

George Manuel Appointed to Green Section Staff

The Green Section is pleased to name George B. Manuel as agronomist in its Mid-Continent Region. The appointment fills a new position on the Green Section staff, and comes in response to the increased use of the Turf Advisory Service by USGA member clubs in the region. Manuel will report to James Moore, director of the Mid-Continent Region.

George brings a broad background in the turfgrass industry to his new position with the Green Section. He has most recently been construction supervisor of the 4th Nine at the Sweetwater Country Club, in Sugar Land, Texas, where he previously served as golf course superintendent. He also spent several years in turf chemical and



George Manuel

fertilizer sales, including a stint as a technical representative for Scotts.

George is a graduate of Texas A&M University, where he also gained some experience working on the research turf plots and on the university golf course. He has recently served as president of the Texas Turfgrass Association and as vice-president of the Lone Star GCSA.

In his new responsibilities with the Green Section, George will be relocating to Waco, Texas, with his wife Ginger and children Ashley, Joshua, and Kendall. He will be joining Jim Moore in making TAS visits to USGA member clubs in the Mid-Continent Region, including the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Louisiana, Wyoming, and New Mexico. The Green Section joins in welcoming George Manuel as a member of its staff.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

Glitz and Glamour Golf

by AL RADKO

Former National Director, USGA Green Section

THE MORE I SEE of new golf course design and the new direction in golf course maintenance, the more I become disturbed about the future of golf in this country.

I'm not happy about the "Hollywood Glitz & Glamour" approach to new course construction now that the Tour Pros have become self-acclaimed Golf Course Architects (hereinafter referred to as Pro-archs). Most of their productions are maintenance nightmares — seemingly produced with but one aim — to replace Pine Valley as the #1 rated golf course in America. Maintenance costs for many of these Pro-arch courses have to be at least twice the cost of long-established 18-hole clubs . . . whose budgets no longer are considered small.

And this "Hollywood Glitz & Glamour" approach has now become ingrained into the maintenance of fairways — maintaining fairways more like putting greens through lightweight mowing and clipping removal . . . which again impacts significantly on the budget and labor force of all courses so involved. Lightweight mowing has its place in periodic cross-cutting *and* for some courses with special problems of terrain, bumpy fairways, etc., but continually on all courses? RIDICULOUS!

As an avowed traditionalist, I ask, "Is all this hoopla necessary? More important, is it good for golf? Does every fairway lie have to be picture perfect? Does all this mean that luck, chance, and "rub-of-the-green" situations no longer belong in the game? Isn't skill in

golf the ability to play well from a variety of lies? Isn't this what adds to the challenge of the game? Does it matter to the majority of golfers (the so-called average golfers) whether their lies are 95% perfect or just 90% perfect? And where is all this leading?"

I for one believe all this glitz and glamour detracts significantly from the purpose, the spirit, and the challenge of the game . . . as well as the aesthetics of golf courses. All courses are beginning to play and look alike — robotic and stereotyped! As a result, golf is unnecessarily becoming so expensive that it will once again be known as a game for only the very rich. And with apologies to Churchill for taking liberty, "For the average golfer, golf is fast becoming an expensive walk with Nature spoiled!"