



**MGCSA MEETING NOTICE**

Date: Friday, August 23, 1974  
Place: Round Hill Golf Club  
Golf: 12 noon on (Superintendents Championship)  
Lunch: Available in grill room  
Cocktails: 6-7 PM  
Dinner: 7 PM  
Program: PGA Officials  
Host: Gus Powell  
Directions: Take Merritt Parkway to Exit 28 Round Hill Rd.  
Take right on Round Hill Rd. Look for sign about  
one mile down for Round Hill Club on right side.

**COMING EVENTS:**

August 19 MGCSA Picnic Woodway C.C. raindate  
AUGUST 26th  
August 21 R.I. University Field Day  
August 23 MGCSA Meeting Round Hill G.C.  
Sept. 3 HVGCSA Picnic Lake Mohonk  
Sept. 18 MGCSA Equipment Field Day  
Sept. 24 HVGCSA meeting Osiris C.C.  
Sept. 26 Labriola Memorial Golf Tournament  
Whippoorwill Golf Club  
Oct. 3 MGCSA Invitational, Brae Burn Country Club  
November Annual meeting  
Dec. 21 Christmas Party Burning Tree C.C.  
Feb. 16-21 1975 GCSAA International Turfgrass Conference,  
New Orleans

WESTCHESTER CLASSIC August 22-25: Bob DePencier has arranged for complimentary tickets for all MGCSA Members and GCSAA Members. Daily tickets can be picked up at the Will Call tent. Thanks BOB.

enjoyable. Richie certainly had great respect for our profession and I am sure we all will respect his Calls on the basketball court even more now that we have heard his comments directly. Well it's August again and we hope we can do a little better than last year. It always seems to be a critical month to make it through. The tired poa annua usually taking a dive somewhere along the line.

Even though we have been pumping alot of water at least it is controlled to some degree and certainly you can see the difference in disease. When the heavy and frequent rains come along with heat and humidity that's when things really happen. Alot of fairy ring, around during this dry period. Mel Lucas where are you? GCSAA is having a very busy year. The new booklet describing GCSAA is an excellent one "You and GCSAA."

**Job Wanted:** Ass't Superintendent position on an 18-hole golf course. I am 23, married, and have 1 son. I will receive a B.S. degree in Agronomy with emphasis on Turf Management from the Univ. of Georgia in Dec. 1974. I have 7 years experience in all phases of golf course maintenance, 3 of them in a supervisory capacity. Available Jan. 1, 1975. Send inquiries to:

M.L. Flanagan  
U Village, Area IV, Apt. M310  
Athens, Georgia 30601

**Job Opening:**

Position Available: Superintendent for Westchester County.  
Duties: Management of five (5) 18 hole public golf courses.  
Minimum qualifications: Required knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes.  
Salary: \$16,615 - \$22,115.

Contact: Mr. William L. Foley  
Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Conservation  
County Office Building  
White Plains, New York  
Phone: 914/682-2000

Note: Please refer to the GCSAA Code of Ethics before making application for this position.

**MGCSA NEWS:**

It was another great meeting at Mt. Kisco C.C. Fred did his usual great job arranging everything. The course was green-green and in great shape. Fred added a little plus to the occasion with a steak cook-out (cooked to your liking). We had about 90 for dinner and certainly everybody enjoyed our guest speaker Richie Powers. It gave you some insight of another profession, quite different from ours. It certainly was





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#### President's Message

As I reported to you at the Mt. Kisco meeting, we are pleased to have two new members on the Executive Committee. Chuck Martineau and Frank Bevelacqua have been appointed to fill vacancies due to recent resignations. Chuck will be working closely with Terry Mulligan and Bob DePencier on our upcoming Lawrence Labriola Memorial Member Guest Tournament.

Frank has been assigned the task of reviewing and revitalizing our Scholarship and Research program and will develop our options and alternatives in this area for the new year 1975.

We are also pleased to announce that Ted Horton will serve as acting secretary for the remainder of the year. We are all aware of the fine work he performed for the association in years past, and thank him for that work, and especially realize that this added work comes during a year already filled with abundant projects.

The thrust of the remainder of our year will be **Preparation For 1975**. Although efforts will be continued to insure that our three remaining tournaments and Field Day are successful, our activity must be concentrated on our goals for 1975. The Executive Committee has accepted the challenge of having our "house in order" for the new executive committee in November. Suggestions will be requested from all committee chairmen and members for the improvement and growth of our organization, and new goals will be set, atuned to todays standards of activity. These suggestions, along with practical goals will be presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Frankly, fellow members, I believe this has been a "lackluster" year, and it will take considerable ingenuity and dedication on the part of the new administration (and all members) to reverse the trend of interest in our association. We have all been beset by new club responsibility, requiring more of our time, resulting in less spare time to devote to secondary responsibilities such as those of our association. I hope that the actions taken the remainder of this year help to "turn the tide" and begin an up-turn of increased interest and activity for the M.G.C.S.A.

I should like to pay tribute to our Tee To Green Staff, our Program and Golf Committees, our Treasurer, and other officers and members whose interest and devotion to their responsibilities has not wavered in the least. Thank you, men!

Harry H. Nichol, President

#### The Mount Kisco Meeting

by Scott Benty

The Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendent's Association held a monthly meeting at the Mount Kisco Country Club. A fine turnout was realized this month, I am sure that this is due to the fine reputation that this club has established. Congratulations to the host superintendent, Mr. Fred Scheyhing, Jr. on a job well done. Further congratulations to the club itself for a delicious steak dinner, and the Cranshaw melon was superb.

Mr. Harry Nichol, the M.G.C.S.A. President made some announcements pertaining to the August 19th Annual M.G.C.S.A. Picnic at the Woodway Beach. The Field Day was moved back one day to September 18th at the Valhalla Dam. Mr. Roger Morehardt is the Committee Chairman for the event and he is seeking volunteers for service. The more people who volunteer, the easier the job will be and the more successful the entire day will be. So pitch in please. September 26th at Whippoorwill Golf Club, the first of which I hope will become an annual, perhaps to be rotated around the M.G.C.S.A. clubs, will be the Labriola Memorial Tournament. A large field would be a just reward for Mr. Labriola's services.

A special guest stopped by in the form of Dr. Smiley from Cornell University. He has witnessed a large amount of fairy ring throughout his travels of this area. If you have some try not to get too alarmed. Recommended solutions are to fumigate the area using wetting agents to move the fumigant further into the soil. Another, is possibly digging the ring area out to a depth of 2 feet, and replacing the soil and sod. Dr. Smiley is also involved with a chemical control for pythium. He hopes to have some definite results in the near future. Possibly a donation from an interested source would help in arriving at the answer.

Mr. Richie Powers, one of the N.B.A.'s referees answered some questions from the floor, including how to get in shape. He advocated dieting before the season starts, and then running 50 yard windsprints. Mr. Powers says Elgin Balor was the greatest to play the game and Bill Russell was the best defensive player.

Our thanks go out to Mr. Powers for taking time for us. Also thanks are in order to Dr. Smiley and again the Mt. Kisco Country Club.

## What Degree of Difficulty

Country club golfers had themselves an unusual look at the professional tour several weeks ago when the scores at the United States Open strangely resembled those of a local kickers handicap tournament. For some, it was a moment of triumph. For others, it was a moment of sympathy.

The site was the West Course of the Winged Foot Golf Club, a hellish spread of tightly cut fairways, tangle-foot grown rough and guillotine-shaved greens. Ted Horton is the Winged Foot superintendent. He did his job as directed by the United States Golf Association which operates the game's most prestigious event. That group wanted a tough layout and Horton gave it to them. The weather also cooperated. There wasn't a trace of rain or breath of wind until the fourth and final day of play.

Many visitors thought the course a fair test. There were many remarks heard through the galleries. "That's the way golf was intended to be played and that's the way it should be at every tournament" one wag demanded in a stage whisper "It's about time these pros get to see a golf course the way we see it. Why should they be set up in a shooting gallery every week and put those low 60 scores on the board?"

This is where there seems to be division of the country club set. The two sides are easily recognizable. On the one hand are those who discovered special delight in seeing the pros spray and pray. These are the members who are all for making their course a respected field of battle. On the other hand are those who sympathized with the pros at Winged Foot. They carry the same message back to the home club. They are all for making the game more enjoyable by inviting lower scores.

There is a certain amount of pride involved in the outlook of the superintendent in this matter. Most supers view their courses as mirrors of their version of the ideal layout. And most prefer to make their course something more than a pitch and putt venture . . . although the final decision on degree of difficulty is left in the hands of the membership.

The showcase set of country clubbers is truly in the camp of the tough-guy layouts. There is a certain distinction between the courses that are considered for championship events and those clinging to the theory that a happy member is a low-scoring member. The tournament courses somehow earn public acclaim by their association with important competitions. In some circles this is viewed as the best type of publicity.

There have been offered alternatives for golfers who are dead set against putting teeth into their member courses. Most of the toughening up comes in the form of narrowing the fairways and penalizing the player in length of rough cut according to the accuracy of the shot. There doesn't seem to be anything wrong with this method when green committees take into consideration the mediocre and high handicap players by installing a fourth level of teeing ground to go along with the ladies, regular and championship areas.

The four-tee system appears to be the compromising move in an argument currently raging in many clubs. In this solution, the golf course is at the mercy of the player's objectives . . . ego could be another word for it. If the player is of a mind to conquer the course completely, all he need do is

move-back to the championship tees. If he is not interested in total submission, he can trot ahead to whatever set of tees needed to keep him from turning the round into an interminable struggle.

One of the no-nos of the superintendent in the matter, however, is the attempt to change the natural beauty of a course in order to make the 18-hole trip around it easier. Filling in of brooks, eliminating sand traps, moving tees so as to take water hazards out of the line of play. All of these have to be considered tampering of the lowest order.

Degree of difficulty . . . what should it be? The answer: The course should be able to be played as difficult as the individual player wishes. The four-tee system provides the options. And in the end, everyone will be happy.

Gerry Finn



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## RECOMMENDED READING

The new U.S. Department of Agriculture yearbook entitled "Handbook for the Home" is now available from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price \$5.70. Quoting from the latest issue of Selected Publications—"The new yearbook is a new book which covers almost every aspect of daily living—purchasing a home, building a patio, creating a terrarium, etc. Whatever your plans, the book will provide important money-saving advice. The handbook is divided into four major sections corresponding to the major concerns in our lives." Much of this information should undoubtedly help the Golf Course Superintendent in his overall planning at his club.

With the exception of the war years, the Department of Agriculture has published a yearbook each year. Some of the outstanding ones have been Grass (1948), Trees (1952), Insects (1953), Water (1955), Soil (1957), and Seeds (1961). These are still available.

## TOP-DRESS GREENS AND SEE THE DIFFERENCE

William H. Bengeyfield

Western Director USGA Green Section

(From USGA Green Section Record, January 1969)

In this age of science and technology, where man's knowledge is increasing at a great rate, it is still difficult to improve upon some things. Top-dressing greens is one of them.

Last October, at the Northwest Turfgrass Conference, Dr. John Escritt, Director of the Sports Turf Research Institute, Yorkshire, England, was telling his audience of his observations of turf management practices in the United States:

"Americans," he mused, "seem to want to overdo everything. For example, I feel you are overdoing putting green fertilization. You are constantly spraying fungicides and insecticides. You seem forever to be veri-cutting and aerifying greens. But there is one important practice you should be doing and are not doing at all: top-dressing greens!"

Many agronomists in this country will heartily agree. His point is valid. Top-dressing is not easy. It may seem expensive, but properly done it is worth every effort and the money if your goal is championship putting turf. It is one management tool your golf course should use even though your neighbors have been overlooking it for the past three decades.

In the early days of greenkeeping, the ritual of top-dressing was carried out every few weeks. The old-timers may not have known all the reasons why, but they knew it worked. World War II put an end to that. Shortages of labor, equipment, and material practically eliminated the practice, and it has never regained popularity. The advent of the mechanical aerifier in the late 1940s further discouraged a return to top-dressing. The soil cores, it was believed, would do the job for us. Only in recent years have the better managed golf clubs returned to sound top-dressing practices.

Why is top-dressing important? How does it work? What are proper top-dressing procedures? Are there really major advantages for today's golfer and course superintendent in a top-dressing program? There is much to be said on the subject.

### Why Top-Dress At All?

Golf has expanded so rapidly in the past 20 years that the technical advantages of top-dressing have perhaps been forgotten by the old, and never fully appreciated by the new. Ask ten turf managers, "why top-dress?" today and at least nine will reply, "to smooth the surface." But the story has far greater dimensions than this.

**"The principles behind top-dressing originate deep in the basic tenets of agriculture, and anyone who manages fine turfgrass would do well to learn the real reasons for the practice,"** says turfgrass agronomist Bob Wiley.

More than merely "to smooth the surface," the following amazing advantages also await the top-dressed green: **Tighter, Finer-Textured Turf:** By following proper top-dressing techniques, the fresh soil material encourages new growth of grass shoots and stems. A dense, fine-bladed turf results.

**Grain is Checked:** Whether your greens are bentgrass, bermudagrass, or *Poa annua*, certain strains of any grass type are going to be more vigorous, more inclined to lay down than others. Top-dressing encourages upright growth and checks grain development in any type of turf.

**Thatch Control:** With heavy fertilization, high or infrequent mowing, etc., aggressive grasses soon form a spongy layer known as thatch accumulation by intermixing soil materials with plant materials. It encourages new microbiological activity, which in turn breaks down thatch and converts it into valuable soil humus.

**Less Disease:** Thatch is an ideal medium for disease organisms and insect activity. With thatch under control, this problem is reduced.

**Better Water and Fertilizer Infiltration:** Because top-dressing checks heavy thatch accumulation by actually separating the plant residues, tight turf matting is prevented. The passages for air, water, fertilizers, etc., are preserved in the turf profile. Localized dry spot problems are reduced, and better overall irrigation infiltration is achieved.

**Alleviates Compaction:** Top-dressed greens have better "holding qualities" for the golfer. The material physically supports the grass plant and thereby helps it absorb compacting forces. It develops resiliency. On heavily played greens, this point is of particular importance.

**Protects Against Winter Kill:** Years of experience and research have shown that greens top-dressed just prior to the winter have fewer problems from desiccation and winter injury. The crown of the plant is protected from the winter's drying winds and wide temperature swings.

**There's a Technique to Top-Dressing:** The success of any top-dressing program depends on how well it is carried out. Poor top-dressing procedures are worse than no top-dressing at all.

At the very beginning, the soil material to be applied must be "standardized," that is, made of uniform quality from one year to the next. Turfgrass agronomist Charles G. Wilson put it best when he said, "Each club should require an act of Congress before anyone is permitted to tamper with or alter the soil mixture decided upon, no matter how well-meaning he may be."

If the present soil in greens has a history of success (good drainage, deep rooting, minimum compaction, etc.), the top-dressing material should be of the same general nature, if available. On the other hand, if it is not available, or if greens do not have a good soil, than an additional effort is needed. In this situation, a physical soil analysis (see "USGA Green Section Specifications for a Method of Putting Green Construction") should be made of these materials that are and will be available at a cost within budget means. The physical analysis will determine what mixture of soil, sand, and organic matter is best for your program. This mixture then becomes THE permanent mixture for all future top-dressings and construction.

The physical mixing of these components is less tedious than it once was. Large quantities can be fairly rapidly mixed with today's front-end loaders, power shredders, screens, and other modern equipment. Time and labor costs have been enormously reduced.

Now two additional steps are needed before this "soil mixture" becomes eligible for "top-dressing" status: sterilization and composting. A weed-free mixture can be obtained by several sterilization methods. Methyl bromide, calcium cyanamid, Vapam, steam, and other techniques have been used.

# MGCSA BEACH PARTY

**Please Come**

**Date:** Monday, August 19th, 1974  
(Raindate-Monday, August 26, 1974)

**Place:** Woodway Beach Club  
(See Directions below!)

**Time:** 4:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.

**Cost:** Six Dollars (\$6.00) per couple  
(Collected at the Beach)

**What to Expect at the Club:**

Tennis Courts, Badminton, Shuffleboard, Volleyball and of course an inviting Beach. We will provide hot dogs, hamburgers, beer, soft drinks, "set ups," coffee & good friends!

**What to Bring:**

Tennis equipment, "brown bag refreshments," bathing suits

**Directions:** Take New England Thruway (I-95) North to **Exit 8**. At the bottom of the ramp turn right (EAST) on **Elm Street** and follow Elm to the 2nd traffic light. Bear right on **Shippan Ave** & follow Shippan Ave. for approximately 1.5 miles to **Hobson Street**. Turn left on **Hobson Street**. Woodway Beach Club is on the right at the water.

Finally, there is but one factor that can change a soil mixture into a top-dressing soil: TIME. It is too often overlooked.

Composting was known even to gardeners in the early 100s. It remains of extreme value today. Top-dressing material should be mixed or composted for at least eight or ten months before it is used on a green. The top-dressing soil should be properly stored (soil sheds are best) and kept dry enough to insure free flow at application time.

#### **Light and Easy Does It**

The question of "how much top-dressing and how often" is always good for spirited debate. But with the advent of today's power top-dressing machines, a program of light but frequent applications is recommended, and is important. For example, four dressings at  $\frac{3}{4}$  cubic yard each are far more effective than two dressings at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubic yards each. Certainly, a top-dressing should never be so heavy as to bury the grass plant.

Depending upon the size of the green and normal circumstances, an optimum schedule might be one of applying  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cubic yards per 5,000 square feet of green on four occasions spaced throughout each growing season. The 'light but frequently' approach allows each dressing to silt into the turf, mingle with the grass, and carry out its many important functions.

Because of the frequency required and the great need for uniformity of application, a power top-dressing machine is an absolute necessity. It will more than pay for itself in any serious top-dressing effort. Hand spreading is of a bygone era.

The use of flat boards, or the back of rokes are needed for the "boarding" operation. They move the top-dressing more uniformly over the surface. The boarding or matting operation must be done very slowly, carefully and in several directions. If it is done rapidly, it does not move the new material uniformly over the turf. Uneven coverage produces irregular surfaces, rather than smooth surfaces.

#### **Aerification and Vertical Mowing?**

Aerification and vertical mowing are now considered practically synonymous with top-dressing, but this need not necessarily be the case. Certain aerification will continue to be important for most good putting green turf, but it need not accompany every top-dressing. In fact, two aerifications annually are generally accepted as standard practice today, unless a special problem exists.

Light or moderate vertical mowing prior to top-dress (as well as regular mowing) is desirable. However, it is not mandatory. The absence of any of these practices should not be used as an excuse for not top-dressing.

#### **Is It Worth \$500?**

Is top-dressing worth the expense? Many of this nation's better golf course superintendents and agronomists firmly believe it is. In fact, there is substantial evidence for believing that a good top-dressing program can reduce other costly maintenance practices. At the same time, it will produce better turf on better greens.

Although costs vary, recent figures in California place the total expenditure of top-dressing 18 greens at \$500 per application. This is an average cost of \$4.50 per 1,000 square feet. Labor as well as material costs are included in the figure.

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**A CONFERENCE PREVIEW**  
**GCSAA**  
**46th INTERNATIONAL TURFGRASS**  
**CONFERENCE**  
**AND SHOW**  
**FEBRUARY 16-21, 1975**  
**NEW ORLEANS**

**CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

- Pre-Conference Seminars
- Certification Examinations
- General Education Assemblies
- Special Interest Sessions
- Turfgrass Industry Show
- Annual Meeting & Election
- Turf Tour
- Ladies' Program
- Social Events
- Golf Tournament

A totally re-designed GCSAA Conference educational program will offer golf course superintendents and others interested in the management of fine golf turfgrass a unique opportunity to become better informed professionals.

Beginning Saturday, February 15, recognized leaders will present two days of in-depth information in GCSAA's Pre-Conference Seminars, Management 1 — Financial Decision Making, and Pesticide 1 — Principles of Chemical Usage. These seminars will be offered on a separate pre-registration basis (\$40 for GCSAA members or \$60 for non-members).

Another new offering at this year's Conference will be the Association's Certification Examination. Given Sunday, February 16, and again on Friday, February 21, eligible members who have made the normal prior arrangements with the headquarters office may complete the six-hour test requirements of the program. Those tested Sunday may make a Thursday afternoon appointment to review their results. Re-testing on previously incompleting sections will also be available.

Perhaps the greatest alteration to the GCSAA Conference and Show will be the week-long educational program. With more than 40 speakers in concurrent general and special interest sessions, Conference registrants will have greater flexibility in choosing sessions that personally interest them. General educational assemblies on topics such as governmental relations with OSHA and EPA officials, the general manager concept and turf management; or special interest sessions on landscaping, personal finance, people relations, communications, etc., will provide everyone greater latitude in improving themselves.

Opening Tuesday morning, and running through Thursday afternoon, GCSAA's Turfgrass Industry Show promises to provide superintendents and club officials the latest information available from the country's leading manufacturers and sales staff. Nearly 100,000 square feet of exhibit space will be filled by approximately 160 firms, displaying their products and introducing new items of interest to turfgrass specialists,

as they answer technical questions.

Wednesday afternoon of Conference week will be devoted to the Association's Annual Meeting and Election of Officers. Reports requiring membership action, and items introduced by the membership will be acted upon at this important meeting. In addition, GCSAA's 1975 President, Vice President and Directors will be elected.

Closing out the week will be a tour of turfgrass facilities in the area Friday morning. Registering separately for this event, those on the tour will be given a first-hand look at Southern operations as they travel to several different operations and points of interest.

While the members are attending educational sessions, the exhibits or meetings, their wives will be treated to the finest of New Orleans. Special tours to interesting sites in the city and surrounding areas will be available to the ladies. A Hospitality Center will also be open throughout the week in the Headquarters Hotel so the ladies can meet for their tours, renew acquaintances or simply relax.

Social activities have not been forgotten at GCSAA's 46th Annual Conference. The traditional Monday evening get-together and Thursday's Annual Banquet and Dance will offer memorable entertainment, food and fun.

Preceding GCSAA's Conference and Show in New Orleans will be the Association's Annual Golf Tournament, scheduled this year for Pensacola, Florida. The men will challenge two area golf courses Thursday and Friday, February 13 and 14, while the ladies will be hosted at a third area course.

Conference registration will remain at \$15 for members and their wives, or \$35 for non-members. Banquet tickets will be the normal \$10, with daily show passes staying at \$5.

Conference materials will be sent to individuals on your request by completing and returning the form below.

Begin now to make your plans to attend this great event and bring along your assistant and green chairman or president to join your fellow superintendents. The educational opportunities are too great to pass up. **PREPARE FOR CHANGE . . . TOGETHER!**

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