

Al Radko Leaves His Mark



Eastern Regional Director and finally peaked out as National Director.

Although the research and development of better turf spurred Al through a distinguished 35-year career with the Green Section, the golf course superintendent might have been his "pet project".

Radko was forever championing the cause of the super.

In 1979, at one of the many functions of the profession he decorated with his presence, Al went out of his way to praise the dedication of the superintendent.

"The superintendent's profession is a unique one in that its goal for perfection is unlike most fields," Radko commented. "Well, you hear of baseball players batting .333 and they're considered very good. You also find that basketball players who shoot 50 percent are said to be excellent. The golf course superintendent would hang his head in shame with those marks. They would crush him."

He added: "It just amazes me how these men and women (supers) put so much of themselves into approaching that level of course condition bordering perfection. I really don't know if there can be perfection at the end of the superintendent's ambitious attempt to attain it. But, one thing is certain. He has contributed to creating some of the most beautiful landscapes in the world...that's what many golf courses are when the superintendent gets through with them."

Radko was both a friend and constructive critic in his visible position with the USGA.

Once he suggested that the golf course superintendent might do well to drop things and take a siesta, so to speak.

"There are times when all of us are entitled to sneak away from the every day grind that leads to a building of unneeded tension," he advised. "The superintendent is a prime example of this ailment. I can see no wrong in him taking off from the job for a day or two and going fishing. To keep gnawing away at endless problems without a break is not the thing to do."

On his job, Al was a source of invaluable information for the superintendent. He could tell where the line of winter-kill spanned in the Northeast or pick up the pending dan-

gers of dollar spot at a glance.

The turf was his baby, all right. Invariably, Al would take to a crusade march with trumpet in hand, blowing sour notes on the effects of premature spring golf course openings.

Again, he had the welfare of the super in mind when he noted, "what the golfer sees and what the superintendent feels early in the season are two different things. The golfer is ready to go at the drop of a 60-degree day. But he doesn't know those 60-degree days mean 30-degree nights when plants are more susceptible to damage."

"Trying to sell that idea to the country club member is tough - tough on the superintendent. The pressures are so demanding that the superintendent overdoes everything that he should do in moderation. This causes forced growth of grasses and it hurts in the end. I'm amazed how the superintendent holds up to it."

Radko's criticism once spread to the GCSANE Newsletter when he took issue with a story intimating that the USGA advocates solid brown golf courses. Al had written an article, "Green Is Not Great", for the USGA Journal and the Newsletter rebuttal exaggerated it slightly by suggesting that the USGA promoted brown grassed courses.

What Radko had proposed - and it was justified at the time - was that superintendents sometimes are inclined to overwater turf in order to maintain a green color. In the process, the turf turns mushy, soggy and undesirable as a playing surface.

The Newsletter published Al's comments and the differences of opinions were out in the open. Later, each party was back on a hunky-dory relationship round of complementing one another.

Al Radko, then, was the golf course superintendent's link to the USGA and the Green Section in his 35 years of fruitful input into the same of golf. The profession, particularly its New England wing, wishes him well and restates its undying expression of appreciation for all he accomplished with its well being and improved status in mind. He's the closest thing to perfection it's seen yet.

Gerry Finn

Next Meeting

February 17, 1982

Franklin C.C.

Host Supt. Gary Luccini

Directors meeting - 9:30 a.m.

Regular meeting - 10:30 a.m.

Lunch

Educational program - 1 p.m.

Guest Speaker - Jeff Carlson from the Pesticide Board

Directions

From Rt. 495 King St. Exit to Rt. 140, club will be on right. From Rt. 95, take Rt. 1 to Rt. 140, club will be on left.



Golf Course Superintendents Association

Profile of the Month: The Greening of Gannon

EDITORS NOTE: This article was originally in the Lynn Daily Item in September 1981. Mr. Tom Dalton should be congratulated on his story for giving a fellow superintendent some good publicity. Steve Murphy should be equally as proud.

LYNN — If Steve Murphy worked in Hollywood, he'd be a million dollar a year plastic surgeon driving a Rolls Royce with a vanity plate "Mr. Fixit".

As it is, the Lynn Municipal Golf Course superintendent has, in five years, built a reputation as the man responsible for the greening of Gannon. He makes grass grow where none ever has before, turns bone-dry greens into lush carpets, places sand traps where God intended them to be and turns asphalt-hard tees into velvet launching pads.

Hyperbole?

Listen to the experts.

Gannon head pro Mike Foster: "At our 50th anniversary this Summer, George Wemyss (New England PGA director) said our course was the No.1 municipal golf course in New England."

Gannon club champion Mike Cole: "Steve represents the turning point in the history of our club."

Lynn Superintendent of Parks and Playgrounds Gene Dooley: "He's turned Gannon into the finest municipal course in the Northeast."

Before 1976, when the 30-year-old Murphy was hired as its greenskeeper, Gannon had become the dumping ground of North Shore golf. It was the refuge of a few Happy Valley (its former name) diehards, young kids who couldn't afford to play anywhere else, and old men who knew they'd never have to fight for a tee time.

But you'd never find a self-respecting golfer there. Tedesco and Salem members closed their eyes and held their noses every time they drove down Lynnfield Street.

Then along came Steve Murphy with his square jaw, Irish good looks, and a fierce desire to pump life back into the wasteland of Lynn Woods, once a showpiece under the care of Dick Walton and Gene Dooley. From the start, he turned people's heads.

"I remember his interview for the job," said a Park Commissioner. "He came in here thinking everything in Lynn was political and was sure somebody else had the job locked up. So he told us what he thought. He said the course had great potential but we were letting it go to waste. We liked his candidness and hired him right then and there."

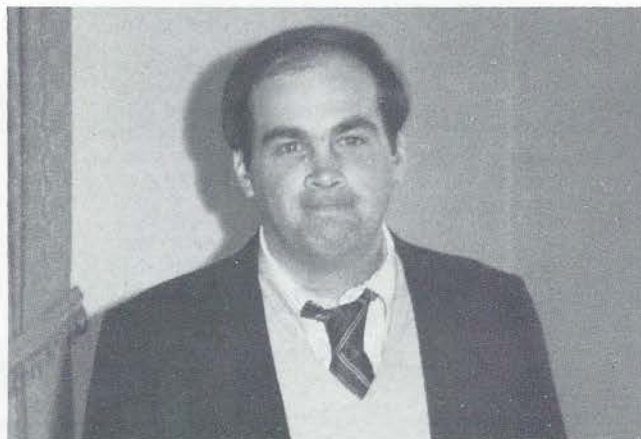
But it was a rough start.

"I remember the first day very well," said Murphy. "Only two pieces of equipment were working so I had to walk around the course."

"They had set ways of doing things at Gannon," continued the Ashland native, "and I knew I had to change them. I remember walking around the course with three of the older members and they told me what changes they'd like to see. When they finished, I told them they were wrong."

That first year Murphy redesigned the tees from astroturf to grass and made them, on an average, nine times as large. After that, with the help of foreman Bob Ford, mechanic Joe Cahoon and temporaries Bob Bogart and Harry Dyer, came 15 new sand traps, a putting green, a renovated 13th tee, and vastly improved fairways.

The Murphy touch has paid dividends off the course as well. Gannon's pocket book was heftier than ever.



"This past July represented the first time in the history of the course that we've broke even financially," said Dooley.

Foster estimates that 50,000 rounds of golf were played at Gannon this past year compared to 30,000 rounds five years ago. The proof is definitely in the putting.

"I'd like to sit here and say I'm a miracle worker," said Murphy, who has a degree in turf management from UMass, "but I'm not. I know my stuff and am proud of the job I've done, but if the people behind me didn't care and support me all the way it wouldn't make any difference what I did, I'm fortunate to get the support I do from Gene Dooley, Mayor (Tony) Marino, the Park Commission, and Mike (Foster). It makes my job that much easier."

And with that Murphy turned and walked off down a cart path...stopping, of course, every few feet to pick up stray pieces of paper.

Anything to make Gannon greener.

Tom Dalton

President's Message

As we enter the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity in expressing my sincere thanks to the entire membership of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association for electing me the 28th President of your Association.

Ever since its inception in 1924, this Association has made great strides forward. From our first President, the late John Shanahan, right on down the list to our outgoing President Ron Kirkman, there have been many individuals for whom I have a great deal of respect. Prof. Lawrence S. Dickinson, Arthur Anderson, and Manny Francis Sr. are only a few of the many that have made this Association what it is today; Successful! I hope that during my administration, I can make a contribution to its continued success.

An Association can only be as strong as its membership. I look forward to your continued support through attendance and participation at our meetings. Knowledge is the greatest asset that we can obtain in our profession. By attending local and national conferences, we can all benefit to strengthen ourselves as Superintendents.

Again, many thanks and I hope to see you all in New Orleans.

Brian Cowan CGCS, President
G.C.S.A. of New England

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Divot Drift...The 1982 golf season will bring four top tournaments to our area. They are: TPA Seniors at Marlboro C.C. Glenn Ackley, Superintendent; the LPGA will be at Ferncroft, Paul Johnson, Superintendent; the TPA tour at Pleasant Valley, Noel Fongellaz, Superintendent; U.S. Amateur at The Country Club, Pete Coste CGCS, Superintendent. An excellent variety... By the looks of the program, the fifty-first Mass. Turfgrass Conference should be another great one... Our thanks to Tony DeBettencourt and the staff at Andover C.C. for hosting our January meeting.



Winter Weather

Our weather here in New England always brings many surprises. The past cold spell has assured us there will be no "Thaw". We have had an ice cover in most areas for quite a while, so it should be interesting to see what transpires from now till spring.

Appointed Committees for 1982

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Donald Hearn, Chmn.
Dave Barber
Dick Zepp

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Pete Coste
Joe Rybka
Jim Beane

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Robt. Grant
Parliamentarian

President Emeritus...Ron Kirkman

PROGRAM INFORMATION

51st MASSACHUSETTS TURFGRASS CONFERENCE AND 6th INDUSTRIAL SHOW

March 2, 3, 4, 1982

Civic Center
Springfield, Massachusetts
(I-91: Exit 6 from South,
Columbus Avenue Exit from North)

Sponsored by:

- *Department of Plant and Soil Sciences,
University of Massachusetts/Amherst
- *Massachusetts Turf and Lawn Grass Council
- *Golf Course Superintendents Association of New
England

PROGRAM

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

—Morning—

9:00-12:45 INDUSTRIAL SHOW open.
Exhibition Hall. Snack Bar.

—Afternoon—

GENERAL SESSION

Banquet Room

Chairman: Dr. Joseph Troll
University of Massachusetts

1:00 WELCOME—

Dr. Daniel I. Padberg, Dean-College of Food and
Natural Resources,
University of Massachusetts/Amherst

1:15 PROTECTING YOUR FUTURE—

Mr. Reg. F. Johnston, Asst. V.P.
Kidder Peabody & Co., Lowell, MA

2:00 ESTATE PLANNING—

Mr. Gilbert Kelling, Atty.,
Kelling Joondeph, Shaffer, & Nagel, Akron, OH

2:45-3:00 BREAK

3:00 RUSTING ON YOUR LAURELS—
Mr. James Arch, Pres., James Arch
and Associates, Maitland, FL

3:45 WEEDS AS I SEE THEM—
Mr. Paul R. Harder, Instructor
Essex Agricultural & Technical Institute,
Hathorne, MA

4:30-6:30 INDUSTRIAL SHOW open
Exhibition Hall

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

GOLF COURSE SESSION

Banquet Room

—Morning—

Chairman: Prof. John M. Zak
University of Massachusetts

9:00 CONTOUR MOWING—

Mr. Geoffrey S. Cornish, Golf Course Architect,
Amherst, MA
Mr. Bruce Cadenelli, Supt.
Hollywood Golf Course, Deal, NJ
Ms. Rachel Therrien, Landscape
Designer, Westchester Country Club,
Rye, NY

9:45 IRRIGATION SYSTEMS: CONSERVATION

AND EFFICIENCY—
Mr. Richard Smith, Pres.
I & E Supply, Inc., Milford, Ct

10:10 ATTRIBUTES AND GROWTH RE-

QUIREMENTS OF BENTGRASS FAIRWAYS—
Dr. Ralph E. Engel, Dept. of Crops & Soils,
Cook College, Rutgers University, New
Brunswick, NJ

10:35 BALUSROL'S BENTGRASS FAIRWAYS—

Mr. Joseph Flaherty, Supt.
Balusrol Golf Course
Springfield, NJ

11:00-2:00 INDUSTRIAL SHOW open.
Exhibition Hall

—Afternoon—

2:00 PREPARATION OF GOLF COURSES FOR
CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY—
Mr. William Buchanan, Mid-Atlantic Director,
USGA Green Section Richmond, VA

2:45 WHAT IT TAKES TO PREPARE A COURSE
FOR THE PGA—
Mr. Richard Bator, Supt., Oak Hill Country
Club, Rochester, NY

3:15 GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE FROM THE
EARLY DAYS TO THE PRESENT—
Ms. Janet Seagle, Librarian/Museum Curator,
USGA, Far Hills, NJ

3:45 THE FATE OF NITROGEN IN TURF—
Dr. William A. Torello, Dept. of Plant & Soil
Sciences, University of Massachusetts/Amherst

4:30-6:30 INDUSTRIAL SHOW open.
Exhibition Hall

—Evening—

7:00 BANQUET AND WINTER SCHOOL
CEREMONY
"Perpetual Miracles"—
Mr. Frank S. Sottile, Reg. Manager Mutual In-
surance Co. of New York
Simsbury, CT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

ALTERNATE SESSION

College Room

—Morning—

Chairman: Mr. Charles Mruk, Agronomist
FBC Chemicals, Inc.
Providence, RI

9:00 NUTRIENT SOURCES—

Mr. William Hoopes, Manager, O.M.
Scott & Sons, Marysville, OH

9:45 LIQUID VS. DRY CHEMICAL APPLICA-

TIONS FOR LAWN CARE—
Mr. Donald Burton, Pres.
Lawn Medic, Inc., Bergen, NJ

10:30 DEALING WITH THATCH—

Dr. John Shoulders, Prof. Emeritus-Agronomy,
Virginia Polytechnic Inst. & State Univ.,
Blacksburg, VA

11:00-2:00 INDUSTRIAL SHOW open.
Exhibition Hall

—Afternoon—

2:00 GROOMING CEMETERY GROUNDS—
Mr. Roger Kindred, Asst. Supt.
Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA

2:45 BEAUTIFUL LONGWOOD GARDENS—
MAINTAINED WITH T.L.C.—
Mr. Carrol Clark, Foreman-Lawns & Gardens,
Inc.,
Kennett Square, PA

3:30 CARE OF ATHLETIC FIELDS AT HARVARD
UNIVERSITY—
Mr. John Cataldo, Stadium Supt.
Harvard University, Allston, MA

4:30-6:30 INDUSTRIAL SHOW open.
Exhibition Hall

THURSDAY, MARCH 4

GOLF COURSE SESSION

Banquet Room

—Morning—

Chairman: Dr. William A. Torello
University of Massachusetts

10:00 GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE IN THE
MARITIMES—
Mr. Larry Brown, Supt., Mactaquac
Provincial Park Golf Course,
Keswick, N.B., Canada

10:30 TURFGRASS INSECTS—

Dr. L.M. Vasvary, Dept. of Entomology &
Economic Zoology, Cook College, Rutgers
University, New Brunswick, NJ

11:00 BACTERIAL WILT OF TORONTO CREEPING

BENT—
Dr. Joseph Vargas, Jr., Dept. of Botany & Plant
Pathology, Michigan State University, E. Lans-
ing, MI

11:30 LESSONS OF THE PAST AS THEY APPLY

TODAY—
Mr. James Snow, Agronomist, USGA Green Sec-
tion, Farr Hills, NJ

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NEWSLETTER

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