



CHIPS & PUTTS

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July Meeting
Fox Hill Country Club
Host: Ron Garrison

July brings us to our fifth meeting and to one of our favorite stops, Fox Hill Country Club. Founded in 1920 as a private 9 hole course, the Club quickly expanded to 18 holes in 1924 under the architectural design of one of the most famous classical architects, A.W. Tillinghast. The 6,555 yard par 71 course winds over the gently rolling terrain to present a very true test of one's game. After recently undergoing an extensive bunker restoration project and additional course changes, this month's meeting will prove to be a welcomed change of scenery. I'm sure host Superintendent Ron Garrison and his team are eager to show off their many efforts and polished beauty.

Ron is a 1987 Penn State graduate who has been in this industry most of his life. A native of Berwick, Ron has been at Fox Hill since 1997. Prior to coming to Fox Hill, Ron gained various experiences while working as a superintendent at Glen Oak Country Club, Construction and Grow-In Superintendent at The Center Valley Club, and served at many other courses in various capacities. In his 20-year career at Fox Hill, Ron has seen a large number of former employees move on through the ranks of many of the local area facilities both private and public.

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President's Message.....

This past month has been great for golf in the North. Timely rain has limited the syringe days to a minimum for June at my course. I'm sure others have not been so lucky though. Look on the bright side - only two months until September!!!

I was unable to attend the June meeting at Honesdale, but I heard from others that the course was great. Thanks go to Chris Moran and his crew for a great event even with the thunderstorms that rolled through. This month will be another good one, as we are headed to newly renovated Fox Hill. I hope to see you there for the meeting.

At Glen Oak, we had some breakthrough of ABW larvae on fairway edges. This wasn't noticeable by the membership, but to my assistants and myself as we were scouting. The toughest part is explaining to my Board that this will always be a problem. They do not understand that there is no full proof method to eradicate ABW; we can only reduce populations. What I had to do was explain to them the life cycle of ABW so that they understand that timing of applications and scouting is crucial for control. I also explained to them how much these applications cost. I know that some members can be tough on these kind of subjects, so if there is anything the PTGA or myself can do to help, please let me know. We are here to help everyone. Thank you.

Gino Marchetti

Editor's Notes.....

The timely, and not so timely, rains combined with the gorgeous, sunny skies has really seemed to get everything back on track. Everyone that I visited with and courses I have been fortunate enough to have played at this last month are really doing a tremendous job and in fantastic shape heading into the heat of the season.

As I have stated in all the monthly letters, PLEASE....provide your input and ideas; such as, articles, pictures, and/or whatever you deem beneficial to the newsletter. I understand this will be difficult to accomplish and realize we are all extremely busy with what is coming at us in the months of July and August.

I can tell you that I am personally looking forward to playing at Fox Hill on July 19. Having played it a few times since the completion of their course renovation project, we are in for a nice treat. Hope to see you out there!

Les Lear



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We All Should Play More Golf

Jun 23 2017 | John Reitman

Once in awhile someone comes along with a message that really resonates. For some of us, though, some things take longer than others to stick.

It was nearly 15 years ago when Henry DeLozier, then an executive with Pulte Homes' golf division, made a statement likening people who work in the golf industry to those who earn a living peddling narcotics.

OK, on the surface, that sounds like a pretty abrasive comparison, but context is everything.

"People who work in the golf business are like drug dealers: We only sell it, we don't use it," he said. "We wear it like a badge; like we're proud that we don't play more."

In 2004, the golf business still was chugging along, so DeLozier's comment did more to generate laughter than it did deep thought. In retrospect, it was prophetic. People in golf don't play enough golf. We didn't then, and we don't now.

Although rounds played have nudged up the past two years, there were 60 million fewer rounds played in 2015 than in 2000; about 9 million fewer people are playing the game today than in 2002; and we're doing it on about 1,000 fewer courses than there were dotting the landscape in 2005.

Ask people who work in the business what they are most concerned about, and the answers are pretty consistent across the board: water, labor, budget and are there enough players to keep the game moving along and cash running through the register.

Generally speaking, the last item can fix just about any problem facing the industry, except access to water.

If everyone whose job is affected or influenced by the game of golf paid to play just five rounds every year at a daily fee facility, the results would be dramatic.

There are superintendents, assistants, technicians and those who write about golf who don't play the game, or at least don't play as often as they should. When pressed on the matter, the objections are pretty similar to those expressed by the general consumer public: it takes too long, and it's too hard if you don't have a lot of time to devote to it.

Playing golf on Saturday morning means time away from the family, and that's a problem for those who have children who have a seemingly endless choice of travel league sports of their own that demand our time on weekends.

Phrases like "necessary market correction" became en vogue throughout the industry as course closures outpaced openings during the past decade. There is no question that, barring an influx of new players, more courses will close than open in coming years so the market can reach supply-demand equilibrium. That said, raise your hand if you want to be the next necessary market correction.

Every course that closes is much more than just a piece of land that goes to seed or is converted to housing or retail. It's jobs that affect real people. It's one less course that will buy product. It's one less course to join a turf industry website.

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Saucon Valley Country Club to Host 2022 U.S. Senior Open

By: *Karl Gilbert, lehighvalleylive.com, contributor*

Club President David B. Kennedy made the announcement Sunday in an email to club membership: the tournament will be played on the facility's Old Course, which has hosted seven prior United States Golf Association national championship events.

The tournament will be played from June 20-26, 2022 -- exactly 100 years after the Old Course opened for play in June 1922.

"We have finalized an agreement with the United States Golf Association (USGA) to host the 2022 U.S. Senior Open Championship on the Old Course," Kennedy said in the email. "This major event will mark the eighth time that Saucon Valley has hosted a USGA national tournament, and the third time (1992 and 2000 previously) that we have hosted the U.S. Senior Open Championship."

With current PGA Tour stars turning 50 in the coming years such as Phil Mickelson, Ernie Els, Jim Furyk, Retief Goosen and Darren Clarke, the tournament should be a big draw for golf fans.

Kennedy also sees the event as a big boost for Saucon Valley Country Club and the regional economy. The club straddles Upper and Lower Saucon townships.

"As many of you know from our past history, hosting these championships brings so many positives to our club," he said in his email, "including national recognition, significant net financial gain, an opportunity for our membership to experience participating as tournament volunteers and seeing the top professionals firsthand, and boosting our greater Lehigh Valley economy."

Previous USGA national championship tournaments played at Saucon Valley were the 1951 U.S. Amateur, 1983 U.S. Junior, 1987 U.S. Senior Men's Amateur, 1992 and 2000 U.S. Senior Open, 2009 U.S. Women's Open and the 2014 U.S. Mid-Amateur. ◆



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Continued from Page 1

Ron is assisted by long-time Assistant John Polak and their hard working crew of 3 full time and 8 seasonal employees.

Be sure to make it out to enjoy this great mid-summer meeting and transformed venue. Knowing Ron, our putting will suffer! ◆

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Playing just a few extra rounds of paid golf per year by those who work in the business could help make a big difference in the golf economy.

As an industry, what are those who work in golf doing to help themselves? The unscientific answer is: probably not enough.

The one objection the public often cites as a barrier to playing more golf, but one that is not usually voiced by those in the golf industry is "it is too expensive." That's because many people in the golf world play for free. And playing for free doesn't really help anyone other than the person who is playing, not to mention there is a financial cost associated with playing golf, even free golf. Traffic, divots, ball marks and spike marks all hasten the threat of disease without the benefit of money coming in the door to help offset those costs.

It's disingenuous to grouse about the state of affairs in the industry when we all hold the power to effect change at the grassroots level, but we choose not to do it. This isn't a call for the end of free golf. Heaven forbid. But if everyone in the business coughed up a couple hundred dollars to play five more times each year, the cumulative results would be hundreds of thousands of rounds and millions in new revenue spread throughout the industry annually.

Everyone can find that kind of time and that kind of money. ◆

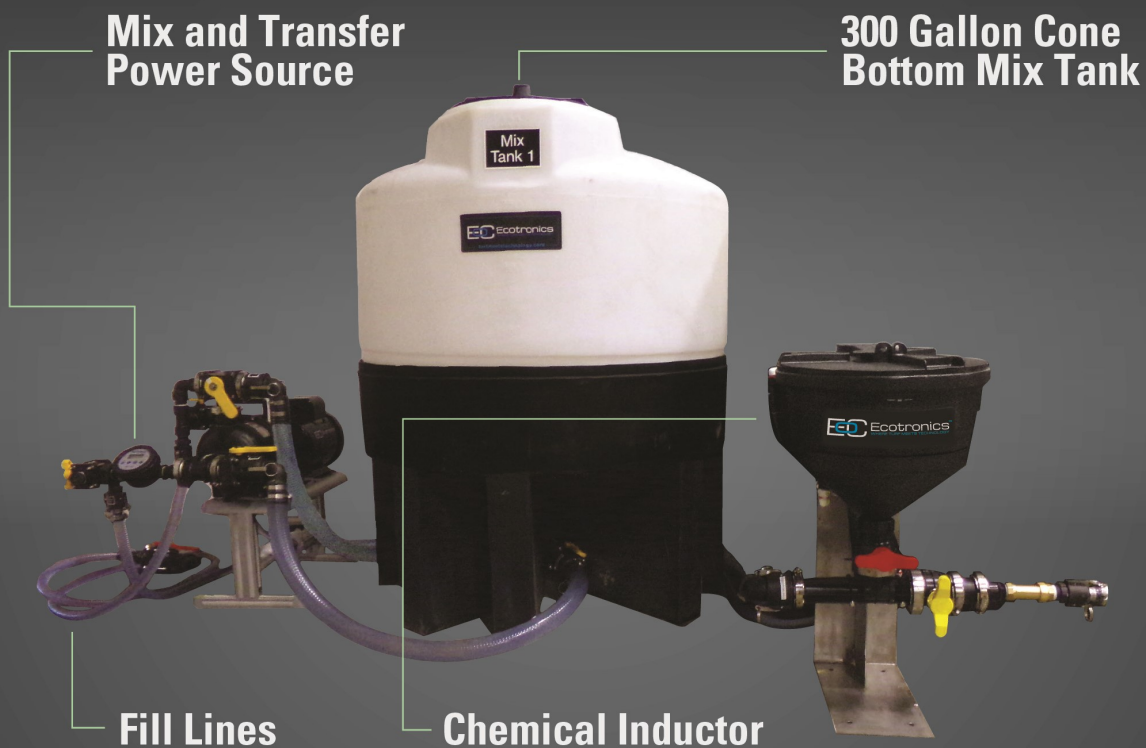


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June Meeting Results



1st Place - 34
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 Bob Seltzer

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 Jim Hill
 Spencer Barry

Skins
 Bob Seltzer & Russ - Eagle #5
 Tony & Ty Williams - Birdie #14
 Steve Chirip & Jerry Decker - Birdie #17

2nd Place - 35
 Jerry Decker
 Steve Chirip

Photo of the Month

We all see interesting things every day....wildlife (like bald eagles and bears), strange turf problems (like a lightning strike), an employee who stayed out too late the night before, etc. So if you have a great photo, send it to me (leslear@turf-equipment.com) and share it for everyone to enjoy (or laugh at).



Photo of the Month

We all say that turf is a living, breathing thing. Well, I guess it has feelings too! It looks like one of our own seems to have found the trick to making his turf show him some affection!

Thanks to Jeff Koch at Glenmaura National for sharing the love.....

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- July 18** PTGA Meeting @ Fox Hill C.C.
- Aug. 21** PTGA Annual Meeting and Clambake
@ C.C. of Scranton
- Sept. 13** PTGA Meeting and Championships
@ Great Bear G.C
- Oct. 16** PTGA Meeting @ Huntsville G.C.

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