

# NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER, 1968



## Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

Sponsors and administrators of the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund — Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

### Superintendent No. 1 Man at Golf Course

Overworked, Underpaid and Unappreciated

Reprinted from *Providence Sunday Journal*, August 25, 1968

By ED DUCKWORTH

Whether you realize it or not — and chances are you probably don't — there is one indispensable person at the course where you play golf.

No, it isn't the club president or greens committee chairman, even though they probably think they are.



Dr. C. R. Skogley

Neither is it the club pro, although he's certainly vital to the successful operation of any club.

The fact of the matter is, the No. 1 man at any golf club is the course superintendent—that overworked, underpaid and generally unappreciated guy who makes sure your golf course stays in shape in spite of weather, turf diseases and careless golfers.

"We're not hungry for praise," says Tony Caranci of Ledge-mont, president of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association. "What hurts is most of us only get criticism from the members of our clubs. If the course is in good condition, which is 99.44 per cent of the time, we don't hear from the members."

But even if they don't win the unqualified praise of every player, the superintendents (don't you dare call them greens-keepers!) will continue to give 100 per cent of their talents to the task of improving playing conditions at golf courses in this state.

That's the reason why about 50 of them gathered at the University of Rhode Island's agricultural experiment station last week.

Naturally, the subject they discussed with Dr. C. R. Skogley, associate professor of agronomy at the college, was turf grass.

"Most of us came here to see what new types of grasses and fungicides are being developed," Caranci explained. "You can't sit still in this business because it seems as if something new is being discovered all the time."

For instance, John Jagschitz, a research associate in agronomy at URI, told the superintendents about the eventual damage certain herbicides can do to bent-grass putting surfaces.

Repeated spraying with these herbicides, which are designed to kill crabgrass, can seriously affect the bent grass too, Jagschitz said, and when the bent grass is weakened fungi may work their way into the putting surface.

Fungi, for the benefit of those not scientifically inclined, are unwelcome plant growths which, if not counteracted, eventually will overpower the good fairway and putting-green grasses and make a beautiful golf course virtually unplayable.

The main attacker of golf-course grasses in this area of the country, though, is a grass-like weed known as poa annua (poa for short).

"To the uninitiated, poa looks like grass and grows like

grass," Dr. Skogley explained. "In fact, at certain times of the year you can play golf on it without knowing the difference."

According to Dr. Skogley, poa presents the golf-course superintendent with two major headaches.

First, because poa reproduces by seed, putting surfaces infested by the weed grow unevenly — and that results in bumping, skipping putts which sometimes refuse to drop into the cup.

Secondly, poa may wilt during the heat of summer. If the weed doesn't receive enough water during warm spells, it will wilt, turning the fairways and greens brown.

"Actually, poa greens and fairways aren't too bad," Dr. Skogley said. "The only thing is, you can't depend on a weed to perform with any degree of consistency. So for that reason we're trying to eliminate it from golf courses."

In its place, Dr. Skogley and his staff would substitute "solid" grasses, such as the R. I. Fairway Mixture which was developed at the station.

"R. I. Fairway Mixture," he explained, "contains blue-grasses, red fescue and several types of bent grasses in a combination designed for this region of the country."

"Several of the new courses in this state have used it with great success and landscape gardeners are interested in using it for home lawns. I think it's going to be more widely employed over the next couple of years."

Unfortunately, however, Dr. Skogley and his staff can't solve the superintendents' No. 1 problem, the lack of well-qualified help.

"Most golf-course operators either can't or won't hire people at competitive wage level," one superintendent explained.

"How many people do you know who want a seven-month-a-year job where the pay is low? That's what most of our help is getting."

"The result is, not all courses are in the kind of shape they should and could be. It's this simple: If people want better-conditioned golf courses, they're going to have to spend more money to get them."

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be the annual Pro-Superintendent golf tournament at Brae Burn Country Club, Newton, Mass. This event will be on Monday, October 28, 1968. Starting times after 9 A. M. Remember, either the Pro or the Super must be a member of the P.G.A. or the G.C.S.A. of N.E. Host Super is Bob Grant.

### NOVEMBER MEETING

The November Meeting will be at Sam Mitchell's Eastern Country Club on November 4, 1968. There will be a 9-hole tournament following dinner.

President Caranci appointed the following as a nominating committee to suggest a slate for the December 2, 1968 meeting. It is important that they are prepared with the new slate by the November 4 meeting: John O'Connor, chairman, Leo Brown, Julius Aksten, Joe Bolter, Leon St. Pierre.

# Golf Course Superintendents Association

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting was held at the C. C. of New Seabury. It was a fine day for Supers' Golf Championship, and many that we've not seen all summer showed up to enter this tournament.

1st Low Gross — Mel Wendell	73 Trophy
1st Low Net — Len Blodgett	68 Trophy
2nd Low Net — Guy Tedesco	69
3rd Low Net — Bill Carter	73
Senior Champion — Phil Cassidy	78 Trophy

Congratulations to Bill Brennan the new Super at Pinebrook.

Bob Grant and Lou Duval have been named to the Advisory Committee of the G.C.S.A.A. Turf Conference. If there are any subjects or suggestions from the Association members for this Committee they should be brought up at the next meeting.

New Applications to be voted on at the November 4, 1968 Meeting:

Regular Membership — Stanley Sablak  
77 Belchertown Rd., Amherst, Mass.  
Amherst Golf Club

Associate Membership — Glenn Achley  
131 Brigham St., Northboro, Mass.  
Westboro Country Club

Associate Membership — Raymond King  
Warren Ave., Plymouth, Mass.  
Plymouth Country Club

Assistant Membership — Donald E. Hearn  
121 Garfield Ave., Lexington, Mass.  
Lexington Golf Club

Assistant Membership — Kenneth Gendall  
26 Marie Street, Tewksbury, Mass.  
The Country Club



Anthony Caranci

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Green Committees should be set up in our Country Clubs, for the benefit of the membership and not for a privileged few.

1. A Green Committee should be as small as possible in numbers. In order to be effective, reach decisions and progress with accomplishments, each committee should consist of three (3) members for a minimum and five (5) for a maximum. If the committees are any larger, they become unwieldy.

2. Green Committee members should be selected on the basis that they will eventually become the chairman, according to seniority. This will eliminate many hours of schooling by the Superintendent.

3. Chairman of the committee should remain in office as long as possible. As each new President of the Club is elected, he should select a new member to serve on the committee and not necessarily change the Chairman.

4. A yearly plan should exist for each club and most important a short and long range program should be enforced.

Continuity of policy and programs is very important. Philosophy of green committees changes all too often.

5. Permanent records should exist concerning a program for the following: Greens, Tees, Fairways, Sand Traps, Landscaping and Miscellaneous Program.

Avoid drastic changes in policy and programs which become very costly to the club.

Anthony B. Caranci, Jr.  
President

## "Patience . . . Everyone Needs It"

Originally, this was to be intended for club members only . . . those tired old souls of suspect who look upon long-range refurbishing plans of the club superintendent with homicide in their hearts. The doctrine to be presented was to be one embrodered with patience . . . "don't kill the super, even though you have a hankering to have his head for the temporary ravages strewn all over your sacred birdie-hunting grounds."

Then, an accompanying thought blasted its way into the programming cells of this writer. If the club member should exercise patience, shouldn't the super also lie back in disciplined wait to reap the rewards of sticking to his guns in the face of well-meaning but unwarranted verbal attack?

Case in question — any country club where a two, three or five-year plan of restoration and rebuilding has been instituted. The natural reaction of the average member is one of hostility. For one thing, he is not well informed of the process. In this instance, he has no foresight. His lone thought centers on the alleged injustice that someone has come along and stripped the green from his fairways and taken all the smooth tracks from his greens. He doesn't care about tomorrow's game. He's only interested in how and where the ball lies today.

In the same boat, not always but often, the superintendent may fall victim to the taunts of the membership. He, too, likes to see the green, green grass and feel the cushion of velvet under him when he resets the cups. There is a danger that he, too, may lose the cool of outlasting the demands of time. He might find his foresight fractured.

Case in question but resolved — the Wethersfield Country Club where the touring pros flood the area with their critical eyes and opinions every year in a \$100,000 stop on their six million-dollar junket.

Wethersfield, the course of 1967, was in the midst of transfiguration. It was a scarred track, one that brought scowls from the players and scoffs from the many fans who watched their favorites flail away in disgust. In the meantime superintendent Bill Dest had his future wrapped in hope.

There were times when the patches of brown and streaks of Connecticut red clay prompted influential people to study the possibility of moving the Greater Hartford Open to another course. Dest had to have patience, even though it was cut in thin layers. Tourney officials needed it to get by the questioning glances of the players and fans. But each stood strong as the tournament finished itself and time took over to heal the wounds.

Wethersfield, the course of 1968, proved to be a shining example of patience rewarded. It was an all new course, pampered beyond the very imagination of the most demanding critic. And here is what came out in the five days of play.

Billy Casper: "The course was in superb condition, playing longer but better because of that condition."

Bruce Crampton: "This is the way all golf courses should look for tournaments. I haven't a single complaint about its condition."

Raymond Floyd: "I've played here several times. I can't remember when it was as lush and lovely as this. Everything has to be labeled perfect. From the tees, through the fairways and roughs, onto the greens . . . this is an excellently-groomed layout."

There were other comments from the pros. And waves of superlatives came from the fans who also notice these things.

The long-range plan had survived and everyone involved could take a long and lasting bow . . . everyone from the club members who backed up their man on the grounds with their loyalty and trust to the superintendent who had to sit on his foresight and rely on his patience to see the project through. Patience . . . it's a two-way proposition.

— Gerry Finn



## Golf Course Superintendents of Maine

Editor — Dr. Burton R. Anderson, Route 5, Augusta, Maine

### SEPTEMBER MEETING

The last meeting was held at the Sebasco Lodge on September 10. After spirited discussion of our problems in a dance hall (?), we were treated to a fine steak dinner in the dining room. Most of the members played golf; and although there was no formal tournament, some mention should be made of Jim Diorio's drive on the last hole hitting the hotel on the fly at least 260 yards away.

The Sebasco Lodge and Course was a "discovery" for most members, for it is one of those coastal hotel resorts made for former times that has remained active and been kept in good condition. Considering the beauty of its location, it is small wonder that people wish to spend vacation time there. In addition to the hotel, there are numerous cottages and private summer homes that make up the "community."

The golf course is about 2100 yards long and to be considered "old-fashioned", but it is exactly equivalent to the modern executive course, showing that, perhaps, fashion repeats itself if we wait long enough. In contrast with most Maine golf course operations, Sebasco has a good budget, which is reflected in the fine condition of the course. Superintendent Frank Cutting, upon "discovery," turns out to be one of the deans among Maine superintendents and was the first in Maine to join GCSA America. He has a shop and staff that gives him something to work with.

### BLUE GRASS CONTROL IN MAINE

Fall seems to be the time for big talk and large visions about improvement of golf courses, while golfers are still playing and the memory of course shortcomings fresh at hand. This summer became dry, for example, and has caused renewed discussion about fairway watering systems, this discussion being conspicuously absent here since 1963, the last dry summer. And since there was an unusual amount of winter injury to turf this year, elimination of annual bluegrass and its replacement by bentgrass or other basic turfgrass has become a subject for conversation among golfers and superintendents, for golfers are becoming increasingly aware that there is a weed grass on the course that is so easily subject to winter (and summer) injury and that it is possible to get rid of it. This is an unfortunate situation because given the present state of golf course management here, it is rather unrealistic to attempt annual bluegrass control for the following major reasons.

1. The superintendent. The editor feels on very firm ground to state that there are probably no superintendents, himself included, that have the knowledge and experience to take a course with substantial annual bluegrass and get rid of it through a cultural program while maintaining the course for play. It can be simply pointed out that there are a mere handful of superintendents over the nation that have a proven record of successful annual bluegrass control.

2. The course budget. In addition to intrinsic qualities of a superintendent, there must be a budget and authority given to the superintendent to carry out the program. This is the major obstacle here, for most courses hardly allocate enough money to mow turf, let alone funds for other management practices known to maintain turf quality. The Maine golfer has a long way to go to correlate his recent discovery of "poanna" with the costs involved in its control. It is very unrealistic to expect a superintendent to undertake what is

probably the most sophisticated turf management procedure when he and his men are considered to be seasonal laborers untrustworthy to handle expensive equipment and be given authority over the expenditure of large sums of money. The information gap extends through much more mundane matters of course management for which resolution must occur before we get to annual bluegrass control.

3. Chemicals. Despite recent advances and publications from the experiment stations, the only proven material for chemical control of annual bluegrass is arsenic. Certainly we hope for less toxic and less costly chemicals to assist us in annual bluegrass control, but all superintendents are very cautious about using new materials on turf. If a researcher puts out an unsatisfactory chemical, he may lose his reputation. Superintendents who follow his advice lose their turf and jobs.

Since the feelings for annual bluegrass control are strong in the fall, there is likely pressure or an impulse to apply arsenicals in the fall. It is hoped that memory is not too short to recall several examples of very severe damage and kill of turf through fall application and that this be avoided.

4. Irrigation systems. Chemical control of annual bluegrass opens up opportunities and obligations for management of a turfed area, and if a good irrigation system is not present, control should not be attempted. It seems inconceivable that a superintendent would dump arsenicals on fairways if water were not available, for it would be very difficult to follow through to grow good turf should annual bluegrass become competitively weakened. Annual bluegrass control should be visualized as the employment of a number of interrelated management techniques according to the judgment of the superintendent rather than just applying a chemical.

5. Climate. Maine climate is undoubtedly better for growing bentgrass than points south and west, and it is also better for growing annual bluegrass as well. The average cool summer without a prolonged dry spell allows annual bluegrass to invade unwatered fairways rather easily and persist over summer even on light soils. From preliminary observations the editor believes that when fairway watering is added to more courses, conversion of turf cover to annual bluegrass will be spectacular unless the superintendent has the experience and authority to exercise restraint in water usage.

A phenomenon in the far north is worth noting. In extreme northern Maine, as well as in Banff and Jasper in the Canadian Rockies, turf on courses tends to become converted completely to annual bluegrass — greens, tees and fairways. To be sure, bentgrass is found growing in surrounding fields and swamps, but it does not persist under golf course management conditions. The editor can offer no explanation for this, and notes that present Michigan State research on winter injury has not been extended into the extraordinary temperature and duration of snow and ice cover conditions existing in these localities. A question can also be raised about the balance of bentgrass and annual bluegrass in central and southern Maine where most golf courses are and where annual bluegrass control has not yet been attempted. If it is easy to say that both grow better here than they do around Boston, it is not easy to predict what will happen if an annual bluegrass control program is undertaken using arsenic, which is essentially a competition change procedure. In other words, will it be easier to remove annual bluegrass from bentgrass turf here than it is at Boston?



## New Hampshire Golf Course Superintendents Association, Inc.

Editor — George Hauschel, Supt. Rockingham Country Club, Newmarket, N. H.

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the N.H.G.C.S.A. will be held at the Charmingfare Links, Candia, New Hampshire on October 15, 1968. The links are located off Route 101 between Manchester and Raymond. Host superintendent will be Len Chace.

This will be our annual pro-supt. scotch golf tournament, selected drive alternate shot. If you cannot bring your pro, bring a low handicap golfer who will have to play with you at scratch. A beef stew lunch will be served at the end of nine holes. There will be no formal meeting this month. Tee-off time will be 9:30 sharp. Fees: pro — \$5.00; supt. — \$3.00.

### SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting of the N.H.G.C.S.A. was held at the Beaver Meadow Country Club in Concord, New Hampshire. Host superintendent was Roland LaChance. Roland showed slides that were taken during the construction of the new nine holes, which was followed by a question and answer period. Bob Vincent of the Dunbar Equipment Company, Manchester, had some of his equipment on display. The winners of the golf tournament were: low gross, Robert Hale; low net, Robert Sanfacon.

### President Flanagan Appoints Nominating Committee

The following members have been appointed to the nominating committee and will meet at 9 A. M. at the Charminfare Links with chairman Charles Pullen: Ford Leach, Norman Pease, Roland LaChance and Richard Lorman.

“We have become rich because of the lavish use of our natural resources and we have just reason to be proud of our growth. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soil has been further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields, and obstructing navigation. These questions do not relate only to the next generation. It is time for us now as a nation to exercise the same reasonable foresight in dealing with our great natural resources that would be shown by any prudent man in conserving and wisely using the property which contains the assurance of well-being for himself and his children.”

— Theodore Roosevelt

### Utilizing the Nooks and Corners

Hardly ever can it be said that a garden is so full of bulbs that no more can be tucked away in it. Nearly always there are nooks and corners that might be utilized to bring about charming spring pictures. A careful inspection of even the smallest of gardens will usually reveal many such places that at the present time are giving no good account of themselves at all. It is a great pity not to make use of them in the interests of spring delight. Here are a few such positions that in most gardens are neglected.

*Close About the Base of Trees* — Scillas, Snowdrops, Winter Aconites, Daffodils, Crocuses.

*Rough Banks.* All varieties, including Tulipa Kaufmanniana and Tulipa Clusiana.

*Beneath Shrubs.* Any low growing sorts of miscellaneous bulbs.

*At the Base of Hedges.* All kinds including Tulips.

*Close to Garden Seats.* Daffodils in particular and Hyacinths for fragrance.

*In the Lawn.* Crocuses, Snowdrops, Scillas, Chionodoxas, Muscari.

*Pachysandra or Myrtle Bed.* Naturalize Narcissi, Botanical Tulips or Hyacinths.

*After you plant your Tulips.* Plant Crocus over the top and enjoy these Harbingers of Spring before the Tulips. Gives a very colorful effect.

*In the Rose Beds.* Daffodils or Tulips.

*Between Clumps of Peonies.* Daffodils, Tulips, Lilies.

*Between Rows of Vegetables for Cutting.* All kinds.

*Tucked in About the Sundial or Bird Bath.* All kinds of miscellaneous Bulbs.

*As a Border to Flower Beds.* Hyacinthus, Scillas.

*At the Feet of Grape Vines.* Narcissi, Lilies.

*At the Base of Climbing Roses.* Muscari, Narcissi, Tulips.

*In the Fern Bed.* Scillas, Trilliums, Snowdrops, Fritillaries, Winter Aconites.

*Close Against a Wall Behind the Perennials.* Delphinium, Eremuri, Lilies.

*The Dull Border on the North Side of the House.* Scillas, Snowdrops, Winter Aconites, Leucojums, Narcissi, Ferns.

*At the edges of Grass Walks.* Muscari, Crocuses, Scillas, Snowdrops, Chionodoxas.

“So now, in conclusion, do I recommend you, and me, and all of us, to the keeping of a happy and humble spirit, such as the love of a garden ought surely to engender.”

— In a Yorkshire Garden  
Reginald Farrer

### PRIZES FOR PRO-SUPT. TOURNAMENT

Low gross — Supt.-Pro., a Revere Bowl which will be kept at the club of the winning pro-supt. each year.

Two plaques, low gross and low net.

1st low gross, cash for the pro and merchandise for the superintendent.



Gerry Finn  
Contributing  
Editor  
of the  
G.C.S.A.  
Newsletter

### "Competition and Commemoration"

A storied past comes to life again on Oct. 28 when the John Shanahan Memorial Shield is contested for over the grounds John loved so much — the Brae Burn Country Club.

The tournament is one fitting the occasion of competition and commemoration. It brings together golf course superintendent and golf professional in the NEGCSEA's annual farewell to arms — the super-pro tournament.

Like so many other cherished events, the super-pro takes this reawakening of the memory cells to recall one of the giants of the profession — the late John Shanahan.

To superintendents Shanahan stands as a pioneer and prophet. With the New England Association he is remembered in that spirit . . . and rightly so. He was our first president and a leader with staying power, all right — serving from 1924 through 1928. Through his devotion to duty and foresight in the eventual place of the superintendent his memory has become an inspiration to all.

The super-pro tournament is John's memorial and if it were possible to accomplish an immediate view of the life hereafter, John is looking forward to this year's competition with just as much enthusiasm as the most formidable entry.

The tournament certainly is time-honored. This presentation will be the 32d, with all previous action coming at Brae Burn except in 1937 when the course had a battle of its own with grubs.

Famous names have stalked the fairways and greens during the Shanahan Memorial. Tony Manero, while the reigning U. S. Open champion, competed as did such as the former PGA king, Denny Shute and Harold (Jug) McSpadden — one of the outstanding players of the 30's.

Pakachoag Hill Country Club claimed the first winner in 1935 when Thomas Matus and Harry Nettelbladt grabbed the title. Since then there has been a succession of great champions helping build the event into a must on the major calendar.

The idea of the tournament is a marvel in itself. The competition, while being foremost in the minds of the players, doesn't hog all the importance of the day. The format of bringing together superintendent and pro to exchange views and appreciate contrasting tactics in attaining the common goals of both positions is a victory in itself.

Therefore, the John Shanahan Memorial deserves such a sendoff. It carries tradition, competition and commemoration onto the field of battle at Brae Burn. It may not be as internationally consequential as the Battle of — say — Bunker Hill, but it's getting there.

— Gerry Finn

#### LIST OF DIRECTORS

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### "Beginning To See The Light"

The words of the song go something like . . . "A good man is hard to find; you could get the other kind."

Apparently, some country clubs are taking heed. It certainly can be a terrible experience to get "the other kind", especially when it comes to putting a shine on your greens and a happy color on your fairways.

It is for this reason — the shrinking market on capable golf course superintendents — that club operational minds gradually are succumbing to the inevitable and making salary offers commensurate with the skills and potential contribution to the overall product which capable men in the field possess.

There was written in a well-known periodical recently the story of a Northeastern club which set some kind of precedent in the area of bargaining for the services of a super. It was the misfortune of that club to see its provider of pleasant playing conditions spirited away by another, supposedly because the green stuff was to be piled higher on the other side of the fence.

The breakthrough in matter of counter offers came when the "hijacked" club put a \$30,000 price on the job hoping to lure their man back. In this case, the individual is said to have placed other reasons ahead of salary increase. He accepted the new post as a challenge, something to awaken him from the monotonous sleep of incessant success at his old place of business.

The decision was a noble one, to be sure. Yet, it is far more significant to the overall picture of tending the store on the grounds of a golf course that a salary of \$30,000 was used as a hopeful roadblock to halt moving to another club.

Now, we come to the crux of the matter. There will be those who dig into the dictionary of cliches and shout that "money isn't everything." Naturally, they are correct. The idea of sermonizing about such a heretofore ridiculous salary offer is to remind ourselves that the profession is rapidly gaining in recognition. Years ago if a club came up with a thirty thousand dollar figure, it would be more like an offer for the super and his entire crew of workers. Times have changed.

Yes, times have changed . . . mostly because supers have made them change with a modern outlook on the job and a hold-fast approach to entering into contract with his club.

It also is evident that the superintendent now carries something which never before was dreamed of — the word being "position." It should be further revealed that in the same area where the \$30,000 tag was placed on the position, other clubs were scoured when the defector firmed his desire to leave. No one in that immediate vicinity could be enticed away from his own post, leaving us to believe that employers were ready to meet any attempt to pluck their men for the 30-grand opening.

There can't be any irrefutable evidence that everything which went with the big-time salary was to be peaches and cream. However, these factors are irrelevant in pointing out the upgraded status of the super. The solid circumstance powers its way through all other barriers (working conditions included) . . . that a club was willing to spend \$30,000 for the salary of one of its employees — other than a pro or club manager.

Two rays of light should begin to split the thinking of both club operators and course superintendents. On the one hand, the clubs must now come to realize that the position is slowly reaching the point where it must be painted in executive tones — specifically in dollars and cents. On the other, supers must realign their estimation of their worth along these lines, too. There must be a meshing of the pair. The club must look upon the position with executive-priced salary offers and the super must react in a matter suiting an executive. In this manner of behavior everyone will begin to see the light.

— Gerry Finn

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## NEWSLETTER

*Golf Course Superintendents Association*  
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.



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