

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.

Never a Dull Moment

The milestone was reached without ceremony, pomp or circumstance.

The other day, Norm Mucciarone looked at the calendar on his office wall at the Woodland Country Club and made



Norm looking over the clubhouse grounds.

NEXT MEETING

**Tuesday, August 10, 1982
Dedham Polo and Country Club
Dedham, Mass.**

Director's meeting 10 a.m.
Regular meeting 10:45 a.m.

Lunch

Golf - Superintendent team of two
championship (full handicap)

Host - Bobby Mucciarone

Bobby has been superintendent at Dedham for the past twenty two years. Prior to coming to Dedham he was at Merrimack for five years. Bobby has served GCSANE in many different capacities over the years and remains very active in the association. We all look forward to playing a well-conditioned golf course.

DIRECTIONS

From route 128 take route 109 west. Take first right (Grove St.) go straight approx. 1 mile. The club will be on the left.

RESERVATIONS

Please call if you are planning to come. Call Bobby at 326-7860.



a significant discovery.

"Well, I'll be darned," the veteran golf course superintendent told himself. "This is my 30th year here. That's cause for celebration. I guess I'll go out and cut the greens."

If 30 years under the same professional roof seems like a long time, it doesn't form a ripple of a wave with Mucciarone. Norm's one of those down-to-earth, dedicated superintendents who plunges into each day's work as if it were his first.

"There's just too much to do, especially at Woodland," he explained. "We're one of the most popular golf courses around. And when the play is heavy, you can't take time out to mark something that reflects sentiment. I've been here 30 years and expect to be here many more. In fact, I'm just getting my second wind."

Mucciarone is a paradox of sorts. He's out of the old school, having launched his career shortly after World War II. Yet, he appreciates what youth and exuberance bring to his profession.

"I have a lot of old fashioned ideas and I still use some of them in my work," he said. "However, I'm not adverse to change and modern methods. My only gripe is that we're into too much gadget stuff. One little piece of equipment breaks down and it throws you into a stalemate. But that's our technological world. Sometimes, I'd rather have a horse pulling a gang mower. All you have to do to keep him going is feed him."

Mucciarone got his start in the turf-grooming business after two attempts at other types of livelihood. After serving two years in the Navy, he gave oil burner school a look and then moved onto plastics school. Needless to say, neither venture impressed him.

"That's when I joined Tony Sperandio at Franklin," he disclosed. "And the first thing Tony did was direct me to turf school at UMass. We had a good class up there, too. One of my classmates was Leon St. Pierre (Longmeadow). Several others came out of it and into responsible jobs."

Norm followed Tony to Framingham as his assistant, moved up to head superintendent at Marlboro for two years, spent three more at Lexington and then got the call from Woodland where the challenge was right down his alley.

"The course was going under, financially, shortly after I arrived there," Norm recalled. "But it was bailed out. They brought in Geoff Cornish (architect) for some redesigning and I worked with him to shape up the course. In addition to firming up its foundation, we got a maintenance program in full swing. The results came around - boy did they ever."

Woodland made the transition from a little-used layout to a full-traffic course that inspired a population explosion. This put Mucciarone into a virtual around-the-clock grooming pattern and he's remained in it ever since.

"The play is so heavy here that I practically have to fight for time to keep the course in shape," Norm told. "My crew has to start cutting greens at 5:30 in the morning be-

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Scratch does it all

His boss coats him with a unique descriptive "prime time."

And in the lexicon of Framingham Country Club golf course superintendent Chuck Lane, that term says it all of Dick "Scratch" Petty.

"Scratch is just a darned, good worker," Lane amplified. "Ever since I've known him, he's come here every day ready to do any job I hand him. He's 'prime time', all right. I'm just glad to have him."

Petty numbers himself among the legions of faceless individuals who make up the supporting cast in the conditioning and grooming of the golf course. He's been at it for 28 years but kisses off his unqualified dedication to his work as just another, insignificant turn of life's cycle.

Strangely, Scratch never has expanded his vocational aspirations beyond his present station. Obviously, he could have taken an ambitious tug on his talents and moved into the superintendent's field.

"I had a notion to go to school at one time," he disclosed. "It was in the back of my mind but I never could move it to the front. Actually, I'm content to be where I am. I'm doing all right, too. I really don't know how I could handle taking my job home with me."

In a curious way, Scratch enjoys the best of his two worlds. While he pulls full time as Lane's assistant at Framingham, he also is a member of the Marlboro Country Club where he plays golf Saturdays and Sundays. In fact, he's on that club's board of directors.

Technically speaking, he's one of MCC superintendent Glen Ackley's bosses. However, he shrugs that off.

"I'm not on the green committee," Scratch remarked. "So, I never give Glen a hard time. How could I, anyway? Have you seen the course? He does a helluva job there. He's tops."

Scratch, who was born and brought up in Marlboro, got into the golf course maintenance business by chance.

"I was at a gas station one day and bumped into an old pal, John Sperandio, who was the super at Marlboro," Scratch revealed. "He asked me to come up to the course and work for him and I've been at it ever since."

That was in 1954. Four years later, Sperandio took the Framingham superintendent's position and Scratch went with him. He also stayed there, working under three other supers until Lane took over.

There also was a time when Scratch divided his time between working on golf courses and caddying in the winter in Phoenix.

That lasted for 15 years and proved another interesting facet of his life.

"I worked strictly at the Phoenix Country Club," he informed. "So, when the PGA tour tournament came there, I got a bag."

Some of the players Scratch attended deserve mention. Among them were Arnold Palmer, Ken Venturi, Lawson Little, Lew Worsham, Mike Souchak, Jimmy Demaret and Paul Harney.



Scratch, in the line of duty, fixing another water line break.

"In those days, you couldn't make a good living caddying," Scratch told. "So, come spring and I'd make it back to New England. After 1963 I stayed here in the winter. That's when I became full time at Framingham."

Petty, 55 and a confirmed bachelor, mixes his life as a golf course assistant super and player very well, thank you.

Check out his Saturday agenda: He goes to work at 6 a.m., leaves at 9 for a golfing date at Marlboro and then returns late in the evening to change the cups at Framingham.

During the recent Marlboro Senior Classic, Scratch was scheduled to caddy for Palmer. However, Arnold brought his own bag totter, so Scratch changed the cups for each day of play instead.

"I was just helping out a good buy (Ackley)," he explained. "That's what this business is all about, isn't it? The superintendents in our area are just great and if I can help them in any way, I do it."

Does Scratch ever do an "if I had only done this" replay on his life?

"Never," he concluded. "In a way, I've just about done everything I ever wanted to do. Right now, I have a good job, work for a good boss and get a chance to play golf. That's not a bad scenario for a guy who never went beyond high school."

Who could ask for anything more? Certainly not Scratch Petty.

Gerry Finn

Never a dull moment *continued from page 1*

cause the golfers start coming out at 7:30. This creates a drawback in my program because I know there's no way of catching up on everything that has to be done."

Although his budget at Woodland is adequate, Norm says it never comes easy.

"The members here are aware of my needs but I have to fight for everything I get in the way of operating funds," he revealed. "I've found that most golfers are reluctant to increase budgets, so I have to be prepared when I go into session with them."

Norm still plays a pretty fair game of golf. However, he has neither the time nor the opportunity to hone it at Woodland.

"No kidding," he quipped, "My course is so crowded, I can't get on it. Most of the time I play my golf at Dedham with my brother (Bob Mucciarone, super there). That proves just how many players get out at Woodland."

Norm has been an active member of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association, having served on many committees with important assignments. And the NEGCSA is very close to him.

"I seldom miss a meeting," he remarked. "And that's been going on since I first joined when I was working in Lexington. I like the way the group is progressing with new and young people taking over the responsible administrative tasks."

There's another Mucciarone on the Woodland scene and it appears that the name could be perpetuated in the superintendent's files.

"My son, David is my assistant," Norm disclosed. "But that doesn't mean I'm looking to pass out of the picture. The 30-year mark is just another step along the way. Next time I look at the calendar it'll probably tell me I've been here 35. And I'm still going strong. I love it."

Gerry Finn

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Divot Drift... Things got off to a rocky start on the first tee at Vesper when host Bert Frederick was run over by a golf cart. Bert escaped serious injury saying it was only a flesh wound. We won't mention who ran him over... Scott's new product Insecticide 4 containing isofenphos is now available... Joel McKoan has been building quite a reputation thanks to our column. Reports have been sent to us from the Rhode Island and New Hampshire superintendents group that Joel has taken some hefty blows and caught all air there as well. One of his playing partners (who shall remain nameless) stated that he should have the nickname "Give me a six" McKoan... Upcoming are the Boston Five LPGA Classic at Ferncroft, Paul Johnson, supt. and the U.S. Amateur at The Country Club in Brookline, Pete Coste, supt... Finally our thanks to Bert Frederick and his staff at Vesper for a wonderful day.

Insect Update - July 9, 1982

The record breaking rains of June appear to have affected turf insect activity. White grub populations dropped dramatically from late April to late June. We put out some insecticide trails in several locations, and in each case we observed a drop of at least 50% from April to June. I suspect this was because the heavy rains left the soil saturated for several days. When soil is saturated, air (and more importantly, oxygen) is forced out of the pores, and small invertebrates have trouble breathing. Worms crawl to the surface to breathe, but grubs do not have that option. Anyway, the grubs apparently faced a severe oxygen deficit and many did not survive. Unfortunately, the survivors may very well be numerous enough to produce damaging populations of grubs anyway, so be on the lookout, especially in perennial trouble spots.

We have been collecting samples weekly to trace the development of the Hyperodes weevil and the black turfgrass Ataenius (dung beetle). The Hyperodes weevil has finished its first generation and the young adults are out now. They should be laying eggs by mid July and a second round of damage may become evident in some areas around the end of July or first week of August. Generally treatment after the damage has been noticed is not as efficient as treatments made during egg laying, because once the damage is noticeable, most of the insects are in the largest larval stages and they are the most difficult stages to kill. In some extreme cases, such "emergency" treatments might provide some relief. Hyperodes weevil development appears to be about a week later than I would expect in a "normal" year, and I suspect the heavy rains are responsible for the delay.

Black turfgrass Ataenius (dung beetle) larvae are showing up in large numbers this week. Many have already progressed to the second instar (stage), and the third instar (most damaging) should predominate by mid July in most locations. By the time this appears in press, it probably will be too late to get good control with any chemicals. The larvae appear to be right at the soil line, which is a bit shallower than usual. This is probably because the turf roots are very shallow this year, again because of the June rains. The young adults should be active by late July or early August, and some areas may see a second period of larval feeding in mid August. In most cases, the August feeding should not cause significant loss of turf.

If you have any questions about insect problems, feel free to give me a call.
Pat Vittum 617-891-0650
Suburban Experiment Station
240 Beaver St., Waltham, MA 02254

To be voted at Dedham

Andrew St. Pierre of Ould Newbury
Richard Caughey of Meadowbrook

July Meeting Results

We had a large turnout at Vesper. The course as usual, was in excellent condition.

This was the Individual Championship and Paul Miller of Tedesco won with a 76. Second was Brian Cowan with an 80. The big net winner was Steve Murphy of Gannon with a 66. Joe Rybka was second with 67. In the seniors division there was a tie between the Mucciarone brothers (Bobby and Norman). The commercial winner was Steve Butler of Larchmont and Larry Bunn of R.F. Morse was second.



The winners (l-r) Paul Miller, Steve Butler, Steve Murphy.



A good looking group of Bert Frederick, our host, Dennis Friel of Tom Irwin Co., Dave Clement of Woodstock and Tony DeBettencourt of Andover.

NOTICE - Upcoming meeting

September 13, 1982
Andover Country Club, Andover, Mass.

Directors meeting	10 a.m.
Regular meeting	10:45 a.m.
All details in next newsletter	

Congratulations to the following new members:

Charles Zeh of Sandy Burr
John Lensing of Norfolk
Doug Stachura of Springfield
Phil DiRico of Shaker Farms
We hope you all will be active in the association.

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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