW MEMBER

I am a new member.

I see you at the meetings, but you never say "Hello",  
You're busy all the time you're there,  
With those you already know.

I sit among the members,  
But I'm a lonesome guy,  
The new ones are as strange as I,  
And the old ones pass me by.

But - darn it! You folks asked me in,  
And talked about fellowship,  
You could have stepped across the room,  
But you never made the trip.

Why don't you nod and say hello,  
Or stop and shake my hand?  
Then go and sit among your friends,  
Now that I'll understand.

I'll be at your next meeting,  
A nice time I hope to spend,  
Do you think you could introduce yourself?  
I'd like to be your FRIEND.

*I still believe ardently that every young man who has to make his own way in the world should devote himself most industriously and enthusiastically to acquiring education, that he should consecrate himself far more to realities than frivolities. But, when reasonable provision has been made for the future of himself and his dependents, when he has earned an established position, he should begin to think along broader, more generous lines. He should give thought to getting something from life in addition to putting his best into life, he should have a wider horizon than mere moneymaking.*

B.C. FORBES

BEHIND THE GREENS  
A Monthly Message From Your Board  
By Jeff Holmes

Welcome to green grass, warm temperatures and, of course, long hours. The winter hibernation is over and it's time to provide aesthetically pleasing as well as optimum playing conditions at the golf course. I hope that each and every one of you came through the winter in good shape. No snow mold, ice damage, wind desiccation or rodent damage would make each of us overjoyed. This doesn't shorten those long hours, but it does let you and your crew concentrate on other tasks.

It is time to put your last ideas on the planning table and start executing all the plans and programs that have been devised over the winter.

Speaking of programs, this brings to mind the upcoming tasks of fighting off disease, insects and weeds. All of these pests can be handled by properly using pesticides.

Pesticides are an endangered species within our profession. To help retain the use of pesticides we need to support our lobby groups, educate ourselves and educate the public on pesticide use.

To be fair to ourselves and others we should obtain a license for purchasing and using restricted pesticides. By obtaining this license you have to pass a test. The test consists of pertinent information on chemical use, effects and proper handling of pesticides.

All of us should take the time to study and receive our pesticide certification license for restricted chemical use. If you would like more information on this topic, there is no better time to find out than at our next monthly meeting. The May NMTMA meeting at Crystal Downs will have guest speaker Bruce Wildie. Mr. Wildie is a member of the Michigan Department of Agriculture. The topic of his discussion will be restricted pesticide licensing.

Take this opportunity to play a great golf course and also receive information on how to further your professional career.

Good luck golfing at Crystal Downs!



# Project Your Image Over The Mist

By: H.E. Frenette, CGCS

"Infinite toil would not enable you to sweep away a mist; but by ascending a little you may often look over it altogether." (Arthur Helps)

A little known quote from a man we have never met but what a profound effect it could have on our efforts to become the recognized professionals we all aspire to become. To lift ourselves above the feeble attempts to convince our members and colleagues that we deserve much more than we get. Just calling ourselves professionals and telling each other we are does not a professional make.

How many meetings have you had with fellow superintendents who begin their acquaintance with some remark like, "I have a pretty good layout but the membership won't let me have the money to do the job", or "We just have to get the job done with what we have because our members can't afford to raise the dues". To add to his martyrdom, some announced EXPERT gets up at your local meeting and spends 30-45 minutes telling you those members expect you to maintain that rock-pile in tournament condition with the same budget as last year and you are just going to have to learn how to accomplish this as professional superintendents. Have you ever met an EXPERT in the field of Turf Management—Superintendents, as you know, are not classed as EXPERTS—who didn't say you were the greatest bunch of guys in the world? Then in the next breath, they're telling you that you just have to learn to do more with less. It occurs to me that these individuals may be experts in Rhetoric but something less than knowledgeable in the field of Turf Management.

Here we are down in the mist sweeping away like mad but to no avail. Any man who can claim to give his members a better course (with today's labor, materials, and equipment costs) for the same money has lost touch with the industry or has a membership that will not long accept his quality of maintenance. We may even consider the possibility that his past efforts have been less than professional if he can suddenly produce results with the same budget.

This brings us back to the purpose of

our discussion. In order to see above the mist, we must recognize that our industry is part of the free enterprise system. We do not enjoy subsidies, tax exemptions, or federal grants. We must operate within the economic realities of the business world; which means competing for labor, paying the going price for equipment and materials and providing the fringe benefits that go with operating any business.

Determine the needs of your membership. What quality of course do they want? Once this is understood, all related efforts must be approached realistically. Determining the needs of your membership should be a continuing process. Listen to the ideas and complaints of each individual member. Be receptive to constructive criticism. Be prepared to reconcile even the most ridiculous suggestions to maintain harmony.

Prepare your requirements and justifications and then be prepared to make a convincing presentation. For clarity, let's consider some of the items that might be in your presentation:

## Labor

This is the largest percentage item in the budget but has traditionally been the least realistic. We have agonized for years with less than adequate personnel because this has been the way IT IS. It is time to recognize that the job is not going to get done properly without skilled technicians who can be encouraged to stay with the club. They should be paid competitive wages and provided with reasonable fringe benefits as added incentives.

Training programs must be organized on a State or Regional level to provide a pool of apprentices prepared to fit into the routine of turf maintenance procedures. State Superintendents' associations can be the leaders in such a program with benefits equal to or surpassing existing half-hearted research efforts. What better trade for a young man to pursue in one of the local Vo-tech schools? You the Superintendent, not the club, will be the one to initiate such a training program.

For years labor has been recognized as the

main problem within the profession. Solving this problem will certainly help raise us above the mist.

Consider two areas where many of us give too little thought to our responsibility as professional superintendents; preparing the assistant and training the turf student:

The Assistant - Once we have made the decision to employ an assistant, our responsibility is twofold: (1) Provide the individual with the opportunity to learn all he can to prepare himself for the time he becomes a superintendent, and (2) Provide your membership with a competent individual who can maintain continuity in the daily operation of the course in the absence of the superintendent due to superintendent meetings, vacations, illness or other emergency.

The Turf Student - You may decide to employ turf students to supplement your seasonal crew. In doing so, you have accepted a responsibility to the student and to his or her school.

The student expects to participate in a varied host of disciplines. He or she does not anticipate spending the placement training period just riding a tractor or raking bunkers. They hope to have the opportunity to engage in every procedure on the course. The superintendent and his assistant should afford the student a chance to learn each skill on the course. In addition, the student should be required to exhibit his or her understanding of the disciplines studied in school such as:

- Turf and weed identification
- Tree and shrub identification
- Lime and fertilization programs
- Safety in the use, handling, storage and disposal of pesticides
- Calibration of application equipment
- Preventive maintenance procedures
- Budget and accounting procedures

Once the student has been exposed to the various duties on the course and given a reasonable time to comprehend the HOW and, most importantly, the WHY, the superintendent has the responsibility to accurately evaluate each student. This is a commitment made to the school when he

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accepts a student for employment. To do less would allow unqualified individuals to enter the field and further dilute our efforts to be professional.

These two areas will increase your duties and cut into your free time. However, it will also raise you above the mist and expose you as a professional. Often we are hesitant to share our knowledge and experience with young people entering the field. This is inconsistent with our efforts to conduct conferences, seminars, and local meetings to share ideas and experiences.

### **Materials and Supplies**

This is an area in which we are reluctant to thoroughly investigate alternatives. It is easy to check price lists or make a phone call and insert a figure. Better yet, the easy way out for many unprofessional superintendents is to just add 10% to last year's figures. Although more troublesome, a complete breakdown of unit prices can save 6-10% of many items used on the course. Breakdown of unit cost does not only mean cost per gallon, pound, etc., but cost of handling, application, storage, value of technical service and availability.

Too often, we use what the fellow down the street uses because it must be good and besides; that's easier than coming up with your own programs. Then there is the Black Magic peddler who has a catalog two feet thick with every answer to your golf course problems. If you really want to know what his products are worth, ask him to see a label. That Cadillac will soon be out of your driveway. How about the guy on the phone from New York or Chicago who has the answer to your weed problems? The only answers this guy has are the ones written on a prepared sheet in front of him. When you talk to this fellow, you are really down in the mist; with a worn broom. When you walk in a materials storage area cluttered with 55 gallon drums of water, from these high pressure sales tactics, question the superintendent's professionalism.

When you list a material or supply item on the budget know what you are buying, what it can or cannot do for you, and that it is the best value available. Analyze the amount of active ingredients and reduce it

to cost per unit or cost per application. Determine your requirements, contact your reputable suppliers, discuss optional materials, price rates and then make your decision in a professional manner.

### **Maintenance**

This is probably the least predictable of all items in the management process. It would appear that no amount of historical recording, equipment record keeping or daily preventative maintenance can accurately predict future requirements. There seems to be one reasonable procedure that will minimize maintenance costs - diligent operator training and supervision. Most generally we are content to acquaint a man with a machine, show him the controls and then turn him loose. This is not proper operator training and supervision. Proper training programs produce better work habits and less down-time due to carelessness.

Then we regularly spot the article in a trade journal concerning repair or replace. There are as many formulae for solving this problem as articles. Manufacturers give us estimates of expected equipment life and trade articles show us equipment still in use that is 30 years old. Somewhere in between we must find the answer to good preventive maintenance, operator diligence and periodic overhaul. This must be accomplished by the superintendent committing himself to some basic principles:

- Inventory all available equipment and list its condition. (Show purchase dates & prices)
- Get rid of your "junk pile". Junk is worth cash.
- Put all equipment in operable condition or scrap it.
- Determine the equipment required to get the job done and prepare your justification for its purchase.

I can hear the outcry, "That's okay for you guys with big budgets but how about us superintendents at the small 9-hole courses?" The question here is not one of affluence of the club but of the degree of professionalism of the individual superintendent. We are speaking of rising above that mist to see the reality of our profession. Being employed at a small club is not an excuse for ineptness.

### **Irrigation**

This is an item that is coming of age and yet

one of the least understood expenditures on the course. Members are completely at the mercy of the fast talkers. We ask why the superintendent is not in a stronger position to assist the club in selecting their irrigation system. Most of us know the answer. We are not acquiring the knowledge necessary to understand the many problems associated with planning the system.

Who should be more concerned with such information as layout, pipe sizing, distribution, pumping stations, automation and specifications than the Golf Course Superintendent? The Architect? (He can advise but generally is not qualified), the Contractor? (He is qualified and knowledgeable but not committed to the interest of the club), the Irrigation Consultant? (He is self-employed to operate over a wide area and mostly not available), and last but not least, the Club member who is a local plumber? We have all seen the results of a plumber's spigot-system.

It behooves the professional superintendent to make himself aware of irrigation principles, design, performance, installation and automation along with the up to date equipment available. The choice is ours; we can take an active part in the acquisition of a new system or gripe about what a lousy system someone else stuck our club with and left us to straighten out.

### **Landscaping**

We all have members who want to see the course progress aesthetically. This means take no trees out but add trees everywhere. Shrubs around all tees, to add to our maintenance headaches, and trees over every green to provide shade and roots for added problems. Usually we end up with trash trees such as Sweetgum, Poplar and occasionally some Hickory. The professional superintendent should be familiar with the plant materials indigenous to his locale and their characteristics. This is where the help of a Landscape Architect comes in handy. Develop a friendship and seek his advice on maintenance-free materials.

If a tree program is to be established, get the help of a competent Golf Course Architect to prepare a Master Plan. Once approved, such a program can be carried out in stages as priorities dictate. The professional superintendent does not haphazardly start planting trees without thought to the game,

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maintenance or aesthetics. What you may consider a masterpiece this year could end up as a nightmare in the course of 8-10 years.

### Construction and Reconstruction

According to the GCSAA Organizational Job Description, the superintendent is an expert in this area. The question is; Where does he acquire this expertise? It certainly isn't as routine as mowing or spraying. Most generally, the average superintendent never gets the opportunity to gain the experience necessary. He may, in a career, become involved in actual supervision or construction of various phases but not the complete picture.

It would seem that the aspiring professional would make the extra effort to learn accepted fundamentals of good construction. Visit the course being built in your area and ask questions. Observe methods and results. Do not accept all that you see or hear at face value. Try to glean information from the architect, contractor and superintendent. Question your USGA representative. This type of investigation is what will raise you above the mist and enable you to see it altogether.

### Conclusions

This writer hopes that these words will encourage you to consider your role as a member of this profession. The word professional denotes one who has explored all aspects of his profession and has prepared himself for problems which he will face and be required to make an intelligent decision. The fact that a club hires someone to take care of it's golf course and calls him a superintendent, greenkeeper, etc. has no meaning unless the individual knows what he is and what his capabilities are to accomplish the myriad of tasks which he shall face. Joining an organization does not change your status unless you have accepted the responsibility to prepare yourself for the profession you have chosen. Make the most of your association with fellow superintendents. It will help broaden your professional horizons.

**Remember!** You will never be a professional Golf Course Superintendent until your fellow superintendents, your membership and the general public recognize and accept you as one.

## Top Dressing Sand

By: Buddy Johnson

I have spent over 20 years dealing in specialty aggregates for various applications. The last three years, I have had the pleasure of establishing working relations with superintendents of golf courses around the southeast. In this experience I have been able to expand my knowledge of aggregates relative to golf course applications.

The most enlightening issue came to be the aggregates most of the greens were constructed with. For whatever reason, availability, budgets, unconcerned attitudes, or a general lack of knowledge, quality specification aggregates were not utilized. Through the years, not much attention was given to the quality of sand used to top dress either.

Out of the seventies and into the eighties the research data base continued to grow. During the same period, the qualifications for superintendents were being raised and continuing educational programs increased knowledge of the research

data base. Superintendents taking advantage of the educational programs realized the need to seek better quality sands for top dressing to offset some of the deficiencies created by construction with inferior materials. Quality top dressing sand became their only alternative to increase permeability rates short of reconstruction.

Traveling and listening to superintendents, I heard many relate permeability rates less than 1/4" per hour. As a result, the search began for the ideal top dressing sand. Preferably the sand should have no more than 1% larger than 1 mm as this avoids dulling and nicking mower blades and settles faster. On the fine end of the gradation no more than 2% should be smaller than .10 mm. The permeability rate should be in the 40 - 45 inches per hour range.

If the above criteria are utilized, you should see a definite difference after your first top dressing. As a bonus, your green mowers will experience less down time for sharpening. This bonus generally will offset any additional cost of buying the better quality sand.

## The Most Vital Thing in Life

When you feel like saying something  
That you know you will regret,  
Or keenly feel an insult  
Not quite easy to forget,  
That's the time to curb resentment  
And maintain a mental peace,  
For when your mind is tranquil  
All your ill-thoughts simply cease.  
It is easy to be angry  
When defrauded or defied,  
To be peeved and disappointed  
If your wishes are denied;  
But to win a worthwhile battle  
Over selfishness and spite,  
You must learn to keep strict silence  
Though you know you're in the right.  
So keep you mental balance  
When confronted by a foe,  
Be it enemy in ambush,  
Or some danger that you know.  
If you are poised and tranquil  
When all around is strife,  
Be assured that you have mastered  
The most vital thing in life.

# 2 IMPRESSIONS 2

A Corporation may spread itself over the whole world . . . may employ one hundred thousand men . . . *yet the average person will form his judgment of the corporation through his contact with one individual.* If this person is rude or inefficient, it will require a lot of courtesy and efficiency to overcome the bad impression.

¶ Every member of an organization who, in any capacity, comes in contact with the public, is a salesman . . . the impression he makes is an advertisement . . . good or bad. . . . .

## 1988 YEARBOOK OF AGRICULTURE

Each year the Department of Agriculture of the United States publishes a book on Agriculture. the 1988 yearbook is titled, "Marketing U.S. Agriculture". This book can be procured by purchase from the U.S. Printing Office in Washington or it is free if you write your U. S. Congressman or U. S. Senator. Over the years, many subjects have been covered in these books and prove both interesting to read and provide many facts for reference. Some of the subjects over the years are, Water, Trees, A Place to Live, Farmers World, Our American Land, Grass, After A Hundred Years and many other subjects. If you have never contacted your congressman or senator, now would be a good time to start your own library.

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It is our understanding that the job of superintendent at Hidden Valley and Alpena Country Club, are still not filled. Seems that there have been many moves of superintendents in the north country. Chuck Menefee CGCS has left Lost Lake Woods for Harbor Springs. Brian Holmes has replaced him at Lost Lake Woods. Brian Hamilton CGCS has left Lincoln Hills and has joined the firm of Jeff Gorney Design Co., in golf course building and design. Maynard Gardner has taken over at Lincoln Hills. Crystal Lake Golf Course at Beulah has officially been sold as of Mar. 1st, to Bruce Keiller. Matt Rieschl has been retained as the superintendent. Bob Rieschl is seriously thinking of retirement and/or fishing.

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### WHAT IS HAPPINESS?

Golf is Happiness

For

Happiness is achievement

The father of achievement is motivation

The mother is encouragement

The fine golfswing is truly achievement.

Man may lie, cheat, and steal for gain

But, these will never gain the golfswing

To gain the golfswing man must work

Yet it is work without toil

It is exercise without the boredom

It is intoxication without the hangover

It is stimulation without the pills

It is failure yet its successes shine even more brightly

It is frustration yet it nourishes patience

It irritates yet its soothing is far greater

It is futility yet it nurtures hope

It is defeating yet it generates courage

It is humbling yet it ennobles the human spirit

It is dignity yet rejects arrogance

Its price is high yet its rewards are richer

Some may say it is a boy's pastime yet it builds men

It is a buffer for the stresses of today's living

It cleanses the mind and rejuvenates the body,

It is these things and many more for those of us who know it and love it.

Golf is truly Happiness.

PAUL BERTHOLY