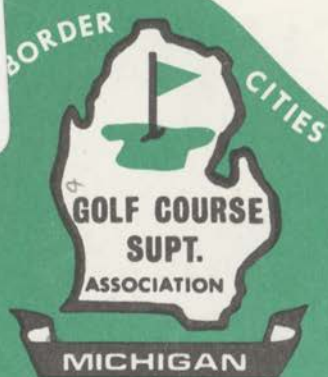


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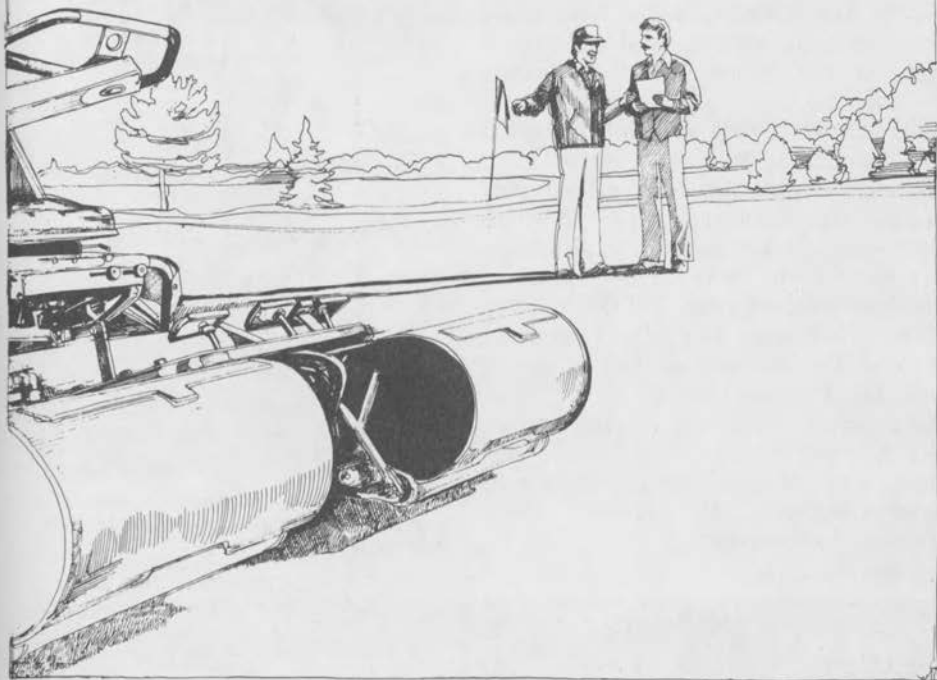
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## San Antonio Conference Largest Ever

Over 5,500 attended the 49th International Turfgrass Conference and Show. Attendance records were shattered recently both in total attendance and in the number of Golf Course Superintendents. All educational programs were well attended including the Seminars and the Certification Exams. Twelve newly certified golf course Superintendents were added to the roster. This brings the total number of GCGSs to 400. The equipment display covered over 125,000 square feet. This too was the largest in history. The highlight of the conference was the keynote address by Dr. Earl Butz, former Secretary of Agriculture. His talk on "I don't want to live in a No Groth Society" inspired all of those attending. It made all of us proud to be Americans.



A real "shoot-em-up cowboys" watering hole. It didn't take long for the boys to move — a little too wild.



Century Rain Aid Supply Corp. was recently presented with a Special Award by the Turf Division of Rain Bird Sprinkler Mfg. Corp. in appreciation for outstanding sales and service effort on the Marriott "Great American" project. Receiving the award are Ken Hodas, center, and Ernie Hodas, right. Presenting the award is Ed Shoemaker, director of sales and marketing for the Turf Division, Rain Bird.



Attention all Superintendents and their Club Officials!

## Tax Reform Legislation

President Carter's proposed tax reform legislation has gone to Congress. It is currently being considered by the House Committee on Ways and Means. Public hearings are now being conducted.

As the proposal now stands the new tax law would:

1. Eliminate the deductions claimed by businesses for CLUB DUES, CLUB FEES (including golf and other athletic fees), ENTERTAINMENT, theater and sporting tickets, yacht, hunting lodges and first class air fare.
2. Limit the deduction for the cost of business-related meals to 50%. Congressional spokesmen tell us that a compromise may be made to kill the 50% restriction on deductions for food and beverages, in order to retain the provision disallowing tax deductions on club fees, dues, entertainment and other related items. Think of what this would do to your membership and club spending!

At this time help is needed from all members. Contact your Congressmen and strongly urge them to fight this legislation which adversely affects our clubs and our jobs and the jobs of our employees. Also ask your Board of Directors and Club Members to exercise their support in this matter.

Michigan and Border Cities Golf Course Superintendents joins the voice of the National Club Association and all other allied groups to impress upon you the importance of taking action NOW. Write your Congressman.

Write to the members of the:  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Guy Vander Jagt (R. - Mich)  
William M. Brodhead (D. - Mich)

Call your Congressman - send a telegram to your Congressman. Do everything you can to make your voice heard. This action request comes from the CMAA.

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### Michigan Golfers do well in National Tournament

Once again Bob Prieskorn has won the Seniors title in the National GCSAA annual tournament. He has won this trophy enough times to retire it two times. Earl Prieskorn took 5th place in the Seniors division.

Other winners were: Fritz McMullen, 3rd place in Low Gross with a 148. J. Delcamp Jr., 9th in Low Net - 144. Chris Meyers won Low Gross in the Black Championship Flight - 156. Ward Swanson won 2nd in the same flight - 160. Kevin Dushane, 6th with 170. The Chapter team took 2nd in the Low Net tournament and 5th in the Low Gross Tournament.

Becky Tate took 3rd in the Ladies Low Gross.

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## Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council Elects New Officers

At the Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council in State College, Pennsylvania in January, Mr. Donald J. Pakkala, CGCS, Grounds Superintendent at Philadelphia Country Club in Gladwyne, Pa., was elected President for the fiscal year 1978-79.

Mr. Pakkala has been a member of the Council since 1972 and has served on a number of assignments. Currently, he is also Vice-President of the Philadelphia Association of G.C.S. and Chairman of the Education Committee, and a Ruling Elder in the Gladwyne Presbyterian Church. Former Council President Art Wick of Sewickley, Pa. was elected Vice-President, Chris King of Bellefonte, Pa. was elected Secretary-Treasurer. Newly-elected Directors to the twelve person board were: George Morgan, Supt. at Wildwood C.C. in Pittsburgh area; Henry Meinert of Meinert Bros. Landscaping Co. in Pittsburgh; Dr. Charles Cuden, D.D.S., Green Chairman at Green Oaks C.C. in Pittsburgh; James MacLaren, CGCS, Supt. at Lebanon C.C. in Lebanon, Pa.; Michael Hair, CGCS, Supt. of Penn National Golf & C.C. in Fayetteville, Pa.; and Charles McGilloway, Supt. at LuLu Temple C.C. in North Hills, Pa. Others serving terms on the

Council Board are: C. William Black, CGCS, Supt. at Fountainhead C.C., Hagerstown, Md.; R. William Marberger, Jr., Fisher & Son Co., Malvern, Pa.; Gerald Brenneman, Supt. at Longue Vue C.C., Pittsburgh, Pa.; and David Guerin, Jr., E.H. Griffith Co., Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, during 1977, contributed more than \$20,000 to turfgrass research, teaching and extension at Penn State University. Two scholarships were awarded to outstanding turfgrass students to reward achievement and to encourage further development and leadership.

Mr. Pakkala says that the turfgrass industry in Pennsylvania amounts to, in excess of \$200 million annually. Turf is becoming more important in our economy as people have more time to spend on outdoor recreation. The Council offers memberships and all dues are turned over to the Penn State Turf Program.

Grasses developed at Penn State include: Penncross, creeping bent, Pennstar Kentucky bluegrass, Pennlawn red fescue, Pennpar bent, and Pennfine perennial ryegrass. Mr. Pakkala urges support for the Council so that this vital work can continue.

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# Creating a Public Awareness

By Ted Woehrle, Editor

In a conversation with USGA officials recently, it was decided that because of our Concern for Conservation and the improvement in the playing conditions on American golf courses, we should perhaps take time out to impress on the public our combined concern for the apparent "over watering" of our courses. For some time now the USGA and other club officials have stressed the point that we are guilty of over watering our courses for the simple reason that we are trying to keep the turf alive and green, especially on fairways. This has become a sore point with some of our Superintendents because they feel that the Green Grass Syndrome was created by the USGA. Needless to say, this is not true. It was created by Club members and energetic Superin-

tendents that wanted to keep up with the neighboring course that always seem greener. A competition was established to see who could grow the most and the greenest grass. Anything less than green was not acceptable.

Now that there is a real concern for conservation on our part and a concern for the improvement in playing conditions by the USGA we should be making an attempt to sit down and discuss these problems and decide how we are going to sell the American golfer on the idea that green is not necessarily beautiful. Here is a recent article by Al Radko of the USGA Green Section. Articles and discussions on this very important subject will be appearing in future issues of "A Patch of Green."

## GREEN IS NOT GREAT

By Alexander M. Radko

A group from Britain visited the Green Section research grounds at Beltsville, Md., early in the 1950s when interest was high in the warm-season grasses in that area. Dr. Fred V. Grau, who was Green Section Director at the time, escorted the visitors through the grounds and enthusiastically described the studies that were being done. One was the Zoysia plot, which happened to be bleached tan in color because it was late October and Zoysia was dormant. After Dr. Grau finished his glowing discourse on Zoysia, one visitor, whose voice was exceptionally heavy and whose whisper could carry a long way, said, "That's the first bloody time I've heard so elegant an address on dead grass!"

This remark typifies what most

people think about turfgrass - if it's green, it's alive; if it's any other color, it's dead or dying! Many people also have the mistaken notion that the greener the grass, the healthier the turf. Unfortunately this notion is especially strong among golfers. They equate dark green with good playing turf, and they often refer to it as beautifully lush turf! Those trained in the study of turfgrass cringe at this description. To them lush means undesirable, soft, succulent, out of condition, filled with juice or liquid - as the case may be. A lush growth often results from the needless race for color despite the fact that color has minimal effect on turfgrass quality for golf.

Nature has provided grasses with

Continued on Page 12

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## Green is not Great Cont.

much genetic diversity. This includes wide differences in color, ranging from dark blue-green to light yellow-green and every intermediate shade. It is interesting to note that Europeans prefer the light green grasses while Americans very definitely favor a deep blue-green, similar to the dark color of Merion bluegrass. There are bentgrasses referred to as the Washington types that take on a purple cast with cold weather. Cohansey (C-7) creeping bentgrass is an example of yellow-green, and although it makes an outstanding putting turf, it isn't widely accepted because of its very light color.

Grasses also turn tan with cold weather. During the winter, northern and southern grasses turn differing shades of tan depending upon the location where they are grown. Despite this, even the most drastic color change does not affect the playing quality of well-managed turf, a fact that is strikingly evident with warm-season grasses during the winter. Although dormant and off-color, grasses hold the ball nicely for fairway play. Color, therefore, is not the most important consideration. **GOLF IS PLAYED ON GRASS, NOT ON COLOR!**

Why this obsession with color? Golfers like to brag about the color of their golf course; they equate dark green with health, they take pride in saying that "our course looks healthier than yours!" They also complain about their courses; they compare some neighboring course from a distance (where, indeed, the grass always looks greener) or they compare the course they played when growing conditions were ideal with the condition of their own clubs at times of stress when growing conditions are poor. Unfair? Yes, but it's difficult to overcome such pressure once it circulates within a membership. Too often such comments force management to say, "If that's what they want, that's what we have to give them."

It takes a very strong personality to stand up to 300 members and say, "You are wrong! My program is the best long-range direction for the club, we'll do it my way completely and totally!" The usual result is a compromise in program, sometimes doing things more for cosmetic purposes and not because it's the best thing to do.

The pressure of a membership indeed has great bearing on the golf course management scene. It has spawned *Poa annua*-oriented thinking because in reality this is what some memberships want. (*Poa annua*, an unreliable annual grass, is considered a weed by some, but a good turf cover by others.) The result is a forced growth of grasses that makes them uniformly greener, but this does not necessarily mean the condition is better for golf. A forced growth is not a healthy growth! Without question it is also a large part of the reason why so-called "winter rules" prevail at many golf courses today despite adequate budget expenditure. If memberships occasionally would accept off-color areas throughout their courses during the playing season, they would be able to play the ball as they find it for a greater part, if not for all the golfing season.

Turfgrass, as any plant, has varied cycles of growth. Warm-season grasses begin growth in the spring and show their strongest growth in summer. When cold weather comes they go into a period of semi total dormancy, depending upon the degree of cold experienced in any specific location. All growth begins in spring as air temperatures rise above freezing. Growth is slow until the soil warms and winter moisture disappears. Cool-season grasses go into their stress

Continued on Page 15

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America has become so tense and nervous it has been years since I've seen anyone asleep in church — and that is a sad situation.

— Norman Vincent Peale



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## Green is not Great Cont.

period in summer; they enter a period of semi-dormancy, which is a resting stage of reduced metabolism, until cool nights prevail in late summer. Then they resume good growth throughout the fall. During winter they go dormant with freezing weather and remain in that condition until spring. This is their yearly cycle; there is no way to change it and attempts to force growth or to force color can have only a harmful effect on their *healthful* growth. In spring, therefore, cool-season grasses take time to regain their normal color. Don't hurry it by watering and fertilizing too early. These practices weaken the turf, make it soft and succulent, and more often than not impose a greater stress on the turf during difficult periods of summer.

Early watering is difficult to justify. Grasses don't die in the spring from lack of water! Normally, winter and early spring precipitation is adequate to provide for early season grass needs. It is at this time that grasses have the opportunity to develop deep root systems that are so necessary for healthful growth throughout the rest of the growing year. Early irrigation encourages shallow roots. Grasses are much the same as humans; they, too, can be conditioned to a way of life and never know any other. The time to be rough and still get away with it is in the early spring. What is done during this stage of growth has a

strong bearing on how the grasses perform during the rest of the year, especially during stress periods.

So the grass isn't green! So the greens don't hold well for the first month of play! So what? This is the time of year for the player to work his swing into the groove for better summer play; similarly, this is the time for grasses to work themselves out of dormancy, to condition themselves for the tough road ahead. There is a big difference between growing grasses for golf and growing grasses for exhibitions. Utility grasses must be hardened so that they can serve their purpose. They must be disciplined and conditioned for traffic, abuse and wear under trying conditions of close cut. This is tough treatment but toughness is necessary for their healthful performance when the chips are down. If members would accept this as a way of golf course life, it would be easier to develop permanent grasses in place of *Poa annua*.

There is another fact of life in irrigating golf courses. Terrain is varied. Slopes, mounds, hills and depressions complement whatever level areas are to be found. Soils vary too, in depth as well as in composition. Sand, gravel, rock or ledge permeate areas of golf course property, and soil types vary, sometimes slightly, sometimes greatly. How is it possible, therefore, to irrigate uniformly when water runoff and water penetration are so variable?

Cont. on Next Page

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You can't!

If you want to keep the high spots and rock ledge areas green in summer, you must overwater the adjacent areas. If you set your pattern of irrigation to favor the low areas, then the high spots suffer. The point is that there is no uniform way to satisfy all conditions of soil and terrain in irrigating golf courses. Something must suffer, and the agronomically sound direction to pursue is to water only enough to keep grasses alive without serious regard for the development of off-color areas.

Overwatering is one of the cardinal sins of turfgrass management. If your course doesn't have off-color areas under conditions described, then chances are your turf is being overwatered to satisfy the membership's "keep it green at all costs" edict - whether it favors *Poa annua* or not!

This is another reason why turfgrass managers throw their hands up and sooner or later follow the path of least resistance. Why fight it if their members play golf on color?

*Poa annua* is the perfect answer for a good portion of the year. From the members' viewpoint water is the answer to keeping grass green. After all, when an expensive system is installed, the members will take no excuses for grasses turning off-color; if the grass isn't solidly green, then the man doesn't know his business. Let's fire him and get someone new!

What a misconception! What an unfair, amateurish appraisal! However, the old axiom applies: "The boss may not always be right, but he's always boss!"

Fertilizer also promotes color in turfgrasses. Nitrogen can modify the natural color of grasses slightly, making them a shade darker green than normal, especially when they are heavily fertilized. Color can be induced early in spring by applications of nitrogen. This is forced growth, inducing faster growth than the plant would make otherwise, an accepted practice, but only if it is timely and controlled. We have already said that grasses, too, are creatures of habit. If you feed them heavily, they come to expect it. Heavy feeding, however, induces heavy and thick-bladed growth. If grasses are overstimulated and are fed too early, their growth is soft, succulent and less capable of supporting the golf ball. Hungry grass, on the other hand, is tough grass; blades that are hungry and lean support the ball well and interfere least with the clubhead's progress through the ball. When the grasses are ready to move, only a little help from fertilizer will provide healthful growth. It's important to wait for signs that they are ready for food. This is good agronomic practice. This is what most superintendents would do if they managed only for the turfgrass needs.

Mowing also has a bearing on color.

Continued on Page 21

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## **Dan Jones wins GCSAA Chapter Newsletter Editor Award**

Dan Jones, Golf Course Superintendent of Aventura Country Club, North Miami Beach, Fla., is the 1978 recipient of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) Chapter Newsletter Editor Award. Jones is editor of "The South Florida Green," official newsletter of the South Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association.

This is the first year the award has been given. Newsletters were judged on the basis of overall quality, appropriate design, editing, content, scope and writing quality. Twenty-three chapter newsletter editors entered the contest.

Jones for the contest were chosen for their editing expertise and knowledge of the golf course superintendent's profession. They were David Slaybaugh, editor of *Golf Business*; Joseph Clough, editor of *Grounds*

*Maintenance*; and Dwayne Netland, associate editor of *Golf Digest*.

The award was established by GCSAA to encourage high quality chapter newsletters, recognize the contributions made by chapter newsletter editors and encourage the establishment of more chapter newsletters.

Jones is also vice president of the South Florida GCSA, and has served the organization as director in the past. He was recently elected a director of the Florida Turf Grass Association. He joined GCSAA in 1975.

Jones was recognized and received a trophy at the Press and Speakers Luncheon Monday, February 13, during GCSAA's Turfgrass Conference and Show in San Antonio.

"A Patch of Green" was not entered but we have entered the contest for 1978.

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## Turf Manager's Guide Available from Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council

Now available from The Pennsyl-  
vania Turfgrass Council:

*A Turf Manager's Guide - Microscopic  
Identification of Common Turfgrass  
Pathogens* by Patricia O'Connor  
Sanders, Research Assistant, Depart-  
ment of Plant Pathology, The Pennsyl-  
vania State University. 28 pp. 6 x 9"

This manual is a practical identifi-  
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manager. It deals chiefly with micro-  
scopic features of the fungi which  
cause turfgrass disease and how to  
recognize them. The manual includes  
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preparation and microscope use.  
Photomicrographs are included of the  
fungi which cause the following  
diseases of turfgrass: leaf spot/  
melting-out, fading-out, Fusarium  
blight, Fusarium snow mold, anthrac-  
nose, brown patch, dollarspot,  
Pythium blight, red thread, and Typhula  
snow mold.

Directions for nematode assay and  
photomicrographs of stylet nematodes  
are also included. A complete glossary  
of terms is provided, as well as infor-  
mation on approximate cost and kinds  
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## Green is not Great Cont.

The higher the cut, the easier it is to keep grasses green and the better the color, especially during periods of stress. The mowing height, the mowing frequency and the mowing pattern each influences health and color. The closer the grasses are cut, the better they play. The closer they are cut, the more difficult it is to keep them uniformly green. Again, terrain and soils have a strong bearing on the performance of grasses on certain areas. The closer the cut, the more difficult it is to manage water properly. Water application is more critical here again, if it is pointed towards the preservation of the permanent grasses. This means a low amount of watering. *Poa annua* always benefits from overwatering. In the days before fairway irrigation, grasses were often mowed at 1¼ to 1½ inches. When the grass was dry, this cut was not objectionable because dry grass blades are thin and rigid and the clubhead can move through the ball easily. The unwatered grass is light and firm, while the watered grass is soft and heavy. Unwatered grass allows a firm surface; heavy watering results in a soft, spongy turf and soil and, therefore, the golfer loses some control over his shots. A good example of this phenomenon now exists on unwatered rough areas. Find a spot and try it for yourself. The problem, however, under completely unwatered conditions is a lack of turf uniformity and density. Eliminating water obviously is not the answer, just as too much water is not the answer either.

The solution lies in a management program somewhere in between. The British system of course management for the most part represents the least watering principle, the tough management of grasses, the *laissez faire*

Continued on Next Page

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**Green is not Great Cont.**

doctrine of allowing grasses to fend for themselves and encouraging the fittest to survive. They describe the American way of management as "the manufactured look," one that tends to favor weaker grasses through management and maintenance techniques, thereby promoting a weak overall stand.

Somewhere in between is the answer, but for better golf, in my opinion, the British style of management is the system to follow. This is especially true since economic, ecological and environmental factors are now so much a part of golf and will become even more influential in the future.

Finally, the race for color has had a solid impact on budgets. Water, energy, fertilizer, chemicals, manpower and equipment are now more costly. As grass growth is forced with excesses of water and fertilizer, more disease, insect and *Poa annua* problems result. The more the grass is forced, the more the need for additional man-hours of mowing time.

Equally important are the increased time and cost of parts required for conditioning and repair of equipment. The race for color has had a solid impact on golf course management. It's time to get away from the manufactured look. Let's go back to emphasizing natural turf growth, to growing tougher grasses. Let's go back to playing golf on grass, and not on color!

ALEXANDER M. RADKO is the National Director of the USGA Green Section.

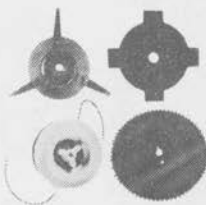
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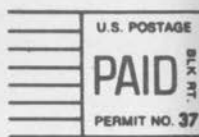
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