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A PATCH of GREEN

Official Publication of the
Michigan & Border Cities Golf Course Superintendents Association



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This is the week that was...

GREENKEEPER'S DIARY

Monday - Want to spray bad dollar spot on greens. Cushman won't work. Sprayer won't work. I don't want to work. Nobody else wants to work. Two of the crew stayed home and did not work. Just had a phone call that the Junior Golfers are to have a shotgun start on both nines at 8:30. Hung up in the caller's face. Should not have had that last beer last night. Mowed greens and tried not to notice that the cups needed changing and the dollar spot is even worse than I thought. Did not mow 13. Hate it. Between the winterkill oil-spillkill and the disease, we ought to tow it to the SPCA and have them put it to sleep. Chairman left message at the Pro Shop to get in touch with him at once. He better not hold his breath. Hit 95 by late afternoon. Late for supper, wife mad, supper lousy, I'm mad. Watered 'till dark. Showered and went to bed. Wife sexy- I'm not.

Tuesday - Went in at daylight - the air feels like a police dog's breath. Got the sprayer working. Can't figure out why the chemical companies package dusty chemicals in bags that are impossible to open without getting it all over yourself and the sprayer, not to mention breathing it. The cheapest cereal on the market is packaged in easy-to-open-and-close containers.

We all should go granular — that would snap their eyes open. Fairway tractor stuck in wet spot right next to the huge localized dry spot the crew calls Iran. Why are there so many cars in the club lot? The Pro Shop says it is a ladies' member-guest transferred from another club that had a fire in their kitchen. I think I'll set one in ours and let them eat at Burger King. Go home early — sleep thru supper. Wife mad again, too tired to be mad. Mow rough 'till dark. Showered and ate cold left-over supper. Felt sexy — wife still mad from early evening. Lost interest.

Wednesday - Slept late, went in at 7:00. Changed cups 18 greens, hit 14 rocks. No record, but close. Thirteen green has disease that looks like vomit — on close inspection it is vomit — what a relief! You can always hose off vomit. Birds working on greens — how many cutworms does it take to fill up a crow! I think their mother was raped by a rooster the way they scratch with black toenails and dig with their beaks. The member who owns the ice cream plant told me we need more sand in the traps — I told him his maple walnut needs more nuts. He said, "Times are Tough" — I agree. Went in the club for a cup of coffee and the manager asked me if I

Continued Page 18



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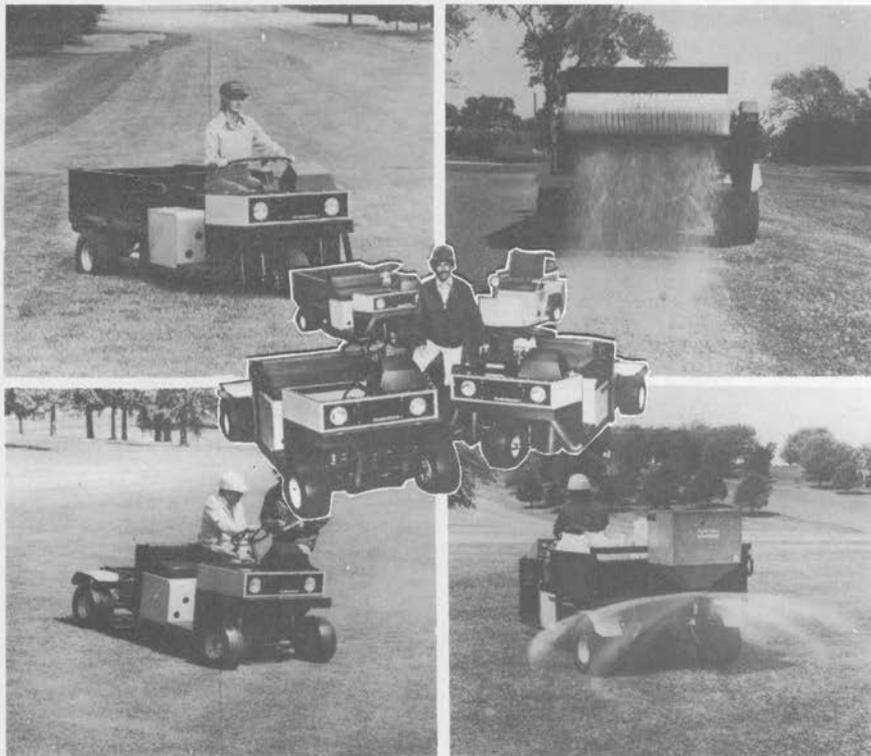
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1 Yes, GCSAA can help you become a better superintendent. One way it does this is through educational seminars and conference sessions it sponsors each year to help you become better informed about turfgrass diseases, pesticides, landscaping and management practices.

2 Yes, GCSAA is helping to further the advancement of the turfgrass industry. Through the GCSAA Scholarship & Research Fund, Inc., GCSAA provided more than \$13,500 last year in research grants to leading turfgrass programs. GCSAA also provides educational opportunities to turfgrass students through annual turfgrass scholarships.

4 Yes, GCSAA offers recognition for superintendents. Through its public relations efforts, its magazine, and its award programs, GCSAA helps promote the image and the professionalism of the superintendent. GCSAA also provides information to superintendents about how they can use public relations to promote their own image to their course, their community and their association.

3 Yes, GCSAA provides a meeting ground for superintendents. Each year, GCSAA sponsors an annual conference and show for its members. Last year more than 6,500 educators, industry representatives and members from all over the world attended. GCSAA's executive committee decided at its last board meeting that the conference experience is so valuable that first-year members should be encouraged to attend by being given free admission.

5 Yes, GCSAA provides each member with a life insurance program. Supplemental insurance, disability and pension programs also are available.

6 No, GCSAA can't help you with your golf handicap. You'll have to work on that yourself.



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A Review of the Past-

How Golf Course Maintenance was in the Late Teens

Several things come to my mind. One of the things is, what were the cost of many items several years ago? One could buy a model T Ford car for approximately three hundred dollars. A spare tire was not included. Usually the dealer would give the customer a spare tire and also a set of tire chains. The chairs were very necessary for anyone who expected to travel in the country. One could buy gasoline for ten or eleven cents a gallon. No tax those days. Farm labor was thirty dollars per month included board and room. One could buy a pair of work shoes for less than two and a half dollars. There was a shoe store in Minneapolis called the ninety-eight cent shoe store, none higher. There was a time when one could go to Sears Roebuck and buy a hand lawn mower for less than two dollars and fifty cents.

What about various costs on golf courses? I can only go back to 1916, the year I started to work on one. Wages were considered satisfactory at that time—twenty cents per hour, ten hours per day, six days a week, and no coffee breaks. Board and room was one dollar a day. This included all the food one could eat. One could hire a team of horses and a driver for five dollars a day. Help was plentiful in those years and it was good dependable help.

Very little commercial fertilizer was purchased in the teen years. The fertilizer used came from the horse or cattle barns. How many of you ever used real liquid fertilizer? I imagine very few of you know of the method that is required in the processing of this kind of fertilizer. My experience came at the club I was employed at in Minnesota. A large pit was built. The pit was then filled with manure from the stables. Water was poured over it occasionally. After several days the liquid was pumped from the bottom of the pit and put in large containers and taken out on the golf course greens and applied, usually with a sprinkling can. It was almost impossible to get an even distribution, but we always were able to tell if the fertilizer was any good. This is some contrast in regards to applying fertilizer on greens today. But labor was cheap. The material cost nothing.

Red top grass seed was five cents a pound, Kentucky Blue - eight cents a pound.

Prior to the middle 1920's the soil that was used in golf course construction or that was necessary to use in the maintenance of a golf course was moved either by horses and scrapers, or wagons or wheelbarrows. How did the soil get into the wagons? By men and shovels.

Continued Page 14

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When you check into a large hotel, as you may during GCSAA's 53rd International Turfgrass Conference and Show in New Orleans Jan. 31 - Feb. 5, one small precaution may save your life. When you enter your room, take a moment to glance down the hallway and note the location of the stairwells. It will only take a second and you may not get another chance.

Fires in large hotels have become frightening familiar news stories lately, especially with two disastrous fires in Las Vegas hotels in a relatively short time. Unfortunately, most people think disasters of that type are something that only happens to other people. With more than 5,000 hotel fires in a year, the odds may catch up with you.

In a hotel fire, the flames are not the killers. Smoke, usually coupled with

panic, is. That's why you should memorize the location of the stairwells as well as the layout of the room. You may not be able to see them very well later.

If you do smell smoke in the middle of the night, don't be in a hurry to flee. Call the hotel desk and report it to the fire department. They may have everything under control and if they don't at least someone will know where you are.

If you do leave your room, stay low and stay calm. Crawl to the stairwell and make your way down, keeping a firm grip on the handrail. Not everyone may be as calm as you, and you could be trampled. Don't try to take the elevator down and unless you're on the lower of three floors, don't try to jump.

If you run into a dense area of smoke

Continued Page 12

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Stay Low!, Cont.

be sure to prop the door open so you won't be locked out.

Many people have remained unharmed in their rooms while others died trying to escape. It's a judgment call, but if you decide to stay in your room, several precautions can increase your chances of survival.

First, turn on the bathroom vent. Fill the tub with water for firefighting purposes. Stuff wet towels under the door. If the door and walls are hot, keep throwing water on them. Keep everything wet, and don't worry about the mess.

If your room has a window or sliding door, open it, but keep an eye on it. There may be more smoke outside than inside. If there is fire outside the window, get rid of the draperies and anything nearby that might be combustible. Keep pouring water around the window.

If you swing a wet towel around the room, it will help clear the smoke. Another wet towel tied around your nose and mouth will filter the air you breathe.

WRITING EFFECTIVE REPORTS

As an executive in what is, after all, a business organization, you may be called upon to write periodic reports on your operation or current and future projects. The art of writing clear and effective reports is one each executive should master. Here are some things to keep in mind as you write:

Remember your reader. Generally, reports are written for one specific person, such as the greens chairman, general manager or other club official. Write as though you were speaking to that person, keeping in mind his likes and dislikes.

Organize your report. Don't make the reader have to dig for the important points. State your case in 1-2-3 order, with headings, if possible, to bring out important facts.

Make it objective. Don't spend so much time telling how you feel and what you think that the reader misses the facts. Avoid exaggeration, extravagant statements and generalities.

Get to the point. Edit out everything which does not serve some informative purpose in your report, and tell your



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reader immediately what he needs to know. Then fill in the details.

Document your report. Attach copies of clippings, letters, notes or price schedules that support your conclusions.

Develop an interesting and easily read writing style. Keep your paragraphs short and avoid long and involved sentence structure. Indent or underscore important points to make them stand out.

Summarize the important points at the end of your report. The reader will then know why it was written and what you have concluded about your subject.

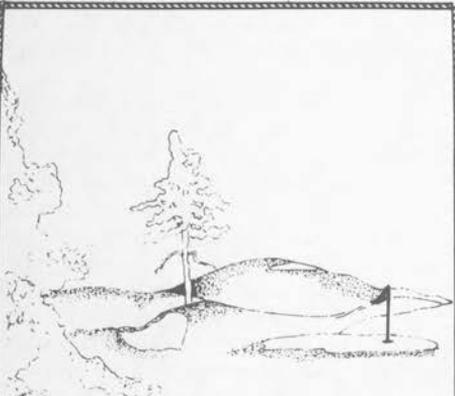
Night Lighting May be Harmful To Trees

The energy crunch may provide a hidden blessing for trees sensitive to night lighting. After the introduction of high-pressure sodium lighting in the 1960s, architects and designers rushed to include bright exterior lighting in new building designs. However, the rising cost of electricity is forcing a trend toward fewer lights or the use of more energy-efficient lighting systems.

USDA research horticulturist H. Marc Cathey surveyed 54 species of trees and shrubs for their response to all-night lighting. He found that continuous light forces sensitive trees into continuous growth, which causes stress and makes them more susceptible to air-pollution damage. It also delays dormancy in the fall, exposing new growth to a killing frost. These effects are dependent on several factors including light intensity, color and night temperature, Cathey reported.

Elms and sycamores are the most sensitive. A single foot-candle of incandescent or sodium light on the leaves of dogwoods, birches and some maples also interferes with the natural dark-light cycle of those trees. Oaks, evergreens and many fruit trees are sensitive to night lighting, and holly, rhododendron, linden and most maples are only moderately sensitive.

If your club uses less efficient light sources, such as metal halide or mercury vapor lighting, you may be doing your trees a favor. These lamps emit less of the red part of the spectrum, which triggers continuous growth.



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Review of the Past, Cont.

When making application for a job of this nature the only qualification required was good legs, and a strong back.

In the early years the grass on the greens consisted mostly of Fescue, German mixed bents, clover and weeds. Weeds were either left there or removed by hand digging. I often wondered which was worse - the weeds or the weeders. Greens were mowed about three times a week with a wheel type mower. It took a man around five hours to mow three greens. Watering was usually done when greens began to turn brown from the lack of moisture, not with the idea in mind to help hold a pitched ball, but to keep the grass alive when cut at, the then called, short height of one-half inch. Worm casts were usually so thick in the spring and fall that the greens had the appearance of a green that had just been top-dressed - before the top dressing had been worked in. It was always necessary to pole a green with a bamboo pole before mowing. I remember on one green we used a chemical for worm control; when the worms came to the surface, we raked them up and hauled them away in a wheelbarrow; and the wheelbarrow was almost full. Statements of this kind are hard for some of you to believe, but I know it is the truth, because I was one of the fellows at the end of the rake handle.

Greens were fertilized usually with ammonium sulphate which was applied with a barrel type sprayer. It consisted of a fifty gallon barrel with two large steel wheels, one on each side, and a handle attached to the front. A one inch pipe about four feet long with several holes drilled into the pipe attached to the back end acted as a spray-boom. A shut-off valve was installed between the pipe and the barrel. Two men pulled the barrel and one walked along the side using a paddle to keep the solution agitated. You can imagine the damage that was done to the putting surface by the barrow wheels and the men's shoes pulling this heavy barrel up the contours. How does this compare to the present day of applying liquid fertilizer to turf? Now a

Continued Next Column



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Review of the Past, Cont.

six thousand square foot green requires approximately seven minutes to apply the fertilizer.

There was practically no chemical for disease control in the teen years. Today there is a chemical for the control of almost any disease; in fact, maybe every one and it can be applied to the average green in three to four minutes.

It used to take one and a half hours to mow a green with a wheel type mower. When a roller type mower was manufactured, mowing time was reduced considerably. Then the power mower came on the market; first a single unit, then a two and three unit mower was used. This looked like we had it made. Now we have a three unit power riding mower which requires approximately ten minutes to cut an average green.

Fairways in the early years consisted of native grass and weeds. Fertilizing was almost unheard of with the exception of a little barnyard manure used on certain areas. The mowing was done with horses - one cutting unit for each horse. The next improvement was one horse to three cutting units. As time went on we used two horses and five cutting units. And remember, we always had to put leather boots on the horses' feet before we could go on the fairway and start mowing. Fairways were cut at 1½ inches. You can imagine the height of the grass during the fast growing season between mowings because it took many days to get over the whole course. It was not unusual to lose a ball in a fairway. As years went by the manufacturers came out with a tractor to either pull or push five mowers. This replaced the horses that were used for that purpose. The result of this improvement meant the fairways could be mowed twice a week!

When the depression came along, the manufacturers built a tractor with greater speed and more power. We then used seven or nine unity instead of five, and were able to mow all the fairways in about six hours or less. The increased speed that was required to mow them in this length of time soon showed faulty results, fairways began to get like a washboard. I am sure that

Continued Next Page

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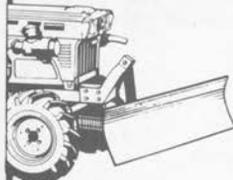
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Review of the Past, Cont.

many of you have noticed the damage done by high speed mowing and had to correct the damage of cross mowing.

Some of you will remember the weed problem on fairways - dandelions, plantain, buck-horn, and many other weeds. In many cases there were more weeds than grass. In the spring when dandelions were blooming and were in their seeding stage, it was almost impossible to find a golf ball. But thanks to the great research work accomplished by some of our chemical companies, today weeds and clover on fairways and in the rough are very rare. A few years back it required about two days to fertilize an eighteen hole golf course. Today, it can be done in five hours or less. This shows a tremendous progress in fairway maintenance.

TEES - Up until the later years tees were built far too small. There was just enough room for a foursome and three caddies, the fourth one was usually down the fairway watching where the balls went. No care was given to them during the year except an occasional mowing. When the grass was all worn away, the tee was resodded. Today, the secret of good tees is large tees. Most tees that are being built today are around six to eight thousand square feet and maintained almost like greens with the exception of the cutting height. Divots are filled with seed and soil or plugged and watered regularly.

ROUGH - I would like, at this time, to say a few words about the rough which I think most of us get into occasionally when playing golf. I wonder how many of you know when roughs were really rough.

All of the rough was cut with a sickle type farm haymower at the course I was at in 1916-19. With the exception of about twenty feet next to the fairway, the rest of it was mowed twice a year, and the hay was used to feed our horses. When a ball got into this kind of rough, it was usually given up as a lost ball. Sometimes the player and his caddy would look for it on their hands and knees, or by rolling over and over, but it was usually useless. Today one can hardly call it rough. It is cut too short, and too often.

Many times I think of the advance-

ment there has been in the past 65 years. Greens mowed at one-half inches three times a week. Today they are like a carpet mowed at 3/16" or less, free from weeds, the finest strains of grass that can be grown in your particular area and mowed six or seven times a week during the growing season.

Fairways are better than the greens used to be. Tees are in a condition that any turf-loving person should hate to take a divot from.

Many wood clubs are used in the rough today. In the old days this sort of thing was seldom heard of. In the teens and twenties the banks of the greens and tees and the fairway bunkers were cut with a scythe. The men mowing with the scythe usually did no other work during the season. They used to wear the wood on the scythe handles with their fingers down to the rod running through the handle. How many men are there today that know how to use a scythe?

Years ago it used to require five nights to irrigate the tees, greens and fairways on an eighteen hole golf course. Today the modern automatic system will do the job in one night. The old systems were lucky to have thirty five to forty lbs. of pressure. Today they operate with one hundred and thirty or more lbs.

Golf course maintenance is at a higher standard today than ever in the history of golf, but there are some players who still complain about the condition of the course. Sometimes I wonder if they come out to enjoy a game of golf, or just look for something to criticize. I am sure if they kept their minds more on their game, there would be lower scores.

Ray Gerber

There is just as much authority in the family today as there ever was — only now the children exercise it.

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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Greenkeeper's Diary, Cont.

knew anything about the septic backing up. Left without getting the coffee. Fairly normal afternoon except we are down to one cushman. Are flat tires contagious? Home for supper at the right time for a change - no one is home. Note says heat a TV dinner. Go down to the Old Eagle Inn and wash a steak down with a half-dozen hinnies. Finish mowing rough. Wife mad. Don't care. Sleep on floor after watching Sands of Iwo Jima. Love Big Duke.

Thursday - My yellow crud is back. Every year it comes the end of July. Interesting light green spots get weaker looking then turn yellow . . . then gray . . . then dead. Some say it's Fusarium, some say anthraznose, some say funose. Wife says it's my imagination. My assistant got rid of the persistent red leaf spot patch on the practice green, he cut it with an eight-inch patcher and threw it in the pond. Sure is wonderful what they teach at the U. of Mass. . . .

Friday - In at dawn again and fell over the barn dog before I could get a light on. Friday is the day we do EVERYTHING. Assistant late again. sometimes I wonder about him. He wouldn't even hold still when I had to cut the bubble gum out of his hair, got mad because I cut his headband. This is the day I was going to spray because I missed last Friday that should have gone on the Friday before that. Maybe Monday. Maybe by then the cutworms will have turned to moths and flown away. Looped around the course in the pre-dawn light and saw four joggers, a mushroom picker, two ball hoppers in the pond, three members walking dogs, an old Italian lady cutting dandelions and a partridge in a pear tree. Threw a rock at the last mentioned. I love the course early in the morning - so quiet, so peaceful and tranquil. I think I'll call the state troopers and have all these people arrested. Picked up the remains of a big beer party by the 15th then went to work.

Saturday - Everybody in the world loves weekends but Greenkeepers. More turf disasters than all the Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays put together. Right off the bat four pins and a dozen markers missing and the usual moronic

messages written in the sand traps . . . why can't they write inspirational thoughts or the weather report? A neat group partied last night. All imported beer, an empty Southern Comfort bottle and two Cutty Sark's - member's kids.

Sunday - Greens mower failed to show 'till I had mowed five greens. I would have fired him, but then I would have had to finish. Things looking pretty good today. Can't wait 'till Monday to see what the hell will happen next.



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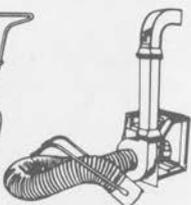
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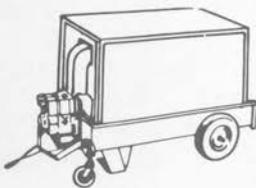
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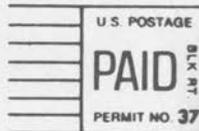
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