



MAY 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.

### BEEFING UP THE PROGRAM

Larry Bunn is the educational chairman for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England and he's overflowing with enthusiasm.

"Maybe I should start with myself and give me a kick you know where", he roars. "I mean what are we doing in this field of education? Sure, we have programs, but I think we can beef it up to be worthwhile."

Bunn gives the super-green chairman golf tournament as a prime example of wasting a wonderful opportunity to make progress in an area where the footing has been testy. "What usually happens in this tournament is that we do nothing more than socialize", Larry claims. "I'm not trying to say we can't have a good time but we're missing the boat. There should be an exchange of ideas taking place but there's none."

The thoughts here really make sense. There isn't any need to hide the fact that in some cases the relationship between golf course superintendent and green chairman is strained . . . even though the two might consent to hook up in golf tournaments and cookouts.

"Why couldn't we get to the site of the tournament an hour or so earlier and take a tour of the place?" Bunn offers. "Usually, this tournament is played on one of the better association member courses. It might open the eyes of the visiting green chairman . . . and maybe those of the visiting super. After all, you learn every day of your life in some way or the other."

Green chairmen seem to be a special project with Bunn. "It has nothing to do with my personal likes or dislikes", he cautions. "But we have to be cognizant of the fact that our relationship with our chairmen is probably the most important phase of the maintenance operation. Sometimes the relationship becomes strained because of ignorance . . . on both sides. Maybe at our tournament we could have some sort of seminar

where both sides give their views on how a golf course maintenance program should be arranged."

Bunn is keen on the idea of educating his fellow supers and himself on the important avenue they must take in public relations. "I think we can do a better job getting our message to more golf writers", he says. "I know we have the super-press tournament and I'm all for it. But how many supers take the time to get acquainted with their local golf writer? All he has to do is pick up the phone and introduce himself. The rest takes care of itself."

Larry blames part of the lack of recognition of the superintendent on the man, himself. "One of the biggest gripes I hear is that golf writers often call up the pro at the beginning of the season to find out when the course will be open", he continues. "But they don't know that we are the ones who have the last word (with the green chairman) on that subject. If there was some kind of communication established at the beginning, this would never happen. We just can't sit still."

Bunn is convinced that progress is being made along educational lines and his thoughts bear no reflection on those who have served in the job of educational chairman in the past. "I'm just here with my own ideas", he makes clear. "This is not a condemnation of what's gone on before. It's just a new twist to what I consider a very important area of the association."

The NEGCSA, then, has to think of beefing up its educational program. Larry Bunn is the boy who wants to make the wheels move . . . and he'd like to start them rolling with suggestions from association members. "I'm sure there are members with ideas that I haven't even thought of", he concludes. "Ideas that can help everyone in the long run. And I am open to suggestion. That's the only way we can make gains."

— Gerry Finn

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the GCSA of NE will be May 1, 1972 at the Oyster Harbor Country Club. Charles Gardner has made arrangements for sandwiches before golf at 11 a. m. There will be a regular meeting at 5 p. m. However, there will not be an evening meal served.

Sandwiches and golf	11:00 a. m.
Directors meeting	4:00 p. m.
Regular meeting	5:00 p. m.

Directions: Route 128 south to Route 3 to Route 6 (mid cape highway). Take exit 5 off Route 6 and follow signs to Oyster Harbor.

New applications: At the meeting in May we will vote on the following for membership to the association:

James A. Mahoney (associate)	William Gilson (regular)
Running Hills Country Club	Hickory Hill Golf Course
Frye Island	Methuen, Mass.
Sebago Lake, Maine	

25 Year Members! At the April meeting Dick Blake, CGCS, presented 25 year national pins to Arthur Anderson and James MacCormack. Both men are now retired. Bob Grant presented a 25 year New England pin to Joe Butler.



# Golf Course Superintendents Association

## THOSE CRAZY COOTS

Take heart, golf course superintendents of New England. Your plight is not one that others don't chase. If you think things are bad and yours is the only conditioning job that has its mostly downs . . . and ups, just listen to the woes a thousand miles to the south where pesty problems also reside on two of the most famous courses in the land.

Those crazy coots, for instance. They're at it again on the water-laced grounds of the Dunes Golf Club in Myrtle Beach. And if it doesn't get too hot for them pretty soon, they might just eat the fairways to death.

A coot, just in case you're not up on your bird watching, is a duck. To be frank, he's an ugly duck. He wears a black coat and a beepy voice signals the occasion when he thinks he's in trouble.

Dunes members hate the things. "I'd like to take a gun and clear them out of here", one golfer said as a flock of coots decorated the famous 13th hole with the messy residue which results from them using the fairway as a comfort station. "They just drive me crazy. And we won't get rid of them until it gets real hot. I think they spend the summer in Canada. I'm not sure."

Coots feast on any of the healthy grasses they can find. The Dunes Club maintenance crew has to be especially careful that they don't take their meals on the greens. Thus, a program has been set up to protect them with a ring of chemicals that discourage the birds from moving onto the putting surfaces. It doesn't harm them. It just sends them the other way.

"We can't use poison or we'll have the conservation people down on our necks", a Dunes spokesman revealed. "This happens to be a bird sanctuary. The only way a coot can be killed is if he's hit by an errant golf shot. That happens sometimes because we have six water holes on the back nine."

The coots are the menace at the Dunes and over to the west at even more famous Augusta National, site of the Masters Tournament, the war is being waged against the sudden emergence of poa annua on the greens.

The theory on poa annua on one of the most pampered golf courses in the world is that the grass makes a visit to Augusta National every five years. It's like clockwork. This year the scourge came at an inopportune time — the week when the greats of golf worked for gold and glory in the Masters Tournament.

Oddly enough the professional players found themselves educating many golf writers on the poa annua invasion. George Archer was especially talkative on the subject. Archer calls poa annua a weed and he even knows how to spell it.

"It'll get out of there when it gets hot enough", Archer told a group of scribes who were curious enough to ask for a briefing on the subject. "I know it's going to affect the scores. You just hit a putt and away she goes. It's like rolling a ball down a bad rug."

Paul Harney, the Pleasant Valley pro who was playing the Masters after an absence of three years, also was tuned into the situation. "These are the worst the Augusta greens will

ever get", he warned. "But there's nothing they can do about it. I'm told that it just busts out every five years. It does affect putting tremendously. You have no control of the ball when you stroke it."

There are programs to eliminate poa but evidently they either haven't been attempted or even have failed at Augusta National. Anyway, two of the premier courses in the country have their troubles . . . although the nature of them are widespread. Those crazy coots at Myrtle Beach keep munching away at the grass while the poa annua creeps into Augusta National.

Next time you get a complaint, tell it like it is. Pests in any form don't look at the name on the clubhouse before they decide to do their damage. It happens in the best of places.

— Gerry Finn

### TIME THREAD

Eons come in layered cells  
 Wrapped in the covering of a seed  
 Spinning from its cone  
 Sometimes to fertile earth.  
 It is a thread sewn back  
 Across the cloth of time  
 To make the fabric of forever  
 Green.

— William W. Mattix, Sr.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As President of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association and with the approval of the board of directors I have appointed the following committee chairmen and committee members to prepare for the National Convention which we will host in January 1973. Additional committees will be appointed in the near future.

Conference Host Association Chairman **Bob Grant**  
 Committee — Tom Curran

Ladies Program Chairman **Leon St. Pierre**  
 Committee — Dean Robertson, Barbara Clapper

Education Display and Exhibit Committee Chairman **Nary Sperandio**

Publicity Committee Chairman **Burt Fredrick**  
 Committee — Gerry Finn, Don Hearn

Ways and Means Committee Co-Chairmen **Lou Duval, Phil Cassidy**

Educational Program Service Committee Co-Chairmen **John O'Connell, Charles Gardner**

Host Association Booth Committee Co-Chairmen **Ron Kirkman, Norman Mucciarone**

Entertainment Committee Co-Chairmen **Wayne Zoppo, Joe Rybka, Tony Caranci**

If there is anyone who would like to serve on a committee please contact me, Robert Grant, President GCSA of NE.

President —  
**ROBERT GRANT**  
 22 Patricia Road  
 Safford, Mass. 01776  
 Phone 443-2671  
 Club Affiliation  
 Bree Burn Country Club

First Vice President —  
**THOMAS CURRAN**  
 133 Faber Street  
 Walpole, Mass. 02081  
 Phone 665-7221  
 Club Affiliation  
 The Country Club

Second Vice President —  
**WAYNE ZOPPO**  
 48 Barbary Drive  
 Sestonk, Mass.  
 Phone 399-7141  
 Club Affiliation  
 Agawam Hunt

Secretary —  
**RONALD KIRKMAN**  
 25 Green Street  
 Needham, Mass. 02192  
 Phone 444-8412  
 Club Affiliation  
 Needham Golf Club

Treasurer —  
**LUCIEN DUVAL**  
 R.F. No. 5 Gault Road  
 Bedford, N. H. 03105  
 Phone 472-3454  
 Club Affiliation  
 Manchester Country Club

Trustee —  
**MAX MIERZWA**  
 136 Crawford Street  
 Chicopee, Mass. 01020  
 Phone 594-4996  
 Club Affiliation  
 Chicopee Country Club

Trustee —  
**NORMAN MUCCIARONE**  
 101 Albee Road  
 Waban, Mass. 02188  
 Phone 332-3056  
 Club Affiliation  
 Woodland Golf Club

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**BERT FREDERICK**  
 45 Stony Brook Road  
 Nahant, Mass.  
 Phone 453-1231  
 Club Affiliation  
 Vesper Country Club

Finance Chairman —  
**MARY SPERANDIO**  
 Concord, Mass. 01942  
 Phone 369-4723  
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**SOUND OFF ! ! ! !**

*(Here it is time once more for the reader to become writer and spread his gospel to the fairway flock. This is Sound Off and all of you are invited to take part. Just jot down a thought, view or complaint on any phase of golf and send it to Newsletter Mail Box, 24 Riverview Drive, Newbury, Mass. 01950. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all published letters.)*

\* \* \* \*

"I would like to make a few comments regarding Mr. Finn's 'A New Hurdle' in your March Newsletter.

"First, I must generally agree with his position that re-examination for certification may not necessarily be needed. I don't think the superintendent's situation is at all like that of a medical association and should not be compared. I feel that asking a certified superintendent to be re-examined is much like asking a person with a higher degree to be re-examined every so often to prove his worth. This, too, would be hard to sell.

"Perhaps a system requiring a certified superintendent to attend so many national, regional or local educational seminars or conferences of his choice each year would get the job done. A point system could be developed to measure his participations. Also, credit should be given for participation in local associations.

"The second area I wanted to comment on is that of the certification test procedure. I feel a test should be considered an educational tool just as the study material is used. A test does not mean too much if you never know which answer was wrong or why it was wrong. When sections are failed, the superintendent doesn't know and so far can't find out his weak areas.

"I have suggested to Dr. Alexander that the corrected test be returned to the person giving the test so that it may be reviewed with the superintendent. Weak areas could then be strengthened before re-examination. The original test could be returned to Dr. Alexander. I am most willing to help a superintendent in any way I can."

**WILLIAM E. KNOOP**, Univ. of New Hampshire

You have echoed our thoughts on this serious matter, Bill, so all we can say is "welcome to the club."

\* \* \* \*

"I am a little curious about the tight security placed on information in regards to new technical attempts to improve construction of greens, tees and other aids to preparing a better golf course.

"Any upgrading of a system whereby the golf course is upgraded in looks and condition and whereby the golf course superintendent's job is made that much less difficult should be shouted from the highest hill.

"I'm told the USGA issues some sort of specifications along these lines, but so far I haven't been made aware of it changing them so as to incorporate the new and worthwhile improvements.

"Does the USGA know of these new methods itself or does it intend to keep the old standards as part of the official specifications forever?"

**CHARLES CURTIS**, Charleston, S. C.

Upgrading of specifications or the updating of them is a long and tedious process, Mr. Curtis. Any new methods must be examined and re-examined before the USGA puts its stamp of approval on them. If they are worthwhile, they will be accorded due recognition in time.

\* \* \* \*

"A funny thing occurred to me the other night as I was watching television and news of the baseball strike was highlighted.

"I looked over the situation of some golf course operations and wondered what would happen if the golf course superintendents all over the country suddenly decided to band together and call a strike if their conditions were not improved.

"As a member of a country club I can't imagine the consequences should the strike be called at a time when the hand of an expert is needed to ward off the effects of adverse weather, the threat of a visit by a dreaded turf disease or a quick death to one of our greens.

"To be frank, I was petrified by the mere suggestion that such a situation could arise and intend to bring this matter (although it is just a case of mind wandering on my part) to our board of governors and see if we at the club are doing our best to avoid its possibility."

**RONALD D. HART**, Bayshore, N. J.

It would be interesting to see a country club president flipping a coin to decide what fungicide to use on a damaged green, eh Ronald?

\* \* \* \*

"I am a superintendent for a nine-hole course which gets a tremendous amount of play and therefore suffers the stronger possibility of becoming worn out and tired.

"My members have been pretty patient with me and I have no gripe there. They, too, must realize that a selected area of turf can take just so much play before it starts to wilt under the pressure of constant beating.

"They have ruffled my feathers a bit, though, in one area. And it has reached the point of being ridiculous as I see it. They have the idea that I should have my crew out changing cups on the greens twice a day so that they will have the feeling of playing a 'different' hole when they play the course the second time around.

"I have tried to explain that this practice is rather foolish. The biggest drawback is that we wouldn't know when to change the cup or which player was playing his 'first' or 'second' nine.

"Don't you think this is going too far in way of members' demands?"

**ROSS GOODRICH**, Churchill, Tenn.

Don't fret, Ross. Maybe tomorrow they'll ask you to change the cup three times a day, so they can think they own a 27-hole course!

\* \* \* \*

*(That wraps it up for another session with the reader. You, too, can be a part of Sound Off. There must be something on your mind. Let's hear it from you .....and often.)*

Golf Chairman —  
**JULIUS AKSTEN**  
6 Main Street  
Southboro, Mass. 01772  
Phone 485-8885  
Club Affiliation  
St. Mark's Golf Club

Educational Chairman —  
**LARRY BUNN**  
145 Deaham Street  
Canton, Mass.  
Phone 828-0467  
Club Affiliation  
Blue Hill Country Club

Newsletter Chairman —  
**DEAN ROBERTSON**  
24 Riverview Drive  
Newbury, Mass. 01950  
Phone 462-4540  
Club Affiliation  
Chestnut Hill Country Club

Past President —  
**RICHARD C. BLAKE**  
211 Sewall Street  
Bayside, Mass. 01505  
Phone 869-2737  
Club Affiliation  
Mt. Pleasant Country Club

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Philip A. Wogan  
Golf Course Architect  
21 Budleigh Ave., Beverly, Mass.

Wyandotte Chemical Co.  
709 Salada Bldg., Boston, Mass.

\* Contributors to the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund

# NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association  
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.



DEAN ROBERTSON  
Newsletter Committee Chairman  
24 Riverview Drive  
Newbury, Massachusetts 01950  
Phone 462-4540  
Club Affiliation  
Chestnut Hill Country Club  
LEON V. ST. PIERRE  
Business Manager  
GERRY FINN  
Contributing Editor

FIRST CLASS

