

Great Golf Courses Of America

and What Makes Them That Way

Edward F. Casey, 17th Recipient of USGA Green Section Award

Edward F. Casey, of Union, N.J., became the 17th recipient of the USGA Green Section Award for distinguished service to golf through work with turfgrass. The Award is made annually and was presented to Mr. Casey by Harry W. Easterly, Jr., of Richmond, Va., President of the USGA, and Will F. Nicholson, Jr., of Denver, Colo., Chairman of the USGA Green Section Committee. The ceremony took place during the 21st Annual Green Section Conference on Golf Course Management which was held in Atlanta, Ga., on January 28.

Mr. Casey served for 22 years as golf course superintendent at the Baltusrol Golf Club, Springfield, N.J. He was responsible for preparing the club's Lower Course for four USGA competitions during that time, including the U.S. Open Championships of 1954 and 1967, the 1946 U.S. Amateur and the 1961 Women's Open.

Mr. Casey did a considerable amount of work with Merion bluegrass during its early development, as well as in weed and insect control. He has authored many articles on golf course maintenance and management and has been a featured speaker at meetings of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and at USGA Conferences. He trained a number of men who have distinguished themselves in the profession of golf course superintendent, including his own successor at Baltusrol, Joseph R. Flaherty.

Mr. Casey came to the United States from England. He began his career in turfgrass work in this country at the Somerset Hills Country Club in Bernardsville, N.J., in 1921. He later worked at the Rye Country Club, Rye, N.Y., and Wykagyl Country Club, New Rochelle, N.Y., before coming to Baltusrol in 1945.

He is the fifth golf course superintendent to be presented the Green Section Award. The others are Joseph Valentine, Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, Pa; Elmer Michael, Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester, N.Y.; James L. Haines, Denver Country Club, Denver, Colo., and E. R. Steiniger, Pine Valley Golf Club, Clementon, N.J.

Casey accepted the Award before an audience of over 500 with the following remarks:

"Thank you for the opportunity to express my

pleasure and appreciation as recipient of the Green Section Award in 1977. My pleasure is further extended by the invitation to join the group of distinguished gentlemen—my predecessors—in this Award.

"I would like to extend a few remarks that may be of interest to the younger men of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

"I believe, with assurance, I can say the competence of the superintendent is apparent in the preparation and maintenance of turfgrass in its total environment and the management of the golf course, including overall landscape.

"That may appear to be a bland statement, yet perceive what is behind it. There is a fabric of components of which the superintendent must have superior knowledge. Any one of them, or in some combination with each other, can cause a problem. By judicious inquiry, the young superintendent can build a level of knowledge from disseminated practical and technical information now in place. With an intimate knowledge of all related subject matter, he can promote competency and strength along with confidence in accepting accountability for one's actions.

"I believe it was in the mid-20s when the United States Golf Association and the U.S. Department of Agriculture applied expertise to the problems of turfgrass management for golf. They were ably supported by the young Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and later by the universities and golf course architects. The input over the years, particularly by the individual contributions of earlier recipients of the Green Section Award, has given us today's great golf courses.

"I find myself the beneficiary of an experience wherein I dwell in comfort and reflect on the improvements we now enjoy. Had I, at any time, served to motivate some part of that improvement, I am well satisfied and well rewarded."

For more on Mr. Edward Casey and the role of the course superintendent in golf, please read "The Invisible Men," by Furman Bisher of the *Atlanta Journal* on page 28 of this issue.