

CONNECTICUT CLIPPINGS

Volume 33, No. 1

February, 1999

Phil Neaton of the Black Hall Club 1998 Superintendent of the Year

by Bob Chalifour, CGCS (ret.)

Phil Neaton, golf course superintendent at the Black Hall Club in Old Lyme, CT, was awarded the 1998 Superintendent of the Year Award at our Winter Seminar on January 5th. Phil is pictured here (left) receiving the award from Owen Regan, Com. Rep. to the Board.

Phil, a native of Albany, NY, began his golf course career at Schulyer Meadow Club. In 1982, he received a BS Degree in Turfgrass Maintenance from Cornell University.

While attending school, Phil worked summers at the Westchester Country Club. After graduation, he took the assistant's position at the Black Hall

Club under superintendent, Richard Marcks.

He began his service to CAGCS in 1990 when he was elected Social & Welfare Director. He then went on to



serve as secretary, vice president and in 1996 he was elected president.

Presently, Phil is the Education Chairperson for the very successful New England Regional Turf Conference.

With all of the association activity, Phil is also kept busy at the Black Hall Club where assistant superinten-

dent, Kevin Balocca, helps keep the club in the forefront of Connecticut golf.

Phil and his wife, Donna, were married in 1984—the same year he became superintendent at Black Hall. Together with their sons, David age 13, and twins, Mike and Robby age 11, Phil is kept busy on the home front. He is active coaching several sports and presently serves as the president of the Old Lyme Little League (probably the most testing position of all).

The CAGCS Superintendent of the Year Award is our association's most treasured award and is given annually to a Class A or Life member who has been a superintendent member for at least five years, a person who has shown exemplary skills in maintaining a golf facility and has devoted his or her time and effort to help benefit fellow superintendents and local and national golf associations.

This award is bestowed upon the recipient by his/her peers and is determined by a mail-in ballot from all voting members. The winner of this award is not eligible for consideration again for 15 years.

Editor's note - A sweep by the Black Hall Club - Tim Gavronski, PGA Professional, received the Connecticut Section PGA Club Pro of the year.

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Anthony Grosso
1999 CAGCS President

As I enter into my second year as CAGCS President, and we all enter into the last year of the twentieth century, I reflect back and wonder where all the time has gone. It seems like only yesterday that we were ushering in 1990.

I am not sure what is going by faster—the winter months or the years; but, as we brace ourselves to enter into the year 2000, CAGCS will continue to be a very progressive chapter, thanks to a dedicated and competent Board of Directors. I can't say enough about their work ethic and their willingness to make CAGCS the best it

CAGCS Board of Directors

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Connecticut Clippings is an official publication of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents.

Newsletter Editor - Bob Chalifour, CGCS (Ret)

Newsletter Committee - David Basconi, Heather Garvin, Ron Holcomb, Jud W. Smith

Photos - David Basconi

President's message

possibly can be. I consider it an honor to be associated with this group of individuals and the professionalism they bring to the board.

I would like to bring to your attention the additional responsibilities of each and welcome all members to call upon these board members whenever necessary. If you are unable to reach them at their offices, just call the CAGCS office and our staff will be sure they get the message.

— Officers —

Brian Skelly - Vice President (Green Book Chairperson, Liaison between the office staff and the board, EIC Representative, Web Site Committee)

Jud Smith - Secretary (Newsletter Committee, Employment Referral Committee)

Les Kennedy, Jr., CGCS - Treasurer (Bishop Woods School Representative)

John Napier, CGCS - Immediate Past President (Employment Referral Chairperson, Web Site Committee, Connecticut Scramble)

— Directors —

Dennis Houle - Education Chairperson (Tri-State Turf Research Foundation representative)

Peter Pierson - Governmental Relations (EIC President, Tri-State Turf Research Foundation representative, Invitational Committee, CAGCS Voting Delegate)

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Dan Rackliffe, CGCS - S & R Chairperson (CAGCS & Memorial Scholarships, S & R Tournament)

Wayne Urban - Membership Chairperson (Tri-State Turf Research Foundation representative)

John LaBrie - Social & Welfare Chairperson

Owen Regan, a non-voting member of the board, serves the association as Commercial Representative.

Bob Chalifour, CGCS (Ret.) is beginning his second year as our Newsletter Editor and is also serving on the Web Site Committee.

Along with the board, CAGCS is blessed with an outstanding office staff of Pauline Streeter and Mary Jo Kennedy. They handle everything that we and GCSAA throw at them with efficiency, while keeping us up to date in all other aspects of our business.

Congratulations are in order for Peter Pierson on his re-election as President of the Environmental Industry Council (EIC), and to Timothy O'Neill, CGCS, on his appointment as President of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

The year 1999 is shaping up to be a very busy and exciting year, starting with the GCSAA National Conference in Orlando, FL.

Upon our return from Florida, we have the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference (NERTCS) scheduled for March 2, 3 & 4. In just its second year, NERTCS has been incredibly successful and is already recognized throughout the country as one of the top turf shows.

March 19th brings us to the Rocky Hill Marriott for a joint USGA Regional Seminar co-sponsored by CAGCS and the CSGA.

It goes to show what can happen when a group of associations pull together for the betterment of the "whole".

CAGCS Winter Seminar

Dennis Houle, Education Chair-person, and his committee are to be congratulated for presenting an excellent winter seminar which was informative, enlightening and entertaining.

In order to receive credits for pesticide recertification, the DEP requires a certain amount of technical material be included. Polls taken of members have shown that a wide array of varied subjects would make for more interesting seminars and optimum attendance. This seminar included a mix of subject matter that would be useful to all.

Dr. Jim Baird from Michigan State University gave a presentation on run-off of pesticides and fertilizer. On average, not more than 5% left the plot after a simulated 2 1/2" - 3" sudden rainfall.

— Conclusions —

- √ Choose pesticides and nutrients with a low potential of runoff,
- √ Avoid applications to saturated soils, and
- √ Buffer sensitive areas (wet lands) with higher heights of cut.

EIC Executive Director, Richard Tice, spoke about how the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) will affect products in the future. Dick also

stressed notifying EIC if you become aware of any problem that may arise in your community.

Control strategies for hyperodes, grubs and cut worms and proper timing of chemical and biorational products were discussed as well as the pyrethroids such as Merit, Mach 2 and Spinosad by Dr. Stanley Swier from the University of New Hampshire.

Fungicide resistance has long been a concern in the turf industry. David Ravel of Novartis (pictured above) reviewed the strategies for combating resistance and also explained which fungicides are at more risk in developing fungal resistance.

An early riser and avid golfer, Bob Maxon, Meteorologist at Channel 30, NBC News, gave us the scoop on the weather. Bob informed us that one of the reasons for varying weather reports is that there are "too many sources of information". He also admitted that predictions of three days are difficult and five days even more difficult.

Lightning detection and warning are important and should be monitored closely by golf courses for the safety of golfers and employees. There is some hype in weather reporting, but electrical storms are taken seriously.

Bob Maxon's great presentation was followed by our own Dennis Houle



*Dennis Houle
Education Chairperson*

who did a fine job of reviewing the program utilizing what he learned from Prof. William Walton's (Connecticut State University) presentation which helped everyone whenever giving a presentation to large or small groups. Dennis followed his advice to a tee utilizing inexpensive visual aides, moving about and not standing behind a podium, and entertained us as well.

Many thanks to our commercial members—Agr Evo, Glenmore Landscaping, Holliston Sand, Metro Milorganite, R. F. Morse & Son, Sawtelle Bros. and Turf Products who purchased vendor space. This additional income to the seminar enables us to keep the registration fee to a reasonable amount.





Anthony B. Caranci, Jr. (pictured above) will be awarded the GCSAA 1999 Distinguished Service Award during the Opening Session at the National Conference & Show in Orlando FL.

CAGCS joined along with the Rhode Island GCSA, the New England GCSA and numerous individuals throughout the country in putting Tony's name into nomination because of his honorable and faithful service spanning over five decades.

Tony was born on August 17, 1930, to a first generation Italian immigrant family. His family home was in close proximity to the Louisquisset Country Club, a Donald Ross design constructed in 1930.

Tony developed a fondness for the game at an early age. When he was

Two northeast icons

Anthony B. Caranci, Jr.

1999 Distinguished Service Award Recipient

by Bob Bianco

eleven years old, he had his first exposure to the game of golf when he became a caddy at Louisquisset Country Club. Then at the age of thirteen, he entered into what would become his life-long career, turf maintenance.

His boss, Pat Tameo, would pick Tony up from school and transport him to the golf course to begin his work. Tony would screen loam daily until dark for 25¢ an hour. He continued his work at the golf course and was a caddy through high school.

In whatever spare time he could find, Tony took up the game of golf. Of course, growing up during the depression golf equipment was very expensive to purchase. Tony would utilize whatever old, discarded clubs he could find.

When Tony entered the North Providence High School, they did not have a golf team. In 1946, Tony initiated, organized and instituted the first golf team for the high school and he competed. He was appointed captain of the golf team in 1947 and 1948. While competing on the golf team, Tony found the necessity for a 3-wood. New clubs were expensive, and there weren't any used 3-woods available.

So Tony purchased an old driver for 25¢ and cut the face of the club with a hacksaw and then cut grooves across the face. He actively competed with this club throughout high school.

Upon graduating in 1948, Tony be-

gan to work full time at the Louisquisset Country Club under the guidance of the man that became his role model, superintendent Pat Tameo. Then in 1950 at the age of 20, Tony became superintendent at Louisquisset. This was a difficult time for him due to the fact that he was the youngest worker on the course. He continued to grow and mature as a golf course superintendent.

Louisquisset was the first golf course in New England to develop pythium. Though it was talked about in textbooks, no one had seen it this far north. The local university doctors, Dr. Troll and Dr. Howard, were thrilled to be able to see first-hand disease at work, but Tony could only measure the progress of the disease by the minute as it overtook his greens.

In 1951, he was called upon to serve his country in the Korean War. He served from 1951 to October of 1953. During his absence, his father ran the golf course for him. Upon his discharge from the Army, Tony returned to Louisquisset to man the helm as superintendent. He continued to work at Louisquisset Country Club until 1955 when he accepted the job at the Ledge-mont Country Club. Tony found his home at Ledge-mont where he is still the golf course superintendent, a position that he has held for 42 years.

When Tony went to Ledge-mont Country Club, the golf course was still in its infancy. The course was only six years old and its problems were starting to show up. Tony began an intense maintenance program that included the design and rebuilding of eight greens, hand mixing the root

(continued on page 6)

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Dr. Noel Jackson wins 1999 USGA Green Section Award

USGA Press Release

Dr. Noel Jackson of Kingston, RI (pictured right) a respected teacher, researcher, and extension specialist from the University of Rhode Island, has been selected to receive the 1999 USGA Green Section Award.

Given by a distinguished panel of experts, this annual honor recognizes persons for distinguished contributions to the game of golf through work with turfgrass. It will be presented to Dr. Jackson during the National Conference in show in Orlando, FL.

"I'm extremely pleased, and very surprised, for that matter," Jackson said. "This is wonderful."

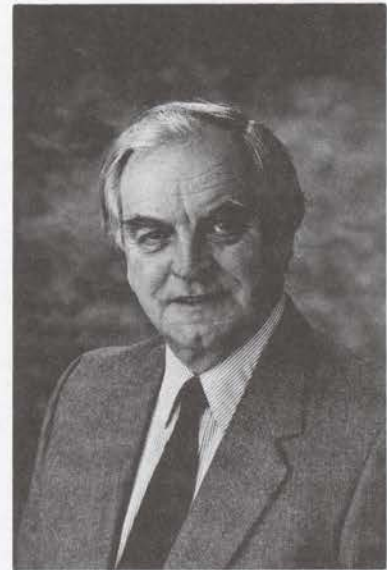
Dr. Jackson is the first Green Section Award recipient to be born, raised, and educated outside the United States. A native of Yorkshire, England, Jackson's academic record includes B.S. and M.S. degrees in Agricultural

Botany from King's College, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, U.K., and a Ph.D. degree in agronomy from the University of Durham, U.K.

From 1958 to 1965, Jackson served as a distinguished turfgrass pathologist with the Sports Turf Research Institute in Bingley, England. He moved to the United States in 1965 to join the faculty of the University of Rhode Island, where he rose to the rank of Professor.

Dr. Jackson is renowned for his knowledge of cool-season turfgrass diseases and for his expertise as a turf disease diagnostician. He is highly respected for his ability to provide effective and practical disease control recommendations.

His academic peers admire his understanding of the relationship between disease and agronomic practices, and



for his exceptional knowledge of the taxonomy, biology and management of turfgrass diseases. He has authored hundreds of articles as well as co-authoring the work, *Fungal Diseases of Amenity Grasses*, considered the premier reference on the subject of turfgrass diseases.

Dr. Jackson is also renowned as an effective public speaker at scores of seminars held throughout the country, as well as a concerned, caring mentor to hundreds of students.

One of Dr. Jackson's advocates writes: "His vast experience and knowledge in turfgrass agronomy and pathology; his dedication to research, teaching, and extension work; his insight, sense of humor, willingness to share ideas, ability to communicate effectively, and his love for his profession make Dr. Jackson one of the most respected men in our industry."

Noel has spoken at numerous CAGCS meetings and seminars over the years. A friend of the golf course superintendent, Noel's presentations are always knowledgeable, supportive and entertaining. He is well deserving of the USGA award.

Dr. Noel Jackson is an honorary member of CAGCS.

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Tony Caranci

(continued from page 4)

zone, installation of miles of drainage and had the pleasure of installing two irrigation systems to bring Ledgemont to the pristine golf course that it is today. When irrigation water was in limited supply, Tony had the ingenuity to purchase a diesel-driven pump and placed it at a gravel pit down the road from Ledgemont. He then proceeded to pump their wash water over the natural contour of the land to the irrigation holding pond so that water would be available for the golf course.

Once Tony became established as a superintendent, he repaid Pat Tameo and other veterans of the profession with untold and unabashed displays of friendship and devotion. When Pat Tameo and superintendent Steve Garabedian became incapacitated by illness, Tony would escort them to association meetings and other related functions. As a result, a once finely-tuned golf game deserted Tony; but to him, it was a small price to pay. "I was a pretty good player until I stopped playing at the summer meetings. Guys like Pat and Steve needed me. There really wasn't any choice. I

also felt better all around. I loved those guys."

In 1956, Tony attended the University of Massachusetts Winter School for Turf Managers. Since that time, he has become an instrumental part of the education of future turf managers. He was called upon to teach Budgeting and Turf Management at both the University Massachusetts and University of Rhode Island, the latter where he taught for 38 years.

Both universities recognized Tony—he received a letter of appreciation from the URI College of Resource Development for Turf Management students at URI and a plaque in appreciation for his dedication and outstanding service to the field of Turf Management at UMass.

Soon after assuming his role at Ledgemont Country Club, Tony became more active in local associations. He served as President of the Rhode Island GCSA in 1957 and 1958 and the President of the GCSA of New England in 1968 and 1969. He has been a member of these associations and GCSAA for 45 years.

He started an annual budget meeting for area superintendents to compare budgets and salaries. This meeting is responsible for transforming the super-

intendent's role to that of a professional, and thus being compensated for such.

Throughout his career, Tony always had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. He would religiously attend all meetings and conferences. If at any time during a conference you needed to find Tony, you would only have to look in the first row to find him listening attentively to the speakers.

Dr. Lawrence Dickinson held the first conferences that he attended at the University of Massachusetts at Stockbridge Hall. While attending the conferences, Tony saw a need for improvement.

It was at this time that Tony, Dr. Joseph Troll and Mr. Charles Mruk were instrumental in the creation of the Massachusetts Turfgrass Council. The Council worked in conjunction with the University of Massachusetts and was responsible for the inclusion of an equipment trade show at the conference to increase revenues to fund research. Tony served as its President for four years. The Massachusetts Turfgrass Council in cooperation with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England created the Lawrence Dickinson Scholarship Fund which awards scholarships to turf students.

During his tenure as a golf course superintendent he has attended 44 GCSAA conferences missing one due to an operation, and 46 UMass conferences missing only two due to the Korean War.

Tony was a speaker at the 42nd and 58th National Conference and Trade Shows. He was a Session Chairman at the 48th Conference.

Tony's efforts for the betterment of the profession did not go unnoticed. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the RIGCSA. The Massachusetts Turfgrass Conference has dedicated the conference to him twice. The most recent time was on January 13, 1997, when he received the GCSA of New England Distinguished Service

(Continued on page 7)

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LEGACY
EST. 1988

Tony Caranci (continued from page 6)

Award for his dedication to the golf course profession. This was the last conference for the university as they have now joined other universities to host a regional conference. Ledgemont Country Club hosts an annual invitational tournament in his name.

Although Tony maintained a rigorous schedule at the golf course, he did find time to take on many civic obligations. He is a life-long member of the Pawtucket Lodge of Elks #920 and served as its President for three years. In 1958, Tony became a member of the North Providence Republican Town Committee, a position he held for 30 years. From 1959 to the present, Tony has been a member of the RI Republican State Central Committee. He served on the Executive Committee for six years, the Finance Committee for eight years and served on the Welcoming Committee for President Gerald Ford when he came to Rhode Island.

In 1960, Governor Christopher DelSesto appointed Tony, Chairman of the Providence-Worcester Railroad for a six-year term. He was reappointed by Governor John Chaffee for an additional term of six years and appointed Tony to the Automobile Body Repair Shop Hearing Board in 1969.

Tony was elected from District 2 as a member of the North Providence Town Council and served three terms from 1970 to 1976.

He was instrumental in the creation of the Rhode Island State Police FOPA. At various meetings around the town, Tony would solicit people for membership until he had enough support. Tony served as President of the Elmhurst Lions Club from 1977 through 1980.

Governor Edward DiPrete appointed Tony Chairman of the Narragansett Bay Water Quality Management District Commission on August 15, 1985. He maintains a Brokers Real Estate License from the Rhode Island

Department of Business Regulations and is a Notary Public.

Tony's family is very active in the art of turf management. His father, Anthony, worked at Louisquiset Country Club and became superintendent at Valley Country Club in Rhode Island. His brother, Tom Caranci, worked as a golf course construction foreman for golf course architect, Robert Baldock, building courses in California, Arizona, and Hawaii. Tom and his family fell in love with Hawaii, so after completing the construction of Oahu Country Club, he became their superintendent. Tom stayed at Oahu until he was approaching retirement age when he took a position in Palm Springs at Cathedral Canyon Country Club from which he has since retired. Tony's nephew, Michael Caranci, is still an active superintendent working in the California area.

Bob Bianco, the author of this article, is Tony's son-in-law and the superintendent at Pawtucket Country Club in Rhode Island.

Anthony B. Caranci, Jr. is a man of many talents and abilities, and has unselfishly shared those talents and abilities with his fellow man throughout his lifetime. It is for these reasons that CAGCS joined in the nomination of Tony as the recipient of the GCSAA 1999 distinguished Service Award.

—Congratulations, Tony!—

Editor's Note — The day I visited Tony, he was busy in his office packing away years of momentos and awards that he has received. This massive project will take him well into the next century. Tony told me that he plans on playing more golf and spending some time in Florida with his wife, Millie.

CAGCS wishes you and Millie a long and healthy retirement—you deserve it!

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* * * * *

Dues & info sheets

Remember that all dues received after February 1st will be assessed a late charge of 10% per month in accordance with the bylaws.

It is important that all members return their information sheets to the CAGCS office. If you have had any change in your home and/or affiliation information, please make the necessary corrections. This is the information used for the membership directory.

* * * * *

Twenty years ago

* Walter Lowell, pro superintendent at the Canton Public Golf Course was named "Home Professional of the

Year" by the PGA. Walter, a member of CAGCS since 1955, was instrumental in creating a good working harmony between the golf professionals and the golf course superintendent.

* Daconil was listed as a restricted chemical. Steve Cadenelli, CGCS, pointed out that sooner or later all of us who are responsible for chemical applications will have to be licensed. Twenty years ago, a review of the sessions and subsequent testing showed that 54% of those taking the test passed. Steve stressed the importance of not being discouraged if you missed the first time and not to wait too long to retest.

The same advice goes for today—the information is still fresh in your mind and with a little more work a passing grade can be achieved.

* Jim Medeiros, a CAGCS member since 1975 and presently the superintendent at Wannamoisett CC in Rumford, RI, passed his certification exam entitling him to use the initials "CGCS".

* * * * *

We are proud to announce that our association newsletter, *Connecticut Clippings*, received the "first runner-up" award in our category in the GCSAA newsletter contest.

Many thanks to Dave Basconi, Heather Garvin, Ron Holcomb, Jud Smith, and the CAGCS members who contributed articles and information.

USGA Regional

**Conference
March 19, 1999**

CAGCS has joined with the USGA and the CSGA in conducting a regional conference conducted jointly by the Regional Affairs Department and the Green Section.

This one-day seminar will be held on March 19th at the Rocky Hill Marriott in Rocky Hill, CT, and is open to golf club committees, members, managers, golf course superintendents, public golf course officials, golf professionals and interested golfers.

The seminar is designed to present current information about turfgrass management issues and other golf-related general interest items.

Program registration forms will be distributed in early February. There will be a \$50 per person registration fee which includes a luncheon for each person registering in advance. On-site registration is \$60 per person and will be accepted on a space available basis.

Watch your mail for your registration form which will include specifics and directions.

If you have any questions on the seminar, direct them to:

James A. Farrell, Manager
USGA Regional Affairs
Northeast Region
177 Georgia Avenue
North Kingstown, RI 02852

* * * * *

Reminders!!!

Deadline for April issue of the *Clippings* is March 7th.

Deadline for submission of scholarship applications is March 15th.

It is again that time when we will be having our monthly meetings. Please remember the importance of a timely reservation.

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Tuesday, March 2 • 4pm - 7pm

Wednesday, March 3 • 10:30am - 2pm / 4pm - 6pm

Thursday, March 4 • 10am - 2pm

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Dogs of summer



Clinton Country Club's six-year-old chocolate lab, Kailey, has been the resident "goose chaser" since she was a pup. Kailey has become proficient at eliminating not only geese but moles, muskrats, squirrels and numerous "hot dogs" during her tenure.

While having the run of the course, she has become the post popular "employee" and a favorite with the membership.

Mike Decker, Superintendent

CAGCS trivia contest

In the five issues of the *Clippings* published last year, we had a trivia question. Some of the questions received a good response, but this last one received the most. Out of the six members who contributed, we had four winners. A drawing was held, and John Callahan of The Cardinals won the \$50 certificate for CAGCS software. The correct answers:

Charlie Baskin - CC of Waterbury
Paul Caswell - Greenwich CC
Ken Kelliher - Manchester CC
John Lynch - Woodbridge CC
Tim Michaud - Bel Compo

Lyle Mitchell - The Farms CC
Karnig Ovia - Hop Meadow CC
C. Robert Phipps - Shorehaven CC
Stanley Sablak - The Farms CC
Les Scheiber - Neipsic GC

Thank you to all members who participated!

Wethersfield Country Club Used Equipment Sale

Contact - Superintendent Alfred Bachand (860/529-9536)
Shop Manager, Michael Kravontka (860/721-6212)

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. 1980 Arctic Cat JAG 3000 Snowmobile | \$500.00 |
| 2. 1961 Lawnall Power Roller (Model AR1) | 150.00 |
| 3. 1965 Rogers Fairway Sweeper (Model 720) | 400.00 |
| 4. 1986 Terra Fairway Aerifier (Model T320A) | 300.00 |
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Calendar of Events

March 2-4

*Second Annual New
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March 9

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Hawthorne Inn, Berlin, CT

March 19

USGA Regional Conference
Marriott Hotel
Rocky Hill, CT

April 20

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Pequabuck Golf Club
Peter Pierson, Superintendent

May 11

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Watertown Golf Club
Robert Viera, Superintendent

June 22

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Grassy Hill Country Club
Tim Gerzabek, Superintendent

July TBA

Annual Invitational Tournament

August 4

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Tunxis Plantation
Charles Babcock, Superintendent

September 27

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Pautipaug Country Club
Anthony Grosso, Superintendent

October 4

Annual S & R Tournament
Clinton Country Club
Michael Decker, Superintendent

October 19

CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Oak Lane Country Club
Lawrence Dodge, Superintendent

November 8

CAGCS Annual Meeting
Old Lyme Country Club
Brian Skelly, Superintendent

URI goes high tech with AgriBio Tech

by Bob Chalifour

The University of Rhode Island and AgriBio Tech, one of the leading seed and turfgrass companies in the US, have made public a partnership to develop a biotechnology lab on the URI campus in Kingston, RI.

A coup for URI to win over the publicly traded ABTX with annual net sales of \$475 million, was an embarrassment for the University of Connecticut. UConn was offered the deal first, but lost it along with Dr. Albert Kausch, a leader in plant transformation technology.

Dr. Kausch, who holds several patents in gene transfer in plants formerly worked at Dekalb Genetics in Mystic, left for UConn. Dr. Kausch will now work for ABT setting up the

lab at URI where he has been an adjunct professor for 10 years.

Generally, such partnerships represent significant private sector money for a university, as well as the opportunity to share in royalties from patents developed on campus. Students and faculty get to participate in front-line research and development.

UConn biotech people complained that it took their university four months to arrange a meeting with ABT, but URI needed only four hours.

URI, the nationally recognized center in turf and related crops, has taken a positive step forward in a technology field that has been compared to the industrial revolution.

What will genetic engineered turf-

grass have to do with the golf industry? The possibilities are endless. For starters, there are monocuts that are resistant to round-up, some diseases and insects.

Other areas of research will include developing turfgrass that will require less water and mowing and further emphasis on insect and disease resistance.

How about turfgrass that satisfies all golfers for greenspeed, color, smooth greens and height. Ah—that perfect golf course where every shot goes straight, every putt the same, no employees with noisy mowing equipment, no pesticide applications, no aggravation from aerating and top-dressing, no competing amongst members who has the best course condition because they will all be the same.

However, I'll bet they will still want someone to change the cups!



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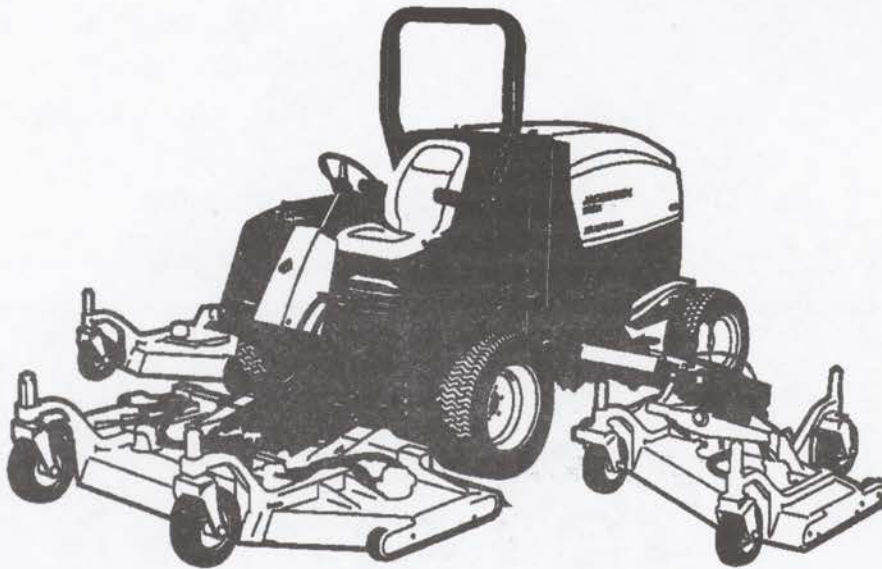
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Don't neglect your golf course superintendent

by Bradley S. Klein
"Golfweek" architecture editor

Ask any golf course superintendent and they will tell you that the hardest part of their job is dealing with in-house politics. Growing grass, dealing with drainage, making sure there's enough air and sunlight to keep their course in shape—these are the things they have trained for. The best university program in turf management cannot prepare them for all the nonsense entailed in responding to 400 bosses - all of them self-styled experts and most of them accustomed to having their way.

Besides reading about *Poa annua* grass and the percolation rates of various soils, it might be helpful to spend a semester in turf school studying Machiavelli and Carl von

Clausewitz. Not that dealing with the vagaries of weather is easy, but at least in responding to Mother Nature you don't have to negotiate along the way with someone else - or worse yet a committee.

The image of the superintendent as country bumpkin greenkeeper, dressed in jeans and suspenders with little more than a few years as a farmhand for training are long gone. You might not know it from the way some members treat their hired help, but superintendents today are the most highly trained professionals in the golf business. Most of them are licensed by their states to deal with pesticides, and many of them continue their college education through ongoing seminars

organized by the 18,000 member Golf Course Superintendents Association of America or its regional affiliates. With all the recent developments in golf equipment, the single most dramatic changes in how golf looks and plays have come by way of refinements in golf course maintenance.

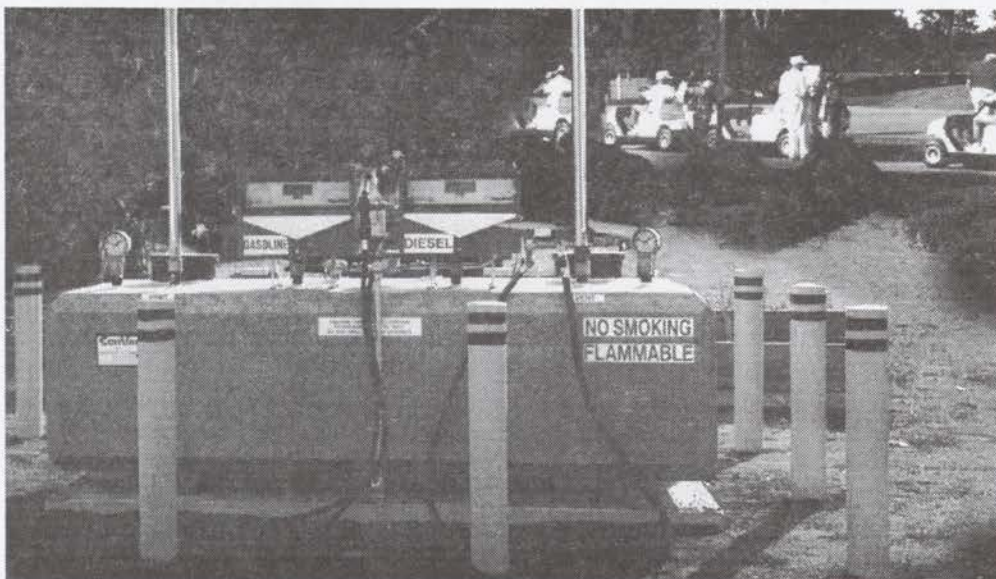
Whenever I have questions about a golf course, I go to the superintendent. The only trouble is finding them because the good ones spend a lot more time in the field than in their office taking calls. Good superintendents know their courses as well as - sometimes better than - their own kids. And why not, since they spend more time tending them?

(continued on page 14)

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That is why it is always awkward, if not downright rude, when some thunderous business tycoon of a member raises hell about, well, you name it. "There's not enough water in the ponds." "Why can't you get your mowers off the course earlier?" "The greens are too bumpy." "The ground is too wet." "The flowers need to be watered more." "Whaddya mean I can't take my golf cart on the fairway?" "The rakes should be inside the bunkers, not outside." "The fescue rough looks like hay." "What are the fairways stimping at?"

Many of these concerns come from excessive expectations. In the business, it is called "The Augusta National syndrome." An awful lot of people expect their golf courses to look like the annual site of the Masters. Of course, they wouldn't be willing to fund the necessary maintenance budget. And little do they realize that tournament venues are primed to look a certain way for one week a year and do not look that way every day.

Don't neglect your golf course superintendent

(continued from page 13)

The expectations are compounded by those Florida-bound snowbirds, the ones who winter down south between Thanksgiving and April 1st and demand that their little havens look lush and plush no matter what.

Superintendents under such scrutiny have virtually no job security. I know many superintendents who have been on the job a decade and still fear the wrath of a disgruntled member or clique. If the course gets highly ranked, they are told "it's about time." Should the golf course fall off in comparison to some neighboring layout, the superintendent's head is first on the chopping block.

The problem is compounded by the proliferation of management companies, most of them eager to cut costs. Too many of them suffer the mistaken belief that they can slash without sacrifice. Many of these firms, interested only in short-term profits, try to force out a veteran superintendent and replace him or her with a lower paid newcomer just to save \$20,000± a year while putting a multi-million dollar asset at risk.

To be fair, there are clubs that value who and what they have. It is crucial to extend long-term contracts so that a superintendent does not feel constantly under the gun. The main reason that golf courses are over-watered, for instance, is that greenkeepers are afraid to make a mistake and "lose" an area of the course to brown-out or disease. They end up saturating the place just to cater to certain expectations about "green is better," even if this invites other kinds of turf trouble.

Beside long-term contracts, clubs can encourage and pay for their superintendents to attend annual training workshops and national meetings. It would also help if superintendents were made to feel welcome teeing it up occasionally with members, or repre-

senting the club in area events. Clubs can also establish regular procedures so that complaints can be directed through a committee rather than having the superintendent respond to every complaint.

A long-term master plan to guide maintenance and any renovation projects is the only way to avoid the nastier forms of in-house politicking. Perhaps most important of all is establishing an adequate budget so that the superintendent doesn't have to cut corners.

For their own part, superintendents need to maintain regular communications. Proper signage at the first and tenth tees about pesticide application or cart traffic can forestall misunderstanding out on the course. A column in the club's monthly newsletter, or a note directly to the members also helps, and so does simply showing up at club meetings and the occasional social function.

What a pleasure it is to see a club that values its superintendent - and to see golfers acknowledging it as well.

The media in general and televised golf in particular, do a lousy job of crediting the hard work most superintendents do. Among the many gracious touches in Justin Leonard's British Open championship speech in 1997 were his words praising Royal Troon's superintendent, William McLachlan.

What is the last time a winner of a major publicly thanked the golf course superintendent? Come to think of it, when was the last time your members thanked you?

This article was reprinted from *Golfweek*, August 2, 1997. Bradley Klein is the author of a new collection of golf essays, "Rough Meditations" (Sleeping Bear Press, 1/800-487-2323).

Ugly tractors and your golf course

"just one more season..."

by Tom Small, Golf Course Superintendent
Abenakee Club
Golf Course Superintendents Association of Maine

As a superintendent, I enjoy visiting golf courses. We all like to see how our peers get the job done. It doesn't matter what color the inside of the shop is, we all have to maintain a fleet of mowers and trimmers. I always look over in the darkest corner of the shop for that unpainted ugly tractor.

I'm drawn to it like a moth to a flame. It doesn't matter what size the maintenance budget is, every superintendent will find a way to get "just one more season" out of it. Hard-to-find parts are always in someone's junk pile. When I need a Cogswell Cog to fix a Spacely Space Sprocket, I make a few calls and can almost always find what I need—even if they stopped making the ugly tractor in 1974.

I also like to see fire trucks that once protected our communities, parked next to the irrigation pond and pumping 750 gallons a minute through the system.

We are lucky to have factory trained mechanics dragged into our shops by our favorite distributors to make that

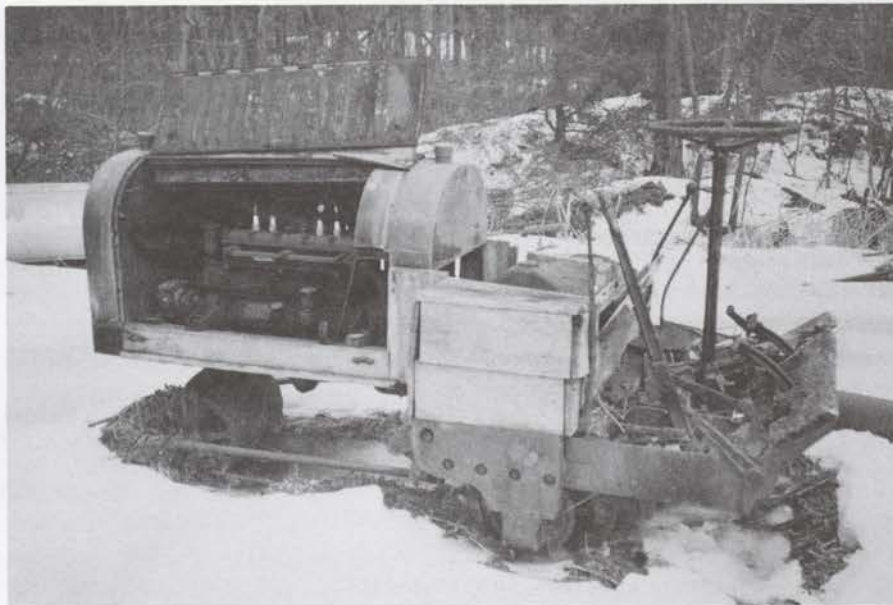
pesky little warranty problem go away on that \$15,000 mower. Maybe it's only an "intermittent problem" and they have to haul the machine off to fix it. Everyone knows it will only act up after the factory guy goes away, so they might as well take it with them—probably an El Nino related occurrence.

can't get it started, hand him a wrench to tighten the battery terminal and have him park it away from anything he may run over. Remember, he's a salesman not an equipment operator.

How come "made in America" means half of the fasteners are metric and the rest are standard? That's another reason I like old ugly tractors.

Hell, all you need to keep them going is a screwdriver, pliers, and a couple rolls of duct tape.

So when your ready to think about scrapping that ugly tractor, stand back and take a good long look at it—maybe its a machine you logged more hours on than anything else in the barn. Listen to it run, maybe it even talks to you. Go ahead and sharpen the reels, adjust the carb and



This 1916 Worthington tractor with continental engine was retrieved from a family farm by Kevin Splaine, assistant superintendent at Cohasse Country Club, Southbridge, MA.

You still have work to do, so go over to that dark corner and move that pallet of fertilizer off from the old ugly tractor and check the oil, top off the fuel and get to work.

When your distributor drives up with your new shiny repaired mower and

don't tell anyone; but, go ahead and paint the old girl, "just one more season."

Editor's Note - Was this old tractor the predecessor of today's modern light-weight mowers?

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