



Unlimited Budget!

Well, A Superintendent Can Dream, Can't He?

A golf course supt., just like anyone else, occasionally should be given the chance to dream.

With this in mind, GOLFDOM, for its annual Planning & Reference issue, queried more than a score of supts. throughout the country as to what they would do, what improvements would they wrought, if manna from heaven suddenly fell in form of an unlimited budget for the upkeep of their courses. The question was obliquely suggested by an off the record remark of a green chmn., attending a supts' meeting a short time ago, who commented: "Most supts. wouldn't know what to do with the money if they got all they wanted to spend."

The response of the supts., while probably shot through with a fair share of dreaming, also showed that the men who have the responsibility for the maintenance of our courses, can take a hard look at the realities. Such mundane things as the immediate replacement of antiquated equipment, which threatens to breathe its last every time it is taken out of the maintenance shed, was foremost on the list of at least three supts. who responded to GOLFDOM's query. Improved water systems also were prominently mentioned as was beautification of course surroundings,

verifying what always has been suspected, that many a supt. is at least an artist, if not a poet, at heart.

One supt., however, injected something of a cautious note into his reply, pointing out that if he were given unlimited funds the demands of his club's members probably would be so exacting that he would have to go to his chmn. within a few months and ask him to shut off the flow. This greenmaster rather wisely concluded that even though the supt. often grumbles that he is being starved in the midst of plenty, it perhaps is just as well for his peace of mind that he has to cut a few corners here and there.

Would Discard Old Equipment

The remarks of Tom Leonard, supt. of the Muskogee (Okla.) CC are typical of those who say that if they were given a free ticket the first thing they would do is replace worn-out equipment. "Our tractor," says Leonard, "is 20 years old. Parts for it are hard to find and so we have to spend many winter hours beating it into some kind of shape so that it will last another season. The same thing is true of our spraying machine. The bottom has been replaced at least once and the pump has been rebuilt several times. We could use more gang and green mowers, a

tractor-drawn rotary mower and a couple others. If I had an unlimited budget, equipment is the first thing I would buy because in the long run I think I would save the club money by doing so."

Touching on the course itself, and personnel necessary to maintain it, Leonard has this to say: "Several of our greens are what I call 'dish faced.' Drainage is toward the center and puddles rapidly appear in them, making it extremely difficult to maintain them. If I had the funds, I'd have a course builder come in and rebuild our greens after consulting with an architect, agronomist, our pro and myself. As for employees, we have only six men working on the course and grounds. To do a proper maintenance job, we should have at least 10, including a competent shop mechanic. All should be better paid because as far as I am concerned each man who works under me is a skilled craftsman who is worth more than he gets.

"That isn't all," Leonard continues. "I seriously doubt if many supts. ever get as much money to spend for fertilizer and chemicals for various controls, as they'd like. I could spend at least 50 per cent more than I do for these materials."

He'd Help Himself

A Virginia supt., who prefers to remain nameless, says that several jobs that his staff undertakes around the club could be done more professionally by specialists brought in from the outside. He'd like to have the money to bring them in. If he were given sufficient funds to do so, he would immediately hire a mechanic to handle maintenance of equipment because, in his estimation, this is the most pressing need at practically all medium size or large courses. And, probably because he is wearing the cloak of anonymity, the Virginia supt. adds that he would increase his annual salary to about \$12,000 and provide himself with a house, utilities and automobile.

Grover C. Keeton, a park board supt. for the City of Dallas, undoubtedly is more selfless than his Virginia contemporary. His No. 1 unlimited budget project would be to provide lights for a regulation course because he feels there should be a better spread of play through the day and also because many persons who desire to play golf are restrained because of lack of facilities. He would increase the average maintenance staff by 50 per cent. He'd also make a more liberal allowance for beautification of grounds because he feels that the usual shabby surroundings

GCSA Show to be Held Jan. 26-30 at Chicago's Sherman Hotel

More than 1,500 supts. are expected to attend the 30th national turfgrass conference and show of the GCSA, Jan. 26-30 at the Sherman Hotel in Chicago. The education program under the direction of Chmn. Henson Maples, supt. at Pinehurst (N. C.) CC, will extend through five days and thoroughly cover the research and practical aspects of turf management. There will be space at the show for about 130 exhibits, about two-thirds of which already have been contracted for by suppliers. Complete information about booths and the show can be obtained from Agar M. Brown, GCSA secy., PO Box 106, St. Charles, Ill.

greatly detract from the otherwise beautiful courses we have today.

Wants Sprinklers Installed

L. R. (Bob) Shields, an acknowledged master at living within the allotment dollars, who is custodian of 36 holes at Woodmont CC, Rockville, Md., would, if given a free hand, build huge storage ponds on the club property to catch winter rains. Then he'd install what he calls "one of those California automatic sprinkling systems." After that he'd landscape every tee on the course and hire a gardener just to look after the tees. He'd also improve parking areas and replace drainage ditches with underground storm drains. High on the priority list would be enough new equipment to enable his crew to work without disturbing golfers. He'd invest in two leaf removal machines and another for snow removal.

If Bob had his way, his labor force would be doubled and there'd be more specialization among members of his staff. For himself, Shields says he'd like to transplant the mahogany panelled office Mal McLaren has at the Oakwood club in Cleveland, O. But, believe it or not, the Woodmont supt. wouldn't ask for a salary increase if he had an unlimited budget. That would make his job immeasurably easier and he wouldn't have nerve enough to seek more money.

About 100 per cent increase in the budget at Somerset CC, St. Paul, Minn., would enable Herman Senneseth to run his course as he thinks it should be run. The entire extra amount would be de-

(Continued on page 103)

Unlimited Budget

(Continued from page 46)

voted to easing everyday maintenance work after a reasonable amount was spent for capital improvements on the course and club grounds. Ed Stewart of the River Forest CC, Elmhurst, Ill., goes along with those who would add new equipment as soon as he got the go-ahead from the green committee. Besides this, he would enlarge all tees, hire an architect to re-build several greens and traps, and complete fencing in the River Forest property. And, since he is blessed with a dependable and skillful staff, Stewart says one of his first steps would be to give a substantial blanket wage increase.

Could Have Its Pitfalls

Bob Mitchell of the Municipal CC, Alton, Ill., does some thinking out loud in questioning whether an unlimited supply of money would take the challenge out of keeping the grass growing and green. But, in the next breath, he adds that he'd be first willing to take the risk. One of his first moves would be to hire a working foreman and upgrade the salaries of employees so as to do away with

the transient type of help that supts. sometimes are forced to hire. As for course improvements, he'd make the following: Build extra large Bermuda tees; plant roughs in solid bluegrass; plant large aprons to C19 and maintain them exactly as greens are maintained except for height of cut; build better rain shelters and toilets on the course, and finally, enlarge and completely equip the maintenance shop and storage shed.

"If the supt. were given a budget that enabled him to increase his staff by as much as 50 per cent," says James W. Morrison of Philmont CC, Huntington Valley, Pa., "there would be a terrific improvement in the everyday, routine maintenance. And, whether members realize it or not," Morrison continues, "routine maintenance either makes or breaks the condition of a course."

Ideal Maintenance Staff

The ideal maintenance staff at a 36-hole course, the Philmont supt. reasons, should be made up of a foreman, mechanic, three drivers, six greensmen, two utility men and two night watering men. As for capital improvements and purchase of heavy equipment, Morrison feels that clubs should have a program where-

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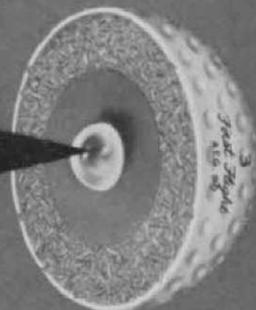
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by the need for these things are reviewed at least every five years.

However, a Michigan supt. at a 36-hole club, who prefers to remain anonymous, thinks that a course of this size should have a staff of at least 20 men. This is particularly true at clubs where members demand that tees be maintained as well as the greens are. This supt. would use part of a staff of this size in maintaining a large nursery because the need for replacement turf is becoming a very important one considering what is being required at first class clubs these days. A large part of an unlimited supply of funds, the Michigan man maintains, would go to increasing wages, providing uniforms for employees and giving them more benefits than they are now getting.

Whether or not the ideas explored by supts. here are more dream than reality is something that may be debated. How you look at it probably depends on whether you are on the supt. or club official side of the fence. But, at any rate, that green chmn. who uttered the remark that a greenmaster wouldn't know what to do with unlimited funds even if they were put in his hands, probably would think twice, after reading this article, before turning his own supt. loose with a bale of currency.

185 Persons Attend Ohio Turf Meeting

By R. R. DAVIS

Assoc. Prof. of Agronomy,
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A total of 185 persons with a professional interest in turfgrass registered at the Ohio Lawn and Ornamental Day held at Wooster Experiment Station, Sept. 23-24. They included course supts., nursery and landscape men, cemetery and park supts., grounds supts. of institutions and industries and commercial supply reps.

The first morning program was devoted to on-the-site discussions of experimental work at the Station. R. R. Davis, in charge of turf research, discussed the performance of 18 bent and 17 bluegrass varieties under test. The best performing bentgrasses, he said, are Toronto, Pennecross, Old Orchard and Cohansey. Merion is the best bluegrass variety under test. Experimental selections from Penn State and Washington State University appear to be about equal to Merion.

H. A. Runnels showed disease control plots and discussed results obtained with