

Don Hearn – Man on the Move

Don Hearn admits that he doesn't know it all.

However, Weston's personable golf course superintendent is one-up on many of his peers. On a professional basis, he's seen it all.

Just think of the impact his experiences have had on his golf business education.

"You might say I've been around the block," Hearn quipped the other day. "When I was in high school, I divided my working time between the course and the pro shop at Woburn Golf Club. Then, years later, I had a chance to see the three worlds of the clubhouse manager, pro and superintendent as interim general manager at Weston."

Obviously, Don draws from his diversified mode of maturation. Presently, he is first vice-president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England — in line to succeed present president Brian Cowan and he's a viable candidate for the post of director in the profession's national organization.

If anyone's destiny were pre-planned, it would have to be the eventual whereabouts of the 36-year-old Woburn native.

Hearn's roots in the game were dug deep and early when he started caddying for his dad at the Woburn club. He was nine years old at the time.

From there, he played the game as a junior and probed further into it as a part-time employee in the Woburn pro shop during the summer and on the golf course in spring and fall.

"I can't remember when I decided what direction my golf career would take," he disclosed. "But I suppose I always leaned toward becoming part of the golf course conditioning world. It was a case of a stronger like for one job over the other."

Don took his first full-time post as assistant super at the Thomson Golf Club in North Reading. From there he moved on to Bellevue in Melrose and then to Lexington under Ted Murphy.

While there, two moves cemented his decision to become a career superintendent. First, he completed the winter turf course at the University of Massachusetts. Second, Murphy left Lexington to purchase the Garrison Golf Center in Haverhill and Don was his logical successor as top man.

When Phil Cassidy announced his retirement after a distinguished career at the Weston Golf Club in 1972, the call went out to Hearn as his replacement and Don's been a fixture there ever since.

It's been an enjoyable tenure, too.

"The course members and I are made for one another," Don said of his association with the Weston course. "The challenge is there every day because Weston is one of our older courses. Did you every try growing grass and keeping it there on small greens? Sometimes, I think it's a killer. But that's part of the enjoyment, meeting your problem head-on and driving yourself to solutions."



For reasons, requiring no explanations, Don has been one of the most active and effective members of the NEGCSA.

He joined the association in 1968 and has had his sleeves rolled up, into the action, in the ensuing years. Along the way he's served his profession in a number of of-
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NEXT MEETING Wednesday, Nov. 3, 1982

Needham Golf Club
Needham, Mass.

GOLF - make your own foursome, tee time 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

LUNCH - will be available in clubhouse
Host Superintendent - Ron Kirkman

Ron has been superintendent at Needham for the past twenty one years. He has also shown his versatility by managing the club for the past 5 years. He currently serves on the GCSANE Board as past president and remains very active in the association.



DIRECTIONS FROM RT 128 - exit 57 (Great Plain Ave.) from the north turn right after exit, from the south turn left at exit. Go ½ mile (4th left) to Green St. to club.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

Seminar Report

I attended the Newsletter Editors Seminar held in Lawrence, Kansas on September 19-22. The information and insight presented by the staff of GCSAA was almost too much to absorb during this period.

Some of the topics discussed were the development of a totally new and far reaching educational program, the relocation of the National Headquarters, the 1983 Conference in Atlanta, the Delta Air Lines travel program, the change in the beginning of Conference Week from Sunday to Wednesday and the announcement of the Old Tom Morris Award. This is a major award to be presented annually by GCSAA to "that individual who, through a continuing lifetime commitment to the game of golf, has helped to mold the welfare of the game in a manner and style exemplified by Old Tom Morris." The first award will be presented to a well known figure during the 1983 Conference in Atlanta. GCSAA is also working on a program to make available shirts, windbreakers, golf bags, umbrellas and other items displaying the GCSAA logo.

Computers are affecting everyone. The golf course superintendent is no exception. GCSAA is talking seriously with software suppliers to develop programs specifically for the golf management field. GCSAA will be the association in golf doing this. Once the programming is available, the possibilities for the practical uses of a computer will be limited only by imagination. Audio visual cassettes will be available in the near future. With them and a video recorder you'll be able to avail yourself, your staff, club officials and others to a new world of educational material.

To develop some of these programs, support from all is needed. If enough members sit back and take the attitude of, "What does the National do for me?" inferring it does nothing, that's exactly what all of us will be getting — nothing.

The most disappointing subject was the lack of member support for the Scholarship and Research Fund. We should all return something to our profession. Contributing to the Scholarship and Research Fund is one way of doing this. Whether contributed toward scholarships or research, it's an investment in our future as well as those coming along.

A recurring comment heard was, "The golf course superintendent may be the best kept secret in golf." This will be changing. Several nationally circulated golf magazines will be carrying complimentary ads for our 1983 Conference. The joint GCSAA-PGA Tour award was presented on national television during the Sammy Davis Greater Hartford Open. The award, presented to superintendent Fred Bachand of Wethersfield Country Club by Bob Osterman, Vice President of GCSAA, was another step toward long overdue recognition of the golf course superintendent. Although these are not the block-busting type of things some would like to see, they are steps in the right direction.

The entire headquarters staff, led by Executive Director Jim McLoughlin, is an extremely capable, devoted and enthusiastic group of people. My exposure to their abilities was a very pleasing aspect of the seminar.

Don Hearn

Congratulations to Dan Tibbetts of Green Harbor -New Member

Photo Quiz



ANSWER: *Smokin' Out varmints with mole bomb.*
Keith Gavin (alias Karl Spangler) of Pine Brook C.C.

October Meeting at Blue Hill

Once again we had a fine turn out for golf. The golf course was in outstanding condition. Quite a tribute to Dave Barber and his crew.

The tournament format was a team of four with best ball of two aggregate. The winners were — Larry Bunn of TPC, Bob Johnston of Hampden C.C., John P. Jones of Walpole C.C. and Bobby Brown of Sawtelle Bros. (how can this guy win anything).



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Field Trip



DIVOT DRIFT

The MGA has announced that the president of GCSANE will serve on their Executive Committee. Brian Cowan will begin serving immediately ... Kevin "snowman" Lyons continued his ways at Blue Hill. Playing partner Paul Miller told him he should go the route of "Give me a six," McKoan and take up tennis. After some chatter in the 19th hole someone came up with the dream match of the year — McKoan vs Lyons. The only problem would be there are not enough hours of daylight for these two choppers to complete 18 holes ... Please remember that GCSANE does have a dress code. We are all professionals and should look accordingly ... Also, when planning to attend a meeting please have the courtesy of contacting the host superintendent. He has an obligation to his club to plan ahead ... Dimi Moore gave a nice presentation on the uses of wetting agents at Blue Hill. Our thanks to her ... Finally, thanks to Dave Barber and the staff at Blue Hill for a fine day.

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official capacities. He's been on numerous committees and run the gamut of offices from treasurer to his present first VP status.

"I think the association is on the upswing, all right," he opined. "Naturally, participation isn't where it should be and I lament that. But it's improving and our relations with the rest of golf's administrating structure are headed in a fruitful direction."

Having had first-hand touch with the position, Don has established some definite ideas on the role of general manager.

"The true meaning of a general manager is a fourth person hired to oversee the operation of the three department heads operating from the course, clubhouse and pro shop," he told. "It involves adding a fourth salary which defeats the original purpose of the post, that of judicious control of the club's financial outlay. Therefore, I can't justify the position."

On the superintendent's side of the recognition ladder, Don expressed much disappointment.

"Don't get me wrong," he prefaced his feelings. "Some people have come to appreciate our input, but there aren't enough of them. It's better than it was when I started, but it could be better — much better."

"The superintendent is not getting the mass exposure he deserves. I still know of people who rely on the pro for information pertaining to the condition of the course. I don't blame the pro for this. However, somewhere along the line something's been missing. I believe the job of getting that exposure must start at the top — at the national level. But I'll be talking more about this later in my campaign to become director."

Right now, Don focuses his discerning eye on the New England Association's makeup and functions.



(L-R Doug Johnson, Kip Tyler, Ted Horton, Steve Murphy, Paul Miller.

During the latter part of September, myself, Steve Murphy, Paul Miller and Kip Tyler took a trip to the Metropolitan New York area. We visited two of the biggest golf operations on the east coast — Westchester Country Club in Rye, N.Y. and Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, N.Y.

Westchester is annual host to the PGA Tour during the Westchester Classic. This is a 45 hole golf course operation along with tennis courts and a swim club. Ted Horton, superintendent at Westchester, showed us around and also let us play the Championship West Course. Ted was in the midst of expanding a pond and completely renovating two fairways, which is occupying much of his time.

Winged Foot is a 36 hole championship layout. The East course has hosted the U.S. Womens and Seniors Open. The West course has hosted the U.S. Open and will be host again in 1984. Sherwood Moore, superintendent is anxiously awaiting the big event. Sherwood also arranged for us to play golf, which we did on the West Course.

As for our golf games, the only thing that needs to be mentioned is that the Murph and I came back with more money than we left with. Both Ted and Sherwood were gracious hosts and run first class operations.

Doug Johnson

"We have to have more involvement by more people," he added. "I hear all that stuff about the superintendent selling himself. However, it would be more advantageous to sell ourselves as a group. That's where the association comes in. We have to pull together by mass participation, not pull ourselves apart by scattered input."

Don Hearn, then, is still at it — a 100-percent pusher for the good of his profession. He's seen and experienced it all. Now, he'd like to concentrate on his favorite world — that of the golf course superintendent.

Gerry Finn

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