

NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

APRIL 1974



Sponsors and administrators of the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund — Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

SHOULD IT BE FOREVER

Suddenly, the life expectancy of a green chairman has shot beyond the norm. Whereas in the past the average overseeing age of the office was two years, it is creeping away from that figure. In some cases, the position has become permanent.

The Newsletter took up the situation in a pick-up, in-the-corridor interview session with golf course superintendents while the Massachusetts Tuft Conference was spinning last month in Chicopee. Strangely, there are pros and cons about the tenure of the green chairman.

One superintendent was obviously enchanted with his present leader. "I think there is a time and place for everything", he noted. "Right now I am getting along fine with my chairman. He does all the things that I advise and he always consults me whenever an important issue concerning the course arises. As far as I can see it, I'd like to have him remain green chairman for the rest of both our lives."

The con side was represented by an opposite force. "I have lived with the same chairman for two years and have considered it some kind of a penance.", the man chortled. "I went out of my way to get along with him because I figured he'd be gone after two years. Now, I hear that he has accepted to stay on another year. It's depressing."

There is no solution to the problem...if it be one. A member of the pro-no term limit group offered that it was up to the individual super to win over his chairman and learn to get along with him. "After all", he opined, "we are not the only people in the world whose immediate superiors are on the unpleasant side. I would think that the first thing to consider is creating a compatible atmosphere. I also realize that this is impossible in rare instances. But the club president or board of governors usually catch onto a touchy relationship between superintendent and chairman. And who knows? Maybe it's not the super who is blameless in the relationship. I know of some people in our business who are hard to get along with, themselves."

Some feeling surfaced as to the value of having a chairman stay on the job as long as he wished. The pro voters argue that familiarity with the work habits and responsibilities of the superintendent gives the chairman a broader outlook at the overall operation of conditioning the golf course. "My chairman has taken a personal interest in his position and me", a super volunteered. "He even has come out to the course to see us doing those dirty jobs that go unnoticed...like watering down a tennis court by dawn's light or plowing out the parking area while the membership sleeps. He's seen it all and appreciates it."

On the other hand, that same familiarity could backfire into a stagnated approach to each succeeding year...on the part of the green chairman who hangs on year after year and the superintendent with whom he is associated. A con represen-

tative noted this: "A green chairman with unlimited tenure could be preventing new ideas from flourishing. He might settle into a routine of overseeing the operation and soon that routine becomes a rut. I think this is why certain political offices should be guarded against the same thing. You see it happen every day on the local and national level. Sometimes change for the sake of change is needed."

Most green chairmen probably would agree that their tenure should be restricted, not necessarily to two years but a definite figure that rules out the danger of overexposing one man to an advisory position which thrives on periodic change.

No chairmen were polled on the subject. However, the orderly turnover in club presidencies would appear to bring forth reason for applying the same terms to the green chairmanship.

In the end, the majority of superintendents went with the limited side or definite restrictions on the tenure of the green chairman. Only a handful thought the individual should go on forever. And even they could change their minds overnight at the first drop of a personality clash!

Gerry Finn

Next Meeting...

April 2, 1974

Clauson's Inn Hatchville, Mass.

Director's Meeting 10:30

Regular Meeting 11:00

Lunch at Noon

Directions from the Bourne Bridge. Route 28 towards Falmouth to Route 151. Right on 151 towards Mashpee. Club is 2 miles on the right.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

TAKE A TIP FROM THE STARS

In some ways the life of a golf course superintendent parallels that of a professional athlete...one bad season and you find yourself dumped or traded. In the case of the superintendent, there are no options and dismissal rears an ugly head in all of its finality.

This is why certain supers are talking up the idea of effecting multi-year contracts for their services. "Why not?", one super demands. "The baseball players and others are doing it. It is a form of security and who doesn't need security in our business? Of course, the multi-year contract benefits the owner, too."

In the case of the superintendent, the "owner" is the club which employs him. The plan, or suggestion, would divide the security. In other words, length of designated service contracted for would protect both parties. The super couldn't leave before the termination date without approval of the club and vice versa.

"This has nothing to do with the union movement, whatever that is," the super continued. "Athletes do all their contract talking and arranging as individuals. There is no organization involved. It is a person to person setup. That's how the superintendent would approach it."

The idea of the multi-year contract comes to light as an aftermath of an uncertain year for superintendents. The golf season of 1973 was one of the worst in Mother Nature's history. She was a mean old girl and few understood just what her contributions to the stifling of plant growth meant to the super. He was a marked man...one who lived in a fish bowl and one who took most of the blame for crimps in the conditioning of the golf course.

Thus, there was many a pink slip waiting around the country for the superintendent who fell into bad growing times. There were reports of dismissals halfway through the season, so outrageous was some of the reaction to lost greens and fractured fairways.

"Sometimes we feel like the manager of a losing baseball team", the same super with the multi-contract eyes offered. "Baseball owners take quick charge of the situation when there's a change to be made. It's always the manager who gets the axe. And it's getting to be that way in our profession. The superintendent finds himself looking for a new job...often whether it's his hand that's done the damage or not."



There are situations...and ones hard to believe...where supers are working without a contract. This could be fatal and often is. There is no protection from immediate dismissal, such as those experienced by shocked superintendents who are fired even before they've been given the opportunity to bring the injured course back.

The non-contract super, though, is the exception. And in the future the non-multi-contract super will be the same...if he wants to assure himself of that security which slips away at the outbreak of an unusually large amount of rainfall or a long stretch of dry weather. No longer can he depend on Mother Nature to co-operate for a full season and keep the headhunters off his back.

Professional athletes have succeeded in providing themselves with that protection and the multi-year contract has been the tool of realizing such a state. Country clubs, too, should think long and hard about the possibility of this arrangement. There are star superintendents just as there are star baseball players. They are up for grabs, too, if the club doesn't have the foresight to keep them from a quick dash to another course by offering a multi-contract. In fact, both parties could take a tip from the stars.

Gerry Finn

EDITOR'S NOTE

You did it again Joe. The spring turf conference held at the Highpoint Inn was excellent. The speakers were well informed and spoke on today's problems.

To the delight of everyone who sat with this writer at the banquet, I was unable to get any worthwhile pictures for this issue. I am glad my business is turf, not photography. If anyone does have some black and white photos we can reprint, please get in touch with me.

In closing, I think we all wish Phil Cassidy well. Don't be a stranger Phil. Come to meetings and keep us "kids" straight. Lunch is on me.

Editor

TREE GROWTH

The growth rate of tree branches can be manipulated by cutting just through the bark of the tree trunk. A cut above a branch, extending about an inch beyond the branch diameter on both sides will result in faster growth. A similar cut below will reduce the growth rate. Thus you can slow down a large limb, accelerate a small one and bring a tree into better balance. How does it work? Cutting below reduces the supply of water and nutrient materials from the roots while cutting above increases the supply.

News & Views

President	First Vice President	Second Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer	Trustee	Trustee	Trustee	Finance Chairman
THOMAS CURRAN Fox Chase Road South Sutton, N.H. 03273 Phone 339-5436 Club Affiliation Eastham Golf Course	WAYNE ZOPPO 48 Barbary Drive Seekonk, Mass. 02771 Phone 359-7141 Club Affiliation Agawam Hunt	DEAN ROBERTSON 24 Riverview Drive Needham, Mass. 01950 Phone 462-4940 Club Affiliation Chestnut Hill Country Club	RONALD KIRKMAN, CGCS 25 Green Street Needham, Mass. 02192 Phone 444-8412 Club Affiliation Needham Golf Club	LUCIEN DUVAL R. F. No. 5 Gault Road Bedford, N.H. 03105 Phone 472-3545 Club Affiliation Manchester Country Club	BERT FREDERICK 45 Stoney Brook Road Nabnasset, Mass. 01861 Phone 453-1231 Club Affiliation Vesper Country Club	MAX MIERZWA 106 Crestwood Street Chicopee, Mass. 01020 Phone 594-4996 Club Affiliation Chicopee Country Club	DAVID BARBER 1 Muriel Road Chelmsford, Mass. 01824 Phone 256-4417 Club Affiliation Wayland Country Club	ROBERT MUCCIARONE 465 Summer Street Westwood, Mass. 02090 Phone 329-8692 Club Affiliation Dedham Country and Polo Club

SOUND OFF

(The mailman has just left his usual deposit in the department of comments and corrections which means that we're ready for another session of Sound Off. Remember, this is your space in the monthly trip through the world of the golf course superintendent. All letters are welcome...on any golf subject. All the Newsletter requests is that the sender add his full name and address. The contact point is Newsletter Mail Bag, 290 North Road, Sudbury, Mass. 01776. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all letters published.)

"It seems to me that you hit a nerve recently when you published an article in which the ethics of the superintendent were questioned in the matter of premature job hunting.

"I am of the opinion that it is every man's right to better his station in life and see nothing wrong with a golf course superintendent or anyone else filing an application...just in case there is an opening at a place of golf or other business.

"You must be aware that the American way is traditionally based on competition and that competition among the superintendents is a healthy thing for the profession in particular and the game of golf in general.

"Therefore, I would not consider it unethical if someone applied at my club to seek information as to future openings on our golf course maintenance staff. It's just good business."

A. J. FULLER
Westfield, N.J.

Right, A.J. But it is unethical to apply for a fellow super's job, specifically, before it has become vacant.

"As of the moment, it appears that the 1974 golf season will get an unusually head start because of the lack of snow here in the Northeast and an unusual amount of late February and early March high temperature days. Somehow, the weather pattern is making such a reverse of normal development that we could become a winter golf resort area if it keeps up.

"Anyway, can golfers here expect our courses to bloom earlier than usual and in the process become the lush playing areas in May and June rather than the usual months of July and August? And another thing that intrigues me is the possibility that our country club pools could be in full swing before Memorial Day. Can we expect a lengthened 'vacation' period at home this year?"

THOMAS BRIGHT
Woodbury, Conn.

It's much too early to make any predictions on the return to mid-season conditions earlier than usual. There's no telling how that unpredictable lady will react from here on through the summer. Of course, the reference is to Mother Nature. She can be a mean one!

"The energy crisis, whether real or not, figures to have some impact on the golf business this year. The projected effect comes in two-way package. The home or metropolitan-based course will be in a state of increased mayhem because of the great numbers staying at home to find recreation.

"On the other hand, the so-called resort courses could be in trouble because of the expected continuance of travel restriction. It could have much of an effect as the hard travel times during the skiing season which I understand wound up as one total disaster.

"The situation must be a testy one for the golf course superintendent. He will be on the spot more than ever if he has a course in those areas where members will be giving up usual summer vacations to stay at home for their recreation.

"On the other hand, the superintendent at the resort course could find his future in jeopardy. According to my information, this winter there were many layoffs at skiing areas because of the lack of business. Do you think the super could be in the same position this year?"

DARRELL JONES
Norton, Me.

The superintendent is studying the situation just as other people whose jobs are affected by the crisis. However, a golf course just can't go to seed because 50 players are playing it instead of 200. It always needs the loving and expert care of the super.

"Could you please tell me where I should inquire about learning the business of golf course superintendents?"

"I am a junior in high school and interested in the agricultural subjects. I have no experience in working with grasses other than having to mow the family lawn every week. However, the field interests me and I am in the midst of preparing my college future.

"Are there special schools for the profession and how much are tuition, books, room and board, etc.? I also would be interested in learning if there are any scholarship opportunities available."

JEROME KEITH
Parsons, Del.

There are several fine schools offering courses that lead to the position of superintendent, Jerome. We suggest you contact Dr. Joseph Troll at the University of Massachusetts. He will answer all your questions and probably slip in an admission application.

(That puts the lid on this month's offering. Remember to keep those cards and letters coming.)

Golf Chairman	Educational Chairman	Newsletter Chairman	Past President
BRIAN COWAN Robbins Way Harwich, Mass. Phone 432-9041 Club Affiliation Eastward Ho Country Club	LARRY BUNN 145 Dedham Street Canton, Mass. 02021 Phone 828-0467 Club Affiliation Blue Hill Country Club	THOMAS SCHOFIELD 290 North Road Sudbury, Mass. 01776 Phone 443-3712 Club Affiliation Maynard Country Club	ROBERT GRANT CGCS 22 Patricia Road Sudbury, Mass. 01776 Phone 443-2671 Club Affiliation Brae Burn Country Club

Information contained in this publication may be used freely, in whole or in part, without special permission as long as the true context is maintained. We would appreciate a credit line.

Please patronize **FRIENDS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

Agrico Chemical Company
R. D. Sibley, Jr., Representative
375 Power Rd.
Pawtucket, Rhode Island 02860

Alfco Rokeby Co., Inc.
Fertilizers and Chemical Specialties
P. O. Box 267, Marietta, Ohio

Baker Tractor Corp., Ford Tractors
Harley Davidson Golf Cars
Swansea, Massachusetts

The Charles C. Hart Seed Co.
Richard McGahan, Rep.
Wethersfield, Conn.

Corenco Corporation
525 Woburn Street
Tewksbury, Mass. 01876
G. D. Kimmey
1-800-222-7976 - 1-800-225-7955

*The Clapper Co.
1121 Washington St.
West Newton, Mass.

*Geoffrey S. Cornish & William G. Robinson
Golf Course Architects
Fiddlers Green, Amherst, Mass. 01002

George E. Cull
Terra-Green Soil Conditioner
112 Green St., Abington, Mass.

C. S. Curran
T. R. C. Products, Oils and Greases
7 Linden St., Framingham, Mass.

E-Z-Go Golf Car, Division Textron, Inc.
Sales - Service - Rentals
Route 28, Pocasset, Massachusetts 02559
Call Ed McGuire collect 617/563-2234

Fairway Equipment, Inc.
Sales - Service - Rentals
35 Walnut St., Reading, Mass.

Farm Bureau Association
158 Lexington St., Waltham, Mass. 02154
Fred Heyliger, Representative
Thomas F. Grummell, Representative

Ron Gagne - Scotts Golf Course Div.
5 Kendall Park, Norton, Mass.
617-285-7466

Grounds Equipment Co., Inc.
383 Boylston St., Newton Cen., Mass.

Gull Agricultural Service Co.
Allen P. Bonnell
55 Freeman Rd., Yarmouthport, Mass. 02675
617/362-2181 - Ohio 614/263-6572

Holliston Sand Company, Inc.
Lowland Street, Holliston, Mass. 01746
Sand for Golf Bunkers and Traps

Irrigation & Equipment Supply Co.
P. O. Box 147 Route 1
Walpole, Mass. 02081
Tel. 617-668-7814

*Tom Irwin, Inc.
11B A Street
Burlington, Mass.

Karandrew Turf Farms, Inc.
Sam Mitchell, Sales Representative
15 Longmeadow Drive, Canton, Mass.

The Kenneth Barrie Company
Irrigation
375 Centre St., Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Larchmont Irrigation Co.
Larchmont Ln., Lexington, Mass.

Mallinckrodt Chemical Works
Second and Mallinckrodt Streets
St. Louis, Mo. 63160

Magovern Company, Inc.
Lawn Acre Road
Windsor Lock, Conn.

D. L. Maher Company
Concord Street
P. O. Box 127, North Reading, Ma. 01864

Malter International
Mr. Howard A. Vincent, Representative
Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01106

R. F. Morse & Son, Inc.
Cranberry Highway
West Wareham, Mass. 02576
Tel. 617-295-1553

New England Sealcoating Co., Inc.
Tennis Court Const. and Maintenance
Sealcoating - Hingham Industrial Center
Hingham, Mass. Tel. 749-3236

Old Fox Chemical Inc.
Fertilizers - Seeds - Turf Chemicals
66 Valley Street
East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

Sil Paulini, Inc.
6 Manor Avenue
Natick, Mass. 01760

Richey & Clapper, Inc.
28 Rutledge Road
Natick, Mass. 01760

Trencher & Equipment Leasing, Inc.
Ditch Witch Trenchers
38 Fairview St., Agawam, Mass. 01001
Phone 413-781-4600

*Sawtelle Brothers
565 Humphrey Street
Swampscott, Mass.
Tel. 617/599-4856

Shepard Sod Company
Merion Blue Grass and Pencross Bent
200 Sullivan Ave., So. Windsor, Conn.

Tuco Products Co.
Division of the Upjohn Company
Kalamazoo, Michigan

White Turf Engineering
5 Sumner Drive, Winchendon, Mass. 01475
617-297-0941

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

* Contributors to the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund

NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

TOM SCHOFIELD
Newsletter Committee Chairman
290 North Road
Sudbury, Mass. 01776
Phone 443-3712
Club Affiliation
Maynard Country Club

A. ROY MacKintosh
Business Manager

GERRY FINN
Contributing Editor



FIRST CLASS

First Class
U. S. Postage
PAID
Acton, MA
Permit #18

