



Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

AUGUST 1975



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Rules Were Made To Be ? ? ?

Ah, rules. It used to be that violation of them was accompanied by the terse explanation that "rules were made to be broken". However, there is a new switch making connections around the country club. In some cases, it appears that "rules were made to be ignored."

Let's have some simple breakdown of the above. A little flash survey of a few golf courses reveals that many superintendents are picking up their rules signs and tossing them in permanent cold storage.

"What's the use?", says one. "I take time and money to see that rules signs are made and set up in certain spots on the course. So, what happens? Some member in a cart knocks one down. Another sees that it is in the way of his swing. So, he pulls it up and tosses it into the woods. That's why I don't bother with rules signs anymore."

The same old golf car rules are being ignored. Most flagrant of these are driving too close to the green, driving over and through tees, straying off the golf car path and making spinout turns. "I have to say that all our members are not going around turning the golf car into a dangerous weapon," another super tells. "But it takes only a few. I have resigned myself to the fact that I'll always have golf car damage. At least, I don't get a shock treatment when the damage occurs."

Ball marks on the green. What to do about them? Most courses provide players with ball mark repair instruments. The same results can be had from the built-in repair tool—a simple tee. However, many members forget or just don't become aware of the dangers of ball marks to greens.

Add to this the completely, inconsiderate member who takes target practice on par three holes and the problem becomes compound. Such a violation certainly warrants suspension. But, here again, begins another story. Just who enforces rules on the golf course?

"I'd be glad to do it," one super volunteers. "But I'd have to have an ironclad contract on the subject before I'd say a word. What I mean is that I would have to be assured there would be no retaliatory action against me if I reported any or all violations."

The ideal counter to those breaking golf and course rules would be a combination of the superintendent and the professional. Since the pro has the opportunity to "socialize" with members in the form of playing a round or two together, perhaps he might be better versed in reporting violations. And the super, in his daily inspection tours, could supplement this with reports of his own.

Sounds ideal and for that reason it wouldn't work. Another super suggests: "I think that the grounds and green committee should be those responsible for enforcing the rules. It is something else for a member to be reminded of rules by the pro superintendent. He could resent it. It must be his peers who do the enforcing."

There was a time when golf pros included a session on the rules of the game and its etiquette in lesson periods. This could be reestablished, as well as regular clinics for members

during which the super could be invited as a sort of guest lecturer.

But then again, the violation of rules on the golf course could be just another sign of the times. This is the time when everyone seems to be going off in his or her own direction. The so-called independence and rights of individuals has stretched over to the golf course where "rights violations" are being met with "rules violations".

Whatever, the superintendent is at a point where his efforts to complement his expertise with cooperation from the members are being slain by shoddy response. If golfers only realized how much they undo with violation of the rules, they soon would open their eyes and take the rules signs seriously. In the end, they're only hurting themselves. Any repair costs of damage wrought by them come out of their pockets. So, doesn't it make sense to obey the rules?

Gerry Finn

Next Meeting

AUGUST 6, 1975

MT. PLEASANT
COUNTRY CLUB

Times - 10:00 Directors Meeting
10:30 Regular Meeting
12:00 Noon Golf
5:00 Steak Cookout

Host - Red Schultz

Directions —

North on rte. 3 to exit 32. Take first right at rotary. This is Westford Rd. Go by incinerator and bear right. Club is on the fifth street on right.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

Storming The Gates . . .

They're storming the gates this year. Not the pearly ones, mind you. But those, which guard the entrance to the private country club, are almost being beaten down. Alas, the club has become an oasis in our economic desert.

It's not all economy-inspired, although the pinch on recreational funds have given some members thoughts about spending the complete summer at the club. There is a second reason and it has to do with this newfangled equal rights flak. It seems women are determined to make the club their "second home" as some men are wont to do.

The gals are rushing to the golf course all right. And they're not stopping there. Tennis programs at country clubs are beginning to challenge golf as sports king there. And the women have a lot to do with this switch in recreational priorities.

It used to be that women took time out to have their children. They would accept the fact that their time and energy had to be devoted to the bringing up of baby and the maintenance of the home. In the past few years, such devotion has been shattered. Alas, a woman's place is not in the home....it is at the tennis court or on the golf course.

It is very common to view the following sight at the country club:

Mother arrives at around 9 a.m. Deposits older children (six to 10-year-old bracket) at the pool where swimming lessons and junior team practice are available. Takes younger children (6 months to 2 years) with her to tennis court. Sets up playpen for offspring and dives into three or four sets of serves and lobs before lunch break. Everyone meets at the club snack bar for a restoring of food. After an hour, the group splits once again for the afternoon routine.

Perhaps, the above is somewhat exaggerated. However, the truth remains evident. Young mothers of today do not chain themselves to the home when they can transfer the scene to the country club where everyone can be entertained and appeased.

Action on the golf course has increased to the point where some private clubs aren't private anymore. Maybe they can call themselves private, but in essence, they are public....or semi-public.

The influx of the so-called "member-guest" tournament has been noticeable of late. At one club, on a particular day, there was scheduled: 1. Regular one-day member-guest tournament (males). 2. Early afternoon mini-member-guest tournament (juniors) 3. Regular husband-wife mixed Scotch foursome tournament. That day, if you weren't thinking tournament, you weren't about to play the course.

Tom Curran has appointed the following nominating committee:

Bob Grant, Chairman **John Petreitus**
Norman Mucciaroni **Paul Johnson**
Brian Cowan **Dave Clements**

First meeting in September at Tedesco Country Club at 10 AM.

Second meeting at Brae Burn in October, 4 PM at the Pro Superintendent Tournament.

Tournaments have worked themselves onto a large part of the club golfing calendar which does stamp the course grounds for public consumption since many of these events are of the member-guest variety. The arrangement reaches a point, especially during those four-day invitational tournaments, when for almost an entire week the private course is used by a combination of 50 percent members and 50 percent guests.

All of this is noted here, not as a criticism of the situation, but a reminder that the country club is fast-replacing many of the other outlets for physical and social exercise. With tennis courts roaring away at a breakneck usage pace (one club has been known to house a stream of players from 6:30 a.m. to midnight) and the golf course beckoning members and guests to trample its fairways, the country club is in full bloom.

And, in keeping with the traffic at all recreational intersections, the golf course superintendent is busier than ever before. Even shuttle systems in maintenance have been required to keep the work flow going at certain clubs.

Obviously, then, the country club member is taking advantage of those facilities which are offered him/her when "they" sign and pay on the bottom line. Those country club gates never have been stormed like they're being stormed these days.

Gerry Finn

July Tournament Results

Super Champion - Bruce Petrelli
Runner-up Dave Barber
3rd Gross Manny Francis Jr.
4th Gross - Tie Bob St Thomas
Ken Mooridian
Bill Carter

Low Net
2nd Net

3rd Net
4th Net

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Tony Caranci
Don Hearn
Eric Brown
Ron Hansen
Frank Murphy

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Sound Off

(It's that time once again for the reader to right all our wrongs. This is Sound Off, the feature that is and for the reader. The subject matter is right up the reader's alley. He or she may write on any subject pertaining to golf. Contributors are asked to include their names and addresses with each letter, although either or both will be withheld upon request. All communication should be directed to Newsletter Mail Bag, 290 North St., Sudbury, Mass. 01776. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on any or all of the letters published.)

"For reasons which will become apparent here, I request that my name and affiliation be withheld.

"Last month I read with interest your fine article concerning the 'new and fresh' attitude of the golf course superintendent's summer help. It was indeed enlightening to many people to read that workers on the course aren't there just to 'turn a buck'.

"I was amused, too, by the mention of how some supers are conducting impromptu classrooms during which some of the 'college' help seek some explanation of plant life behavior and such.

"My two cents on the subject may not be appreciated. However, let it be in the form of a suggestion to those young seekers of knowledge. I have on my course several college people who are just as interested in the job as those you depicted. However, I find that they seek too many definite answers to questions. They seem to forget that we are dealing in an indefinite science where there are no flat book answers. As you know, often there are three or four answers to a single question.

"So, I'd just remind our young and eager friends that there is more to our plant sciences than flat answers. I only write this so that they continue to seek the knowledge of the subject while realizing that the superintendent cannot provide all the answers as if he had a book at his call and could snap them off without a blink."

NAME WITHHELD
Club Withheld

You've made a good point here. Plant behavior remains a mystery and maybe this is why the subject is so fascinating. Evidently, the younger generation is finding it to be just that.

"I have a question for you, one which you probably think is absurd.

"However, I live close by to a golf course where several ducks take sanctuary during the summer. I have no quarrel with that wonderful gesture by the course to keep the ducks fed and happy.

"My quarrel is that somehow the ducks have taken it upon themselves to enjoy the waters of my swimming pool. I have talked to the golf course people several times about it and they sympathize with me.

"They come with equipment to transport the wandering ducks back to their own ponds. But a few days later there the ducks are again. Why aren't the ducks content to stay where they belong?"

MILDRED JONES
Holyoke, Mass.



The Newsletter conducted a survey on the subject, Mildred. The findings: Nine out of 10 ducks prefer swimming pool water over pond water. They just like your pad, Mildred.

"It has been interesting for me to read several times in your Newsletter about the damage that the electric and gas golf cars do to golf courses. I'm not defending the superintendent or the golf car manufacturer in writing this. But I would suggest that the mechanized golf car is not alone in having damage potential.

"I play a municipal course where many pull-carts are used. And as far as I can see, people using them probably do more damage than those riding the mechanized jobs.

"I have seen players ignore roped off areas, pick up their pull carts and drag them through freshly seeded areas. I have seen them pull their carts practically to the pin before they decide to take their putter out of their bag. And I have seen them take deep gouges out of sparsely grassed areas as well as tramping across tees.

"So, why not get after these culprits, too?"

SAM GELINAS
Springfield, Mass.

You just did, Sam. And you did a darn, good job of it!

"I have become very intrigued by some of the many steps a superintendent has to take in order to fight the diseases that attack the golf course. I realize now that the job of maintaining a golf course is as complex as any task I know.

"I do have a question, though. Many people hear of the insect pests that haunt trees and plants. I am somewhat confused over some, actually the gypsy moth and tent caterpillar. Is there a difference between them and please forgive me for wasting your time, if I have."

WILLIAM L. JOHNSON
Wilbraham, Mass.

No bother, Bill, but the explanation might fill most of the remaining space. The gypsy moth and tent caterpillar are similar in their defoliating habits (eating leaves). The gypsy is a caterpillar, black in color. The tent caterpillar also is black but has a white stripe down its back. It produces a silken tent where it lives when it isn't devouring leaves. The gypsy moth prefers a diet of hardwood tree leaves like oak, birch and poplar. The tent caterpillar likes all the fruit trees but will hit the others if fruit is not available. One common bond between them is their reputation as serious plant pests. They are, indeed, the enemy!

(That puts the cork back on the bottle for this trip. Remember, your letters are what make this feature. They are most welcome, so keep them coming whether they contain orchids or onions!)

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NEWSLETTER

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