

NEWSLETTER

June 1975



Golf Course Superintendents Association
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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Just Kicking It Around

Every now and then the notes gather and put themselves into a piling formation, giving notice that they had better be written or the desk upon which they lie will collapse under their weight. So, let's get with it. For a change...let's kick it around:

The May meeting was certainly a breath of fresh air in the NEGCSA environment clogged previously by the effects of cabin fever (staging monthly sessions indoors) and choked recently by some fire and brimstone rising from a family spat.

Many new faces seen at the Dedham Country Club where congenial Bob Mucciarone grows the grass so green. "One of the reasons is Bob," one informant told of the good turnout there. "Hey, it makes a difference when the host superintendent makes you feel at home. Maybe some of us can take a page out of Bob's book."

Joe Troll came up with an interesting suggestion while bringing members up to date on pesticide regulations. Since there are new laws going into effect in 1976, Dr. Troll told the group that it wouldn't be a bad idea for association members to take a brush-up course on those pesticide regulations. Education can be and is a two-way street. One source makes knowledge available, the other has to take advantage of it.

The salesman-meeting tussle was almost treated under last century's business. "Around 10 salesmen" attended the business meeting and business was conducted as usual. Strangely, the faces of the salesmen resembled those who have been on hand for monthly luncheons and educational programs for the past several years.

Speaking of educational programs, the NEGCSA's version is off and running for the outdoor season. Dr. Troll's appearance with expertise on a timely topic was well received and could be the reason for another up-pattern in attendance for June's get-together with the green chairmen at ITT Country Club.

That meeting will present a double-barrel opportunity for supers to absorb and enjoy. Naturally, the ITT course always offers its own little form of intrigue. And the occasion of green chairmen to express and swap views on the subject of course conditioning budgets, etc. is another clue that attendance will run high.

And, just to make it a tripleheader type of offering, educational chairman Larry Bunn presents MGA officials Dick Crosby and Dick Haskell in what should be a worthwhile rundown on the green belt environment.

Back to Dedham doings, one of the highlights of the day came

when NEGCSA president Tom Curran presented Cohasset's Arthur Washburn with his degree of golf course superintendents' certification. Congratulations are in order for Arthur who serves the NEGCSA as a trustee.

A warning was sounded at Dedham, too. Returning to the golf wars after a long absence was popular Ernie Wolfgang. Ernie didn't break any records but he did manage to play 14 holes. So, the word is out. Ernie's coming back; so, watch out, world!

Dick Blake was a welcome addition to the group at Dedham. Despite being on "another planet" (Woodstock, Vermont only seems that far away), Dick managed to make the long trip and take part in the eventful gathering. He was encouraged by the turnout, too, since he has been one of the more active of association members and one who has been promoting greater participation for a long time.

A closing reminder. Notes of interest for the membership and/or the readership will be welcomed here. Just drop them to Tom Schofield and they'll make the full cycle to these pages.

Gerry Finn



Congratulations To

Bob Maguire
Steven Murphy
Voted in as associate members

To be voted on next meeting - Philip D. Rico

Next Meeting

June 3, 1975
I.T.T. Golf Course
Host - Nick Cammuso
Starting Time - 10.00 A.M.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

Another Opening, Another Spring

It seems that golf has been caught in the sports syndrome that appears to make all the games men and women play an endless season. But golf has an excuse. It lives by the dictate of Mother Nature and dies by the ditto of the first part.

Reader Joe Crugnale, who made us aware of the fluctuating opening date of the golf season in a Sound Off letter last month, certainly knows that golf depends on the weather...both from the standpoint of the player and the superintendent who conditions his playground. What Joe implied, though, is that golf has become one of the many "sports-overlappers"...those sports that can't wait to start and never know when to quit.

A review of these is in order.

Basketball and hockey have just completed their post-season fare-thee-wells, and as usual, baseball people claim those two should have been gone and one with before the first pitches of spring. On the other hand, the basketball and hockey addicts make merry of the fact that in the East -- for certain -- baseball in April is akin to surfing in December. But, then again, basketball and hockey in May?

The age-old question hasn't been settled. It sets a dispute centering on logistics. Does one sport start too soon or does the other sport end too late. In other words, is that overlapping space on the calendar owned by the starting sport or the finishing one? Apparently, it belongs to no one and is up for grabs.

On the tournament side of the picture, golf probably wins the prize -- booby or otherwise -- for being the longest season. The TPD tour pushes off in January and takes its journey in pursuit of the sun for the next 10 or so months. Its season is dependent on its appeal. So, if there are fans willing to take the time and expense to watch the pros tee it up and stroke it down from one end of the year to the other, the tournament season remains a year-round venture.

Thus, when you get right down to it, golf is the champion over-lapper among the nation's sports. And tennis is right up there, too, although its impact doesn't have that of golf since a good deal of its play takes place indoors -- even in climates where outdoor action is feasible.

Here in New England, the participation brand of golf follows a unique seasonal path. On Cape Cod, for example, there can be no official opening day because there is no official closing day. Unless winter takes a hard look at that sector, people are wrapped up in birdies and bogies in one endless turn of time.

Then, in a bizarre turn of events since the Cape certainly cannot be classified as tropical country, the season varies sharply. Only a few hundred miles north of Cape Cod many a golf season is restricted to half as many months...six to be precise and six to be lucky in those hilly sections where snow in October is no rare occasion.

Away from these extremes, golf walks a more temperate playing path. But, again, there can be no official opening date...for a number of reasons. All of these are offshoots of weather conditions. A wet spring in some areas with courses that are short on drainage could mean a full month without play. A late-spring snowstorm (they do happen) might be the catalyst for another delay. So, in the middle of the New England golf spectrum, opening day is a day to day basis.

As for tradition of waiting for a certain date to fall before the first swings of spring are taken, this custom has been overtaken by practicality. For, alas, golf can't be played according to the calendar. It is available only when Mother Nature yells, "tee it up". That is golf's newest tradition...whether it be April 6 or May 12. Spring and the golf season arrive when they are told to arrive.

Gerry Finn

Editors Note

Received a note from George Wemyss who is the Exec. Director for the New England Pro golfers Association.

George and I have discussed ways of promoting better communications among pros. and supers. In relation to this George sent me some guidelines on marking courses for tournament play.

If anyone has any suggestions both on the guidelines or in establishing better relations with our professionals, drop this writer a line. We both would be very interested.

Tom Scholfield

Guidelines on Marking Tournament Course

1. No alteration of course once play has started.
2. Number position of tee marker spots on each tee....prior to practice round.
3. Check entire course for proper markings of boundries, hazards, GUR, etc.
4. Pin Placements:
 - No hole closer than 15 feet from edge of green.
 - Don't use front 1/3 of green.
 - No hole on severe slope.
 - Watch out for old cup spots.
 - Do not plan on pin placements for later rounds where players will walk off.
 - Equal left and right, equal front and back.
 - Get weather forecast before setting course.
 - High ground placements when rain expected.
 - Be aware of need of forecaddies.
 - Have a siren.
5. OB stakes, white 2x4, 30 in above the ground.
 WH stakes, yellow , 1x2 thin edge faces line of play, 8" above ground.
 LH stakes, red, 1x2 thin faces line of play, 8" above ground.
 GUR stakes, orange, placed outside playing area.
 GUR lime or white paint in playing area (completely circular) plus signs.
 OBSTRUCTION - Black stake or black circle on it, hang sign on it and have white line around it.
6. OK to use a "ball drop" area when necessary.
7. Preparation of Course
 - general width of fairway 30 yds., more or less depending upon difficulty
 - of hole, Fairways 1/2", greens, 3/16", rough 1 1/2" for 6 feet, 3" beyond.
 - Recommended lip on bunkers 3"
 - Flagstick 8', 3/4" 3" above ground, narrow below
 - Use BLUE tee markers for all tournaments
 - Use a cup setter when cutting new holes.

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Sound Off

(It's that time again for another go-round with the readers. Sound Off is just that, the views and comments of those interested in the future and well-being of golf. There are no restrictions on subject matter. You may dream up one or harp on a familiar topic. All letters should be signed although names will be withheld upon request. The route to this feature starts with Newsletter Mail Bag, 290 North Street, Sudbury, Mass. 01776. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on any or all published letters.)

"I'm just a run of the mill golfer but I'm interested in gardening and in turn am intrigued by some of the methods golf course superintendents use to achieve their desired goals.

"Recently I found out how you people get those greens so smooth and free of bumps. At a nearby course I saw workers rolling greens with one of those huge multi-ton jobs that you see when highways are being built.

"Being concerned with my own lawn, I was thinking that maybe if I could hire someone to roll my grasses with the same type of equipment I wouldn't have to worry about spraining my ankles falling into holes every time I mow it.

"I was wondering how expensive it would be and if the results would be worth the expense."

PHIL TARPAN
Ludlow, Mass.

Got time for a long-winded answer, Phil? In the first place, what you're talking about is one of those five-ton rollers. And, in your case, the talking and thinking should end there. What happened to those greens will find its severest results later in the summer. The roller compacted the soil, squeezing all the life out of it and deterring growth. The process only created another job for the superintendent there who will be forced to bring the greens back to life by aerifying them. In the end it will inconvenience both player and super.

"I recently visited a golf course in California and noted one or two things that might be of interest to people operating golf courses and those conditioning them.

"The most interesting item I found was that the ladies tee markers were made a little more lively by using something other than those ugly tee markers you see back home. One course painted the ladies markers pink which I think is much more appealing to our sex.

"On another course, instead of the conventional tee markers the owners there saw fit to identify our teeing rounds with flower pots and the flower in bloom at that particular time was in them.

"Also, many courses provided golf ball retrievers on water holes which ladies were required to carry in order to get to the green. I think this to be a good idea in places where golf balls can be rescued without threat of the golfer falling into the water.

"Just thought I'd make you superintendents aware of these things with hope that perhaps you can work them into your beautification program."

BARBARA KNOWLES
Barre, Mass.

We all thought women's lib did away with ladies tee markers, Barbara! Seriously, there's nothing wrong with dressing up a ladies tee... just as long as the fashions don't change every year!

"My fellow superintendents are already aware of the dry and cool April we experienced this year. It was not the best type of condition for expecting new growth which probably set back most of our fertilization programs a bit.

"However, the conditions did have its rewards. We were able to put our time into other things that needed refurbishing and correcting, if that was the case. Since, we couldn't do much with the actual plant growth because of dormant atmosphere, it gave us the opportunity to concentrate on other areas. In my case, we were able to work on tennis courts to the extent that we opened those earlier than in past seasons.

"I think that the April weather pattern should be a reminder to one and all that we superintendents are only human in regard to giving members a lush course ahead of schedule. But, we were able to compensate for this with other accomplishments that should be noted."

LEON ST. PIERRE
Longmeadow, Mass.

There's always something to do around a golf course... whether it's growing weather or not. There's something more to this job than simply making things green.

"Here, we haven't been open for more than a couple of weeks and that old enemy of the golf course appears to have spent the winter there waiting for the opportunity to unload again.

"I'm talking about the vandals who seem to have a passion for putting a golf course to severe tests of survival with their little tricks and 'pranks'. I certainly don't call riding over a green with a motorcycle a 'prank'. But some of the do-gooders in these parts use the expression as if it were something kids do on Halloween.

"Vandals should not be tolerated and perhaps the NEGCSA could do something about perking up the legislatures to write laws that require stiff penalty for destruction of this sort. Golf courses have to live with too many dangers to their condition without vandalism."

FRANK KEARNEY
Greenfield, Mass.

Vandals should be treated like turf disease. Wipe 'em out!

(That works it right to the end of things for this time. Don't forget, this is your feature. So, keep those cards and letters coming our way.)

NOTE

**Sport Jackets are required
at all evening meals.**

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.

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