

CONNECTICUT



CLIPPINGS

JULY/AUGUST 1983

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"View From One Side"

As most people in the turfgrass industry realize, the tasks of the Golf Course Superintendent are more complex and varied than ever before. From this fact superintendents often acknowledge the necessity for an able assistant wherever their situation warrants. The assistant's position varies from course to course no matter what guidelines or standards are being followed. With these points in mind, I will express a few thoughts concerning the assistant's position from an assistant's perspective in connection with the G.G.C.S.A.

The involvement of the assistant in the Association can only improve the quality of golf course maintenance and the turfgrass industry. Attending golf outings, meetings and seminars benefits me greatly in understanding the turfgrass industry and therefore helps me in my work. At golf outings I not only enjoy the camaraderie but also learn new ideas and how different operations are handled. The concepts learned on these outings either answer questions or raise questions to be answered at a later date. Meetings and seminars share the same principle as golf outings in acquiring knowledge from others to be used in your situation.

Of course, not all assistants have the same situation as I do. I consider myself fortunate to be able not only to attend but also to be active in the G.G.C.S.A. Duties such as registration and fee collection at golf outings assists me in getting to know individuals in the turfgrass industry. Being on committees also gives me the opportunity to work with others in the Association and gives them an opportunity to get to know me. Therefore, my being active mutually benefits the G.G.C.S.A. and myself.

Someone has to work on a golf course when G.G.C.S.A. functions are in progress and so the assistant usually remains on the

(con't. on page 4)

President's Message



I am excited to announce a new award which will be given for the first time at our 1983 annual meeting in November. The award is the "Superintendent of the Year Award." This individual will be elected in a vote of class A members only. A point system will be established for first, second and third place and the votes will be tabulated by a private accounting firm.

Qualifications to win this award are: Class A member in the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents for a minimum of five (5) years, knowledge of the turfgrass sciences, understanding of the game of golf, contributions to local and allied associations.

These are just a few criteria. I'm sure you will have many others when you make your decision for whom to vote. Once elected, an individual is not eligible to receive this award again for fifteen (15) years.

Give some thought to who you feel is deserving of this award. Discuss it with your fellow superintendents, get their thoughts and then make your decision. Ballots will be mailed to you at a later date along with an eligibility list.

Michael Wallace, C.G.C.S.
President C.A.G.C.S.

Meat In Those Meetings

If you are a member of a golf club or a frequent visitor to a public course, don't expect to see the superintendent around on the first Monday of the month or that round-about date when his presence is required elsewhere.

And, above all, don't think he's off on a goldbricking venture. No, he isn't fishing. No, he isn't back home putting up wallboard in his rec room. And, no, he isn't off on some escape sojourn to some shrink paid to recharge his professional batteries.

Yes, he's where he should be—becoming a viable and visible participant in the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England's monthly meeting. In fact, if he isn't there, you should take him to task for not being there.

The GCSANE meeting is a session that evolves into something for the country club member and public course player's own good. That's right. The supers steal away from their daily chores for you. In a word, they go back to the basics—to school, the books, the seminars. They throw the bull and they gab on, sometimes far into the night.

That's what regular participation in the association is all about. In many cases, that one ounce of prevention—often meaning the difference between a top-notch conditioned golf course and a scrub pile—is gleaned by one super or another. Educational benefits abound.

"There are times when I come away from meetings aware of some turf disease or something similar which I never suspected could happen at my club," notes NEGCSA president Brian Cowan. "And because I hear about it, I don't have to cope with it. I'm steered onto a chemical which prevents or softens it and I'm 100 percent ahead of the game."

(con't. on page 2)

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The object of this association is to encourage increased knowledge of golf course management and greater professionalism through education, research, exchange of practical experience and the well being of each individual member.

The CONN. CLIPPINGS is an official publication of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents, Inc.

Greg Wojick, Editor
1347 Newfield Avenue
Stamford, CT 06905

Fuel for Thought



Recent events in our profession call to mind several questions that should be of concern to us individually as superintendents and collectively as an association.

The first of these issues is the matter of

a valid state pesticide license. Is a license necessary for a golf course superintendent? Should it be a prerequisite for employment? And to carry this matter further, can restricted chemicals be bought without a license? In state or out of state? Why are only license holders subject to state inspections?

The next question is that of resumes. Is a resume personal property for private use only or is it public property subject to exchange between clubs? Does any employee have the moral right to disclose information in a resume or the resume itself to any other business, organization or individual? Must we as individuals protect our rights by requesting that our resume be returned when the position is filled?

I feel that these questions are a matter of serious concern to us all and would welcome any thoughts or opinions from other members.

Ron Holcomb

Grass Catcher

Let's give credit where credit is due. CAGCS board member, Ron Holcomb's brainstorm has become reality. The idea of the Superintendent-of-the-Year award came from Ron. The definition and details of the award were worked out by Ron. And the perseverance to convince a reluctant board of directors came from Ron. The idea is a good one. Let's get behind this award and support it so that the recipient can indeed be proud. Start thinking who you would want to be this year's—Superintendent of the Year!

A check in the amount of \$100 was sent to the National Coalition for a reasonable 2,4-D policy.

John Faricelli (class A), Steve Rackcliffe (class A), Jim Kilburn (class B), and Henry Lesinski (class C) are now official members of CAGCS. Congratulations and welcome.

(con't. from page 1)

Unfortunately (for themselves), there are some New England clubs—and they are numbered among the staggering minority—that prefer to turn their backs on the association. They oppose it either by ignoring the pleas of their super to join the group or refusing to allow him the time to take an active part in its functions.

Obviously, they are the worst because of that attitude. Rather than expose their super to the teeming possibilities of increasing his knowledge of turf management, they isolate him from the vortex of the industry where everything has, is and will happen. What a way to run a business.

Some of the above claim that the super makes it a point to immerse himself in the association only in those summer months when golf privileges are available at monthly meetings. They view his involvement as self-serving and satisfying. How wrong they are.

As a matter of fact, clubs should encourage GCSANE tournament participation by their supers. Playing a round of golf gives the super that added perspective so necessary in the pursuit of his vocational goals. His outlook is not blindsided by his technical

approach to the job. By playing, he acquires a practical feel for his tasks. Sometimes what the tunnel-visioned super and the golfer see are miles apart.

Then, too, a round of golf often serves as a tension-breaker for the superintendent. Private and public club golfers certainly are aware of building pressures in their own work. Consequently, they should appreciate what a round of golf might do for the super who is prone to the same type of pressure.

Educational-wise, the GCSANE meeting schedule presents supers an opportunity to expand their expertise and bone up on its standing credibility. The session's open format also allows the super to seek answers to his particular problem. That, in itself, is worth the price of admission in the form of membership fees and traveling expenses.

So, be mindful of that one work day in the month when your superintendent is nowhere to be seen. And be thankful that he's not in sight. Most likely, he's among his peers solving one turf problem or another and planning to put those solutions to work on his own course. If he's not there, it's high time you saw that he was.

Gerry Finn

There has been discussion at the board meetings concerning the initiation of an annual meeting with other New England Superintendent's associations for the exchange of ideas, thoughts and problems. Your thoughts about this idea would be appreciated.

CAGCS will fail in its purpose if it is not closely geared to your needs. Your input will be greatly appreciated.

The Greater Hartford Open will be played for the last time at the Wethersfield Country Club this year. In 1984 the GHO will move to the Edgewood Golf Club. Tears or cheers from the Wethersfield Country Club and Fred Bachand?—See the next issue of Connecticut Clippings.

Greg Wojick, Editor

Future Happenings

August 9

CAGCS Meeting
Washington Golf Club
Host Supt.—Bob Witowski

August 18-21

Greater Hartford Open
Wethersfield Country Club
Host Supt.—Fred Bachand

August 24

URI Field Day
Turf Plots
N. Kingston R.I.

September 13

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Madison Country Club
Host Supt.—Mike Chrzanowski

October 4

CAGCS S&R Tournament
Edge Wood Golf Club
Host Supt.—Peter Pierson

Thanks to the Suffield Country Club



Tom Watroba
There are times when I go to a golf course for a monthly CAGCS meeting and hear fellow members say that they have never played that particular course. This is quite common. But when I arrived at the Suffield Country Club, for the May meeting, the conversation that I heard was more like "I never even knew that this club existed."

Now I don't think that the people associated with the Suffield Country Club have any intention of keeping their cozy, clean and well-run club a secret (although they probably should), but I do know that all the CAGCS members at our May meeting were very impressed. Impressed—not only with the quaint setting, beautiful clubhouse vistas and host superintendent, Tom Watroba's meticulously maintained golf course and grounds, but above all they were impressed with the hospitality. The \$11 cost for the fit-for-a-King buffet was not charged. Instead it was decided that the meal cost would be collected and donated to the S & R fund.

This is a very special thanks to Suffield's management, kitchen staff, pro shop staff and to Tom Watroba and his crew who went overboard to provide us with a very enjoyable day. CAGCS hopes you will invite us back again soon.

Greg Wojick, Editor

GCSAA News

GCSAA Executive Director James E. McLoughlin has announced his intention to resign his position as Executive Director effective September 1, 1983, due to the fact that the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America will not be considering the possibility of relocation from Lawrence, Kan., for at least one or two years.

During his nearly three years with the Association, McLoughlin has been effective in working with the GCSAA Executive Committee and staff in setting new Association standards in the areas of national image, communications and publication, conference performance, technological planning, staff reorganization and general program development.

GCSAA President Robert W. Osterman, CGCS, accepts this decision with regret, fully understanding Jim McLoughlin's need to be reunited with his family on a more consistent basis in New York. President Osterman is pleased to announce that Jim McLoughlin will be working with the Executive Committee to effect an orderly transition during the summer months, that he will serve on the search committee to select his successor and that he will act as advisor to the Executive Committee following his term as Executive Director.

McLoughlin notes that this is a natural time for this transition and that he is proud and grateful to the members of the Association for the opportunity to have served them.

*Always Remember —
pushing a rotary doesn't
make one LOON'Y (or a
MOON'IE!) But helps
one's mind enter a state of
unconsciousness to the
immediate world around and
thus enter a new dimension
separate from the body.*

Ancient G.A.R.P.ism

G.reenskeepers

A.cknowledging

R.elative

P.racticality



(Left to right) Peter Rappoccio, superintendent at Silver Spring Country Club, host of our June combined Superintendent-Manager meeting. Ted Horton, superintendent at Westchester Country Club, host of the PGA Tour stop Westchester Open. Bob Alonzi, superintendent at Fairview Country Club, host of Metropolitan GCSA Invitational.

"How Fast Is Fast?"

By Sherwood A. Moore
Superintendent of Golf Courses,
Winged Foot Golf Club

In the English language the word fast has many meanings, such as you can run fast, hold fast, go on a fast, have fast women and have fast greens.

The topic of conversation around the locker and grill rooms of golf clubs these days is "how fast are the greens today?" In some areas of the country it is referred to as "the roll of the green." It all boils down to the speed of the ball on the green. Lost is the art of stroking the ball—today a tap is all that is required. I think some of the golfers want the ball to roll into the cup just by looking at it. At some clubs they post the speed of the green on the bulletin board for the day.

Are we becoming victims of the stimp-meter, fast greens and tournament play? When big tournaments are on TV all we hear about is how fast the greens putt, that they double cut the greens daily, even triple cut, and yes, on some greens quadruple cut to increase the speed.

Whenever a group of golfers or superintendents congregate, golf and turf are naturally discussed, greens speed for the average club is a favorite topic. Seven, eight, nine, ten or more feet is suggested.

Has the superintendent contributed to the dilemma? Yes, in a way. He probably has perfected his course to the point where only incredibly fast greens will save par. Also the competition to have faster greens than your neighbor is not helping the situation in any way.

In any event, an increasing amount of pressure is put on the Superintendent to increase the speed of the greens. Every Superintendent has heard the following remarks: "Are the greens going to be mowed today?" "When are you going to lower the height of cut?" "The greens at such and such a club are faster than ours."

Seriously, I am concerned about this trend of "fast greens." Can we afford to maintain greens of this caliber—that require frequent topdressing; frequent verticutting; daily cutting or double cutting of greens; close, close mowing—even to the point of grinding the underside of already thin bedknives.

And in all my conversation and reading and listening, I have never heard anyone mention a thing about the little grass plant. How is it standing up under all this abuse? I was tutored under the late Professor Lawrence Dickenson of Massachusetts and one of his often quoted phrases was "Give the grass plant half a chance. It wants to live." Under these conditions of shaving the grass

plant to 1/8" or less are we giving it "half a chance?" I do not think so. We are giving it very little chance. Sooner or later we are headed for trouble.

We all know that the root growth of the grass plant is in proportion to the top growth. That the grass plant needs leaf surface for survival—for transpiration, respiration, the manufacturing of carbohydrates to maintain life and growth. It also needs nitrogen and other nutrients that we are withholding so as to increase speed by limiting plant growth.

I predict that in the not too distant future we will get back to the basics of a good putting green surface—that the demands of the grass plant will be given equal or more consideration than the demands of the golfers. A firm, true, healthy green with reasonable speed is much more pleasurable than putting on dead grass and plain soil. We will return to stroking the ball, not tapping it.

Credit: Tee To Green

(con't. from page 1)

job. Since this is most often the case, I would like to see an assistant's program instituted by the Association, such as golf outings designated for assistants. For example; one or two golf outings a year specified solely for assistants so that many assistants would be able to attend. Also, a Class A membership for that assistant with many years on the job, who has all the responsibilities of a superintendent and is active in the Association could be another part of the program. The P.G.A. is one organization in which an assistant can receive a Class A standing that is almost necessary in getting a head professional job. As I understand there are approximately 15 assistants that are presently members of the Association so an 'assistants program' can only lead to a bettering of the individuals and the Association.

Such a program and assistant involvement starts not only with the willingness of the assistant but also the encouragement of the GCS and the Club. I am fortunate to have the encouragement and cooperation needed to be an active member of the G.G.C.S.A. Finally, since learning is a continuous process, to encourage learning and involvement in the G.G.C.S.A. will benefit all parties concerned due to a better working knowledge of golf course maintenance.

*Mark E. Esoda, Asst. GCS
Dunwoody Country Club
Dunwoody, Georgia*



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Karl E. Olson Named USGA Agronomist

FAR HILLS, N.J.—Karl E. Olson, golf course superintendent at Ft. Douglas-Hidden Valley Country Club in Salt Lake City, has joined the United States Golf Association's Green Section.

Olson replaces Brian M. Silva, who resigned his position in February to pursue a career in golf course architecture. Olson will serve as an agronomist in the USGA Green Section's Northeastern Region, assisting regional director Jim Snow.

"We are fortunate to have someone of Karl's background and experience join our staff," said USGA Senior Executive Director Harry W. Easterly, Jr., in making the announcement. "Karl will be an asset to our member clubs in the Northeastern Region, particularly New England."

Olson, who will join the USGA staff in May, will be based in Worcester, Mass. and will be responsible for visiting USGA member clubs and courses in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Olson, 33, is a graduate of New Mexico State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Agronomy and was a member of the school's golf team.

Olson's turf management experience spans nearly 10 years, including positions at the Orinda (Calif.) Country Club, and the Four Hills Country Club and University of New Mexico Golf Courses in Albuquerque.

How I Spent My Fourth of July

*"The True Story of a Rookie
Superintendent's Trial by Oil and Water"*

During a recent snowstorm my mechanic caught me daydreaming between grinding reels. As he joined me gazing at the swirling snow accumulating on the golf course, he asked, "Thinking about summer days again?"

"The better ones," I answered.

"Don't worry, there'll never be another day like the fourth."

I pray that his words are the truest ever spoken. Let me tell you why. The Fourth of July started like any other Sunday in the summer, too damn early. I got into work about 5:40 a.m. I should have known that it was going to be a bad day, we were out of coffee. The rest of the crew arrived at 5:59. I expressed my appreciation for their earlier than usual arrival. With both greens mowers underway, the trap rake out and a man changing cups, markers and water coolers, I felt good thinking that I'd be back in bed by 10:00 a.m. I then made a quick check of the course before taking care of the tennis courts, everything O.K. Time: 6:45.

While dragging the courts I saw a sight which all superintendents fear, a crew man, who should be mowing greens, driving towards me on a Cushman. With terror in my heart, I impatiently waited for the news. With terror in his eyes he mentioned something about an oil leak on the 20th and 7th greens. I doubt that he finished before I was on the truck, on my way to buy that box of detergent that is supposed to be on hand, just for those emergencies. Suspecting a carbon build-up in the truck I thought this to be a good opportunity to blow it out.

Needless to say there were probably areas where I may have exceeded legal speed limits. On my way back from the market, I couldn't help but wonder what the check out girl may have thought. Why would someone need forty pounds of detergent, so anxiously on a Sunday morning?

I arrived at the 7th green at 7:10. Two men were there awaiting instructions, or death. I gave them each a box of detergent and started looking for a quick coupler, which wasn't there. (At this point I should add that this was my first season at this club and as a superintendent.) A third man arrived at this point and aided me in my search. Deciding that I could not wait any longer, I instructed one man to turn on the pump and return. I had decided to turn on the sprinklers, while continuing to look for the non-existent coupler. I removed the cover of the valve box and planted my hand on the valve handle and a wasps' nest. I was promptly stung twice by some irate wasps. Never having been stung before I was now not only concerned with dead grass and



"Him stop here, Kemo Sabe—hit practice shots."

unemployment, but the possibility of a painful death. Despite the danger, I managed to turn on the water. Leaning against the truck, licking my wounds, taking in the sight of something working correctly, I felt a momentary sense of relief. Only a few minutes passed before I noticed a more than slight pressure drop. Water pressure, not blood pressure.

At this point the remaining man on a greens mower approached. He inquired if I was aware of the water in front of the 16th green. I said that I knew there was a stream there. He asked if I knew about the pond with the fountain. I was not familiar with this part of the golf course. I decided to investigate. I wish I hadn't. When I arrived at the new hazard, more than just a small part of the 16th fairway had disappeared and the apron was rapidly following suit. I knew what I had to do. I went and shut down the pumps, roped off the pond, found my greens chairman on the second green and ruined his day. I then returned to the garage. There was the crew sitting in front of the building, each holding a bottle of beer. There are times when I would not give these lads credit for knowing enough to breathe, but here they were doing the smartest thing they could do during this crisis, drink. Smarter yet was the operator of the leaking greens mower, he got up immediately and opened up a bottle for me.

Time 9:10.

After the crew left I contemplated my future and decided to poison myself. I went through my entire chemical inventory, only to find nothing lethal enough to kill me. Damn E.P.A. Discouraged, tired, aggravated, and frustrated I felt it was time to go home. Not being lucky enough to make a clean getaway, I was met at the door by the superintendent of a neighboring club. I made the mistake of showing him one of the damaged greens—which by now was as burnt as burnt grass gets. I thought that this sight would provoke some much needed sympathy. Instead, he seemed to enjoy seeing the agronomic carnage before him. A rather sinister smirk came to his face as he counted each of the eleven brown strips on the green. On the way back to the barn he did his best to assure me of his deepest sympathy for my plight. But, his voice lacked the sincerity usually accompanying such words. As he drove off, leaving me in a cloud of dust, I found a new source of inner strength; hate. That snickering s.o.b. gave me the will to go on. The energy to fight. The desire to bring that green back and show him. I was reborn. I was also still tired, and was having the worst morning of my life. I packed it in and went home to bed. Time 9:57 a.m. I made it.

*Timothy D. Madden
Credit: The Collaborator*

To All the Supt's & Friends of Dick Parsons:

My family and I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all the members of the Golf Course Supt's of Conn. who expressed their sympathy and kindness during Dick's hospitalization and his untimely death.

We were very proud that he was so well remembered by his fellow Superintendents.

Alma & Faye Parsons

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