

NEWSLETTER

MAY 1973



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.

LOOK AHEAD . . . THEY SAY

During the recent Massachusetts Golf Association Spring Conference, one of the interesting — although complicated — topics was that of long range planning for the country club. It developed into a 10-year-travelogue for the responsible club member (official), 10 years to the rear and 10 years in advance.

Although no conclusions could be drawn from the seminar and ambitious structure of the 20-year study, some pertinent questions popped out at the superintendent's position in the plan.

In an analysis of the past, these questions appeared: "What has been the effect of employee turnover in the past 10 years (particularly in the case of key employees)?" "How many different club managers, golf pros, grounds maintenance supervisors (you now have a new title to go along with 'greenskeeper'), etc. have you had over the past 10 years?" "Has there been an employee pension plan in existence? If so, how long? Is it adequate? What other club benefits has the club provided?"

Those are the key areas, as far as the super is concerned. In fact, he would welcome the answers to all with a hope that improvements could be made. But it does give the club official something to think about and perhaps remedy. There are a number of reasons for employee turnover. And it doesn't take an Einstein to figure out that a happy (well compensated) employee seldom comes to work with an airline or train ticket in his pocket.

In the look to the future, it follows that planning take the good things from the club's past, expand them, and discard the bad things from the past. Sounds easy . . . but it isn't.

For instance, take the position of the superintendent. Nowhere in the analysis are there any considerations applicable to his contribution to the success or failure of the club. No,

for that matter, are there little things expressed for the health and welfare of the pro and manager.

One of the intriguing questions in the look-ahead segment of the project reads: "If the membership were polled, what would be the five aspects of the club that they most appreciate in their order of importance and what would be the five aspects of the club that they find objectionable in their order of importance?"

Now, there is a mouthful. And it is worthwhile that the member embark on such a journey through the things he likes and dislikes about his club. The superintendent, we're sure, would be most interested in the position of course condition . . . and on what list it falls. Of course, this is a burning issue with many people. It's comparable to the old, what came first . . . the chicken or the egg bromide.

It can be answered thusly: If the concentration of funds and effort fall on the clubhouse, the setting is a glorified restaurant. And if the same concentration is directed toward the golf course, the setting is a country club. There are objections to such reasoning . . . but the taste of a filet mignon is not as lasting as a season of long putts and perfect approach shots — aided by the right playing conditions.

Whatever the result of the 10-year look backwards and the 10-year glimpse into the future, the topic is very worthwhile. Wound in the maze of questions are such subjects as status structure and all that goes with it. Certainly there is a place for this. But the meat and potatoes are found in the facility arrangement, condition thereof and the people to operate it.

The club official should profit from the past. And what he does in the way of planning for the future affects the superintendent's future. Those days after tomorrow are in his hands.

— Gerry Finn

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the GCSA of NE will be Monday, May 14, 1973 at the Green Harbor Golf Club, Marshfield, Mass. The course is owned by Manuel Francis and Son. Dahn Tibbets is the golf course superintendent. In 1965 Manny and his son purchased the land for the purpose of a sod farm. After removing just two crops of sod, they decided to build a golf course in the summer of 1970. Manny, Sr. was to design the course and to carry on all phases of the construction while Manny Jr.'s project was to install the entire water system. Believe it or not the course was opened for play in the 1971 season!

DIRECTIONS TO GREEN HARBOR GOLF CLUB

From Route 3 take Exit 32 (Route 139) to Marshfield. Go right on Webster St. in Marshfield Center. Sign for course will be on your left up about one mile.

Directors' Meeting	10:45 A. M.
Regular Meeting	11:15 A. M.
Lunch (Snack bar only)	12:00 P. M.
Golf	1:00 P. M.



Left to right: Manuel Francis, Jr., Manuel Francis and Dahn Tibbets of the Green Harbor Golf Club will be our hosts at the next meeting.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

THE WOMAN'S TOUCH

Let's see now. There are women taxi cab drivers, women bulldozer operators, women bartenders . . . women everything, it seems. So, how about a woman golf course superintendent?

Don't laugh. We could very well see the day when the fair sex makes a mass invasion of the superintendent ranks. In fact, there are isolated cases around the country where a woman is listed as the superintendent. So far, the GCSAA membership list doesn't have one.

More evident than the incidence of a woman super, though, is the presence and increasing presence of women laborers on the golf course, and the experience seems to be rewarding on both sides of the fence. The fair ladies, it appears, are in many instances just as capable . . . and in a few more capable than the men.

The most popular course in the country for women laborers is the Inningsbrook Club in Florida where Arlin Grant serves as the superintendent. Inningsbrook is a 54-hole layout and included in the work crew are nine women.

Their duties run the gamut, excluding intricate mechanical work. They handle all kinds of equipment, mow fairways, pamper greens and tees and rake bunkers. Their ages range from 16 to 39 and they are decked out in the uniform of the day . . . shorts and tee shirts.

Arlin says that the girls do an excellent job, so much so that there is a waiting list for their positions. The girls come from many different occupations including waitressing, office work. Some of them are still college students and arrange their schedules around their course assignments.

Arlin also points out a few fringe benefits for the super who employs women. He tells that they seem to have more patience with equipment and discipline themselves in the re-

pair of same. They never tinker with the mechanics of the equipment, thereby leading to complications and the possibility of extensive damage. Instead, they wait for the mechanic or superintendent to assist them whenever a breakdown occurs.

Since the labor problem on the golf course is one of eternal standing, speculation on the future of the woman worker is spreading the ranks of the superintendent. And as far as the sampling goes, the super is anything but against the hiring of women for the job.

"Certainly their sense for the artistic can be employed around the clubhouse", one super reasoned. "In some of the more affluent clubs the need for expert attention in arrangement of flower beds and other beauty aids to the appearance of the clubhouse makes it most advantageous to hire a woman for the job."

Another factor favoring the girls is the incessant grumbling among men workers in view of questionable wages and sketchy fringe benefits. The man worker usually is the bread winner in his household and consequently must demand more in the way of money and fringes. The woman, on the other hand, can make concessions in those areas. So, the super might lean toward the woman to avoid excessive turnover of the job.

One superintendent took a negative view of the situation. "The idea of women working on the course is new", he offered. "So, it now becomes a novelty to them and to the super. But in time the novelty will wear off and they'll learn to gripe about working conditions just like the men. They may even be more successful in organizing the entire crew and then what do we have on our hands?"

That opinion is in the minority, however. For most of the supers, women working on the golf course is perfectly in keeping with the times. The woman's touch . . . it's felt everywhere.

— Gerry Finn



Richard Blake, CGCS, (far right) is presenting certification plaques to (left to right) Sherwood Moore, Charles Gardner and Paul O'Leary at a recent meeting.

To be voted on at the May meeting:
Regular Member — Charles A. Borden, Sharon Country Club.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the April meeting, Lou Duval, our Association Treasurer, pointed out that 45 members have not paid their dues for 1973. Our bylaws state that all members whose dues shall remain in arrears more than five months shall be suspended from the Association. Check to see if your dues have been paid so that you may continue to attend meetings, play in the golf tournaments, receive the Newsletter, etc. You need the Association and the Association needs you.

The Golf Committee has requested that all members and guests of the Association who play golf at the summer meetings, please register and then turn in their score cards. There will be prizes for golfers of various ability and the scores will be used to up-date handicaps. Remember the summer meetings are an opportunity to discuss current problems, conduct Association business and to enjoy a day of golf and fellowship. Plan to attend every meeting.

Robert Grant, CGCS

Meeting dates to remember:

- May 14, 1973 — Green Harbor Golf Course
- June — International
- July — Topsfield Country Club
- August 14, 1973 — Crestview Country Club
- September — Blue Hills — Supt.-Celebrity Tournament
- October 12, 1973 — Brae Burn — Supt.-Pro Tournament
- October 29, 1973 — New Bedford Country Club
- November — Bass River — Joint meeting with the Cape Codders

President — ROBERT GRANT 22 Patricia Road Sudbury, Mass. 01776 Phone 443-2671 Club Affiliation Brae Burn Country Club	First Vice President — THOMAS CURRAN Fox Chase Road South Sufort, N. H. 03273 Club Affiliation Eastman Golf Course	Second Vice President — WAYNE ZOPPO 46 Barbary Drive Seekonk, Mass. 02771 Phone 359-7141 Club Affiliation Agawam Hunt	Secretary — RONALD KIRKMAN, CGCS 25 Green Street Needham, Mass. 02192 Phone 444-8412 Club Affiliation Needham Golf Club	Treasurer — LUCIEN DUVAL R.F. No. 5 Gaulf Road Bedford, N. H. 03105 Phone 472-3454 Club Affiliation Manchester Country Club	Trustee — NORMAN MUCCIARONE 101 Alban Road Waban, Mass. 02168 Phone 322-3056 Club Affiliation Woodland Golf Club	Trustee — BERT FREDERICK 45 Stoney Brook Road Nabnaset, Mass. 01861 Phone 453-1231 Club Affiliation Vesper Country Club	Trustee — MAX MIERZWA 106 Crestwood Street Chicopee, Mass. 01020 Phone 594-4996 Club Affiliation Chicopee Country Club	Finance Chairman — NARY SPERANDIO Concord, Mass. 01742 Phone 369-4723 Club Affiliation Concord Country Club
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SOUND OFF!!!!

(Here we are again with that portion of the Newsletter which gives readers the chance to clear the air of all golf controversy and give their absolutely infallible answers to today's major issues. This is Sound Off and everyone is invited to take part. The writer may present his views on any subject pertaining to golf. All we ask is that he or she identify themselves and include their address. Same will be withheld upon request. Comments should be sent to Newsletter Mail Bag, 24 Riverside Drive, Newbury, Mass. 01950. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all published letters.)

"This is just a few lines to let Dr. Troll and the New England Superintendents know that the recent Massachusetts Conference in the City of Springfield was one of the best ever.

"The program was full of interesting subject matter and interesting speakers to present them. And I was most satisfied with the physical surroundings. The new hotel and all the facilities available to the conference goes made a big hit with all. In fact, I'm spreading the word about it up here with the hopes that we can get more representation when it's time to return to Springfield again.

"Please keep me advised as to the planning and progress of the next conference, so I can talk it up in my area. Thank you."

SERGE FONTAINE
Saute, Que.

Always glad to find a happy customer, Serge. The wheels are already turning on next year's conference and from the sound of things it will break all speed limits.

"Once again it has passed. I mean that time of year when the golf course superintendent is snubbed by everyone — including the press — in an area where he is supposed to have some authority and knowledge.

"The other day I read in my local paper that my country club was going to open 'on Saturday with all greens in play.' That's a very funny thing to me. You see, I'm the super there and this was the first word I had heard about our opening. As a matter of fact, that date was in error since we opened on the following Wednesday.

"The time element has nothing to do with my increasing annoyance with the press, our club members (most of whom think that the pro runs the conditioning process of the course) and others who ignore me when it comes time for a course-opening announcement.

"Fortunately, I still make the decision on that score here. But I do wish I could get my point across to the press. If they will only call me instead of the pro, I will be glad to give them any information on the course, its opening and its condition."

NAME WITHHELD
Club Withheld

You are so right. The sportswriters don't call you for the results of the weekend tournament, do they? Or do they????

"I was very interested in the article about slow play which was given a place of prominence on the first page of your last publication. I do believe you've hit a solid point.

"Blaming the touring professionals is not fair, though. And I think you absolved them of any blame by the implication that their lives almost depended on everything they did on

the course. The real culprit, as you pointed out, is the amateur golfer who magnifies the importance of every shot, perhaps at the suggestion made by watching the pros on TV.

"Therefore, I am making a proposal that will get me rave razzberries from my fellow club members. I think that all country clubs should make a concentrated effort to curb gambling on the course at any and all levels. Pardon me while I duck.

"Seriously, these two-dollar Nassaus, skins and what have you are at the basis of most of our slow play. I've seen 25-handicap players line up 100-foot putts as if they sank them on every occasion. Even the caddies are getting into the act at our club. There are members who ask them to help survey tricky putts . . . and all over a couple of bucks.

"I say stop gambling and speed up play."
CRAIG DAWKINS
Humming, Md.

Wantta bet you're asked to resign, Craig?

"You can be proud of the performance of the members of GCSA of New England during the 44th Turfgrass Conference and Show. All reports point out there was a record attendance and exhibits. The Chapter newsletters are hailing the hospitality as being the warmest ever. This one element is remembered longer than all the others put together. My experience in San Francisco makes me appreciate the job you did in organizing the committee.

"Thank you for the courtesies extended to Myrtle and me. We really enjoyed the reception on Saturday night at the Chestnut Hill Country Club.

"Please convey our thanks to all the members of GCSA of New England.

"We look forward to seeing all of you in Anaheim."
Clifford A. Wagoner, CGCS
Modesto, Calif.

You said it all Cliff, the only thing we can add in the Newsletter is that we had fun doing it.

"Some of the clubs in our area not only have experienced early openings this season but a few even had electric golf carts out for the start of play.

"However, at our club there seems to be some silly rule that the superintendent has to make the decision on the use of carts at this time of year as well as when we have heavy rainy weather. How come this man can tell me that I have to walk 18 holes instead of ride them?

"Certainly, I can see his point about wanting to save the course when it is extremely wet and all. But I don't think it's that wet and besides, those other clubs in the area are allowing carts to run about all over the place.

"Am I being unreasonable about this or is there valid reason for our superintendent to ground the carts?"

TRACY EVANS
Elkhorn, Ill.

Your super knows his course and what it can take. When he blows the whistle on carts, you can be assured your club will be the best-conditioned club in town. Besides, the walk's good for you.

(This wraps it up for this time. But, remember to keep writing. Right or wrong, your cards and letters keep this column going. So, sit down and let us have it!)

Golf Chairman —
ROBERT MUCCIARONE
465 Summer Street
Westwood, Mass. 02090
Phone 329-9562
Club Affiliation
Dedham Country and Polo Club

Educational Chairman —
LARRY BUNN
145 Dedham Street
Canton, Mass. 02021
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, CGCS
211 Sewall Street
Boylston, Mass. 01505
Phone 869-2737
Club Affiliation
Mt. Pleasant Country Club

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617-297-0941

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

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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



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