

# Getting Your Money's Worth

BY WILLIAM H. BENGEYFIELD  
Western Director, USGA Green Section

About the only tool or piece of equipment one can afford to buy these days and then not use, is a fire extinguisher. Few professional turfmen would think of buying a tractor, or any other useful tool, and just put it aside and not use it all year.

When your club subscribed to the Green Section Visiting Service (GSVS) program, it bought an interest in maintaining a golfing turfgrass advisory office in your region. Potentially, this office can be your most valuable turf maintenance tool. But, like any other tool, it must be used if you are to benefit most. The more you use it, the more valuable it will become to you. Let's look at this program and see how you may use it more effectively: How you may get more than your money's worth.

## The Visit

"Think Through — Then Follow Through" is good advice, whether applied to life, golf, checkers or turf. An important way to use your GSVS visit is as an aid to the "Thinking Through" process. One superintendent has called the visit "the best way I know of to keep my thinking on the right track." Of course all of the discussions, suggestions and recommendations in the world are worthless unless they are actually put to use. If you never try a new idea, you'll never know if it had value. The GSVS visit can greatly help with the "Thinking Through," the "Follow Through" must be up to you.

We believe every professional Golf Course Superintendent should have a definite program of turf improvement outlined for his course. If you have reached the point where no further improvement is possible, read no further. Chances are, however, you're with most of us who are still struggling down the road toward the millennium of trouble free turf. In this struggle, nothing can be more defeating to you as a superintendent or to your golf course's future than by repeating "Last Year's Maintenance Program." No one makes progress, either professionally or economically, by standing still.

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Try a new approach this year: try different fertilization techniques; try raising the yearly nitrogen level; try light but frequent nitrogen summer feeding of greens; try new watering methods; try some of the better bentgrasses and Bermudas; try iron applications for chlorosis; try lowering phosphorus levels on your greens. Try a new approach and use your GSVS visit in planning and discussing the new approach. We believe it will work!

The visit is intended to be a consultation, not an inspection. One way of getting more out of each visit is by jotting down a list of questions on problems that, from time to time, have presented themselves. Such a list does not mean that you do not have the answers. It does mean that you are taking full advantage of us. Each year new scientific information supplants or supplements the old; new methods and new practices should be adopted. Perhaps research has uncovered new information on the very problem that faced you. Keeping up to date on research is also part of the GSVS visit.

Visits cost money! They can be a valuable tool and should be used for all they are worth. They are the backbone of the Green Section Visiting Service.

## The Report

Long have we wondered how often the "Report of the Visit" is read. Actually,

the report is important and can act as a permanent historical record of the problems and progress your course has made. Many times a report has strengthened the hand of a superintendent or a green committee chairman when he went before the board. In the report you have the opinion of an authoritative, impartial, scientific agency that is constantly at work, solely in the interest of better golfing turf.

### Research

If "The Visit" is the backbone of GSVS, then "Research" is the heart. Behind the program of direct visits to USGA courses stands research. Knowledge flows from it unendingly. Through the U.S.G.A. Green Section Research and Education Fund, Inc., grants are made for

research projects at various state institutions. These grants have supported studies on carbohydrate nutrition of bentgrass, soil mixtures, goosegrass control, nematode studies, bentgrass selections and evaluations, irrigation studies, non-stoloniferous bent strains for fairway use and many general turf support programs.

Each Regional Office is your storehouse of knowledge, gathered through years of research and practical experience. It is constantly being improved and continually ready to work for you. It is a part of an integrated national team of men and information that is ready to serve the golfing turf interest at all times. You own a share of GSVS—use it. The more you do, the more valuable it will become to you—and to golf.

## *Another Look at Financing the Building Program*

BY JAMES WILSON

Green Hills Country Club, Millbrae, Cal.

Many of you have undoubtedly heard, as I have, members of your respective clubs say, "Let's borrow a hundred thousand dollars and fix up our course." They make it sound very simple and the implication is that all that is needed to have a perfect golf course is an unlimited supply of money.

Money, of course, is important but there are other things, I believe, that are equally important, if not more so. Your golf course will not be rebuilt with money alone. There are three major requisites to preparation for rebuilding. These are: 1. Planning, 2. Budgeting, 3. Financing.

The importance of proper advance planning cannot be over-emphasized. The changes to be made in the golf course and the work to be done should be defined clearly so that everyone immediately concerned with the project is informed accurately as to the scope of the work.

The planning group naturally include the finance committee, the superintendent, and the green committee. Planning should take in all phases of the job. The necessity for making the improvement or change should be thought out carefully so that as many as possible of the advantages and the disadvantages of the change have been considered. Many times at this point of the planning stage the project will be drop-

ped, because what on the surface appeared to be an improvement over existing conditions shows up to be of questionable value, and the existing situation is actually better than the suggested change.

Let us assume that the planning has been carefully done and that the decision has been reached to carry out the projected improvement if financially possible. The next logical step is to estimate the cost of the job. This figure need not be binding but it should be accurate enough so that the finance committee can determine whether or not it is feasible to proceed with the final details.

With the green light from the finance committee, the time has arrived when an accurate check should be made of all the materials needed and the amount of labor necessary to complete the job. Will you use the regular crew; will you augment the regular crew with extra men for the job; or will you bring in an independent contractor?

These are important decisions—as in many cases time is of the essence. Let us say that the decision is made to use the regular crew with whatever additional help is needed. Your superintendent is going to boss the job. It will fall on his shoulders to have the labor and materials necessary to do the work, at the time and place when they are needed. This is where advance planning pays off. If the