

NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 1972



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.

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

The man pulled his feet up on his desk in comfortable position and started to expound.

He covered such subjects as sports being a substitute for war, establishment of university-owned golf courses to curb campus unrest, a formula for building natural turf football fields which would lick the water problem and a revolutionary idea which takes the dangers out of superintendents' undisciplined use of water on greens and tees.

He's Dr. William H. Daniel of Purdue University and he had to be one of the hits of Joe Troll's annual Massachusetts Turf Conference last month. Dr. Daniel telleth all.

"I'm convinced that sports are one of the most essential parts of life," he took time out for a little preaching. "Just think for a minute and try to imagine where we would be without sports. Our way of living has to have conflict and challenge flowing through it. War is one method of providing them. But sports are more feasible. They do, in effect, form a substitute for war."

Turning to golf, Dr. Daniel touched briefly on the contribution of the game to campus life at Purdue. "We have a 36-hole course of our own," he revealed. "And I truly believe that it has helped to stem campus unrest. We haven't had any serious incidents. When a student feels like blowing off steam, he can take out his feelings on a golf ball. And we have the place right on campus for that."

Naturally, Dr. Daniel's place on the agronomy staff at Purdue makes him conscious of turf problems . . . not only on the golf course, but in other areas. "We've been working on a new construction formula to save football fields from turning completely synthetic," he told. It's called the PAT system . . . Prescription Athletic Turf. What we do is build a drainage field with suction pumps attached to the drains. When there's a storm, we turn them on and, presto, we have a dry field. No one has adopted our system yet, but we feel it will become very popular."

Dr. Daniel's main function at the conference was to unveil his Purr-Wick green and tee construction theory. Away from the speaking platform, he explained it in layman's terms.

"What it does is take the guesswork out of watering greens and tees," he said. "I believe that this is one of the superintendent's biggest hangups, what with the influx of automatic irrigation in vogue."

Purr-Wick works in such a manner to bring on a free movement of moisture. The green or tee is started by laying a plastic sheet at the bottom, then building up a depth of from 16 to 18 inches of sand. The turf goes on top and the water problem is licked."

"The system disciplines the distribution of water to the plant roots," Dr. Daniel explained. "The sand acts as a sponge and there hardly ever is any surface water. You've heard of tournaments being called off when greens are flooded after a thunderstorm or hard rain. Well, with Purr-Wick, that circumstance is eliminated."



Dr. William H. Daniel (left) and Leon V. St. Pierre discuss the Massachusetts Turf Conference after the annual banquet on March 2, 1972 at the Highpoint Motor Inn.

Not only does the system benefit the superintendent, it also gives the golfer the one thing he desires — uniformity in playing conditions. "We began our research in 1966," Dr. Daniel remarked. "We watched the possibilities grow in 1967 and the next year we built our first Purr-Wick green. Right now there are 60 greens in nine different states and each one of them has performed to perfection. All we need now is to get the system popularized. It takes time, but it's coming.

So, the man for all seasons is right on top of a number of projects to reduce the problems in conditioning turf. Dr. Daniel has the answers for poor drainage, whether it be 50-yard line or 18th green. And they appear to be sound answers.

—Gerry Finn

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the GCSA of N. E. will be April 5, 1972 at the Holiday Inn, Grove St., Newton, Mass. Please make note that this is a Wednesday.

Directors' Meeting	10:45 A.M.
Regular Business Meeting	11:15 A.M.
Luncheon	12:15 P.M.
Educational Program	1:15 P.M.

The following applications will be voted on at the April meeting:

James Damiam, Associate Membership. Whitingville Golf Club, Main Street, East Douglas, Mass.

Andrew L. Gregory, Associate Membership. Tedesco Country Club, 173 Salem Street, Swampscott, Mass.

Louis A. Ingalls, Associate Membership. C. C. of New Bedford, 185 Centre Street, Quincy, Mass.

James D. Calderwood, Assistant Membership. Blue Hill Country Club, 87 Billings Street, Sharon, Mass.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

MERCURY MADNESS

The "Mercury madness." You've heard about it. More than enough, if you follow the line of reality. And here is where Dr. Leonard J. Goldwater enters the picture.

Dr. Goldwater is an expert on mercury and he's on a country-wide binge trying to let people know that its scare been magnified to the high heavens. He was aboard for the Massachusetts Turf Conference last month and he picked apart the over-reaction to the effects of mercury.

It's sensationalized," Dr. Goldwater delivered in between his formal lecture at the Highpoint Motor Inn. "The dangers of mercury have been blown way out of proportion. For what reason I really can't say. But if you think about it, the mercury jitters follows every hint of malfunction in certain products. The public just lets the thing run away to the point of being ridiculous."

The outspoken Dr. Goldwater, who has been doing research on mercury at Duke University, admits that indiscriminate use of it can be harmful. Then, on the other hand he says that indiscriminate banning of mercury is just as bad.

"You fellows," Dr. Goldwater said, "you superintendents . . . have to be realistic about the use of mercury. It is one of the most useful fungicides at your disposal but it must be used with discrimination. That's all that is needed. Don't run scared from it. Don't let the emotional tirades of certain people turn you from using it."

Dr. Goldwater emphasizes that all a superintendent guards against in use of mercury on a golf course is excessive application. "There are certain states which ban the use of mercury on plants," Dr. Goldwater revealed. "But I think this is a case of being an alarmist. If everyone took a course in mercury they would find that it is present in some form or other

in every living thing. That's why I can't understand why such a strong stand has been taken against it."

The mercury scare crept into industry some time ago when it was inflated as a health hazard in a hat factory in Danbury, Conn. That started the ball rolling and from there the mercury syndrone has spread far and wide. Who ever eats swordfish anymore, for instance?

Dr. Goldwater snickers at that suggestion, "All fish have mercury in them," he laughed. "If everyone picked up the swordfish scare, there wouldn't be another fish sold in this country. And I'm talking about things like shrimp and clams. What would we do without them?"

There's a natural concern for the plight of the golf course superintendent on the part of Dr. Goldwater. "I've been a golf fan and player for a number of years," he confessed. "I don't get to play very much these days but I can understand just how much mercury can help the superintendent in his attempt to do his job. That's why I'm going around to these conferences explaining that use of mercury is not harmful to the turf or the atmosphere. I'm one of those golf people who want people to know that the superintendent uses chemicals with a certain amount of logic and knowledge of what its reaction, if any, will be."

Thus, the super has a champion on his side. Dr. Goldwater both endorses and encourages the use of mercury on the golf course. "I can't see any harm in its use just as long as its application follows normal lines," he concluded. "The superintendent should be determined in his selection of fungicides. He shouldn't be scared off because of propaganda. If he runs scared, his golf course will suffer for it."

—Gerry Finn



E. Nash



F. Cheney



Charles Baskin (left) superintendent of the Country Club of Waterbury, Conn. and GCSAA Director, was talking with Dr. Joseph Troll, chairman of the conference at the Highpoint Motor Inn, Chicopee Falls, Mass. National Director Baskin was on hand to award the GCSAA Scholarships to Stockbridge students. Those students who received them were Frederick Cheney, Erwin Nash, Niels W. Oleson, and Frank L. Santos.



N. W. Oleson



F. L. Santos

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SOUND OFF!!!!

(It's that same old time again for readers to put their views on the line in Sound Off. Last month they had a rest from the rigors of expressing opinions with a man-on-the-street presentation concerning the burning issue of re-examination for certified golf course superintendents. Oddly enough, most of the flak this month goes back to the re-examination question. Anyway, the Newsletter is happy to receive any reaction to any issue, and we remind readers that they may respond in this column by directing their letters to Newsletter Mail Box, 24 Riverview Drive, Newbury, Mass. 01950. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on each published letter).

"I was most interested in the interviews of New England superintendents about this re-examination once a super is certified.

"I have been thinking about trying for certification, even though I am firmly established at my present job and don't expect a change in my status until I decide to retire.

"At the start, though, I felt it a challenge to myself and a sort of act of good faith toward my membership in my decision to try to become certified. But now my mind has been changed.

"I think that a one-test obligation on my part is enough. If I had to worry about being re-examined every five years, I really don't know how I could keep up with my basic task of keeping my course in top condition. I'm not the studious type. Therefore, I really think my course would suffer if I had to go through an exam every five years. So, I'm not even going to try for certification, period."

JACK CRAWFORD, Sebring, Fla.

You have a point, Jack. But give certification a chance. There may be alterations in that re-examination clause yet.

"This re-examination issue really has been put on the line by you fellows from New England, and I really believe it's about time somebody came out and told us about the fine print.

"To be truthful, I never was aware that we had to be re-examined periodically once we got our certification. I was under the impression that being certified was the same as getting a driver's license. As a matter of fact, I don't know of any other profession that demands its members to be book-worms for the rest of their lives. I'm against it. And here's where I'm telling my opinions."

REGINALD POTTER, South Derry, Md.

There are other professions who require certain proof of outside study on current topics which perhaps is something the GCSAA should think about if this thing gets too hot.

"There is nothing I have to say about re-examination at this time. My gripe to you is why didn't you do the same thing (the interview bit) when the question of certification came up? I'm sure that we might have had a different setup if you had done this.

"I've been against certification from the start. Maybe it's because I'm selfish. I have a job for life here and certification wouldn't do me one favor. I think you people were two steps behind the times. You should have had your readers SOUND Off on the original issue . . . certification.

RALPH JOHNSON, Harwich, N. Y.

Certification gives the profession a push forward. But remember. It is not mandatory, so why should you complain about it?

"Don't you think that the GCSAA is getting a little bit too on the high-hat side in this re-examination clause?

"I'm an old timer in the business. I've never learned much from books on the subject of treating turf, but I am not too old to realize that modern approaches could make my job easier.

"However, I think one exam is enough. It's enough as far as I'm concerned. In the beginning I was not too enthused over the certification program but I gave it a wait and see attitude. But right now I'm seeing too much of this book stuff. Who needs it?"

CEDRIC THOMPSON, Blandford, Conn.

At one time or another you need it, Ced. But for how long, we're not quite sure. We'll let the membership decide that one.

"I haven't decided about the worthwhile aspects of re-examination after original certification.

"However, I think most of the reaction in your street-type interviews was made in haste. After all, we haven't seen a re-examination paper or we haven't had the opportunity to learn just what type of a re-examination it will be.

"It could boil down to a couple of oral questions and answers. That doesn't sound too bad to me. As for my feelings, I'm not condemning the thing until I see more of it and I think everyone should feel likewise."

DONALD TURPIN, Fairfax, Va.

You sound like one of the young Turks, Don. And bully for you. You could be right. Re-examination may not be a two-headed monster like some of the boys have envisioned it.

(That puts Sound Off back in motion again and ready for your reaction to its revival. Drop us a line and let us know your views. It can be on any golf subject. Let's hear from you).



Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship winner Allen Fogarty (right) accepts the plaque from Robert Grant, President of the G.C.S.A. of N. E. at a recent meeting. Fogarty is a senior at Stockbridge and is from Rockland, Maine.

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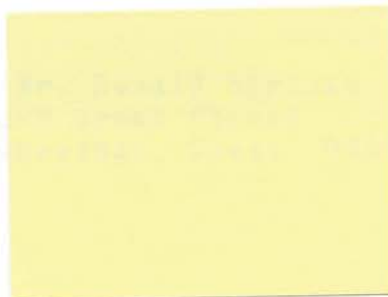
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FIRST CLASS



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