



James E. Connolly Becomes Northeastern Agronomist

James E. Connolly has become the third new member to join the expanding Green Section staff in 1988, replacing Gary Watschke, who resigned in mid-May.

Connolly brings a wealth of academic and field experience to his new post. A 1978 graduate in Turfgrass Science from Washington State University, Jim has served not only as assistant superintendent and superintendent at courses in the Pacific Northwest, but also as a sales representative and pesticide consultant.

He also has warm-season turfgrass experience, serving as a sales representative in Florida, with emphasis on pesticide use and safety.

Connolly served on the board of directors of the Northwest Turfgrass Association for three years, and was an active member of the Inland Empire GCSA, in Washington State. In addition to his turfgrass management experience, Jim has also been active in amateur hockey organizations — which should put him in good stead in New England. The Green Section is pleased to have Jim Connolly as a member of its staff.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

Getting The Priorities Straight

by **STANLEY J. ZONTEK**

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WHEN THE TIME comes for a club to spend money — big money — for capital expenses, the needs of the golf course itself frequently take on a secondary role to the needs of the swimming pool, the tennis courts, or the clubhouse.

You don't believe it?

Just think of the number of clubs that have completed \$1 to \$2 million or more in renovations to their clubhouses or built tennis courts during times of tight money and recession and compare them to the number of golf courses that have spent the same amount of money on new maintenance buildings, rebuilding poorly built greens, installing up-to-date irrigation systems, or replacing old, worn-out maintenance equipment on a regular, scheduled basis. On a smaller scale, which often comes first . . . repairs to the swimming pool, new carpets or drapes in the clubhouse, or a new tractor? More times than not, equipment for the golf course is deferred.

Are golf course superintendents bad salesmen? Or have today's golf clubs and golf facilities misplaced their priorities?

In my experience, probably a little of both. Of all the physical assets of today's modern and complete club facility, the golf course itself remains the main attraction. Around it centers the prosperity and the reputation of the entire club.

How often is a club really remembered for its great gourmet meals, or for its colorful swimming pool cabanas? Most clubs are remembered for their golf courses . . . how they look, how well they are turfed and manicured, and how well they play.

It truly is a credit to today's golf course superintendents and their hard-working crews that, in many instances, golf courses are in such great condition in spite of modest maintenance budgets, poor irrigation systems, old maintenance equipment, poorly built putting greens, and maintenance buildings that even now lack proper lighting, heat, sanitary facilities, pesticide storage, and equipment repair areas.

Obviously, some golf courses have set their priorities properly and have spent

money when and where it was needed, and in almost every instance their courses reflect this philosophy. Regretfully, other clubs have not.

What to do?

The superintendent must be willing to state his case for needed capital expenditure improvements to his committees, governing boards, and/or administrators. Sell your programs because, after all, as their first priority most people join to play golf. In my opinion, if your case is properly presented (perhaps with the help of your regional USGA Green Section Agronomist), the decision makers will understand that the needs of the golf course must come first.

Perhaps in the future the following scenario will take place at a board of directors meeting: "Gentlemen, the motion is passed. We will replace the old irrigation system, renovate the golf course superintendent's maintenance area, and then replace the carpets, drapes, and furniture in the clubhouse. After all, the golf course is our first priority."