



# THE NEWSLETTER

*Golf Course Superintendents Association*

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.



July — 1985

## DATES TO REMEMBER

*July 8*

GCSANE Regular Meeting  
Dedham Golf & Polo Club, Dedham, Mass.

*July 12*

News Deadline for August Newsletter

*July 18-21*

LPGA, Boston Five Classic  
Sheraton Tara HH & Rst., Danvers, Mass.  
Paul Johnson, Supt.

*August 5*

GCSANE Regular Meeting  
Hickory Ridge C.C. Amherst, Mass.

*Sept. 4*

Joint Meeting GCSANE/RIGCSA  
Wannamoisett C.C. Rumford, R.I.

*Sept. 19-24*

GCSAA Mid Year Conference & Show  
Indianapolis, Indiana

## Bob Grant Doubles His Pleasure and Success

You might say Bob Grant is down to earth - but he had to come down out of the clouds to get there.

Grant, for the uninitiated in peer recognition, gets double exposure on that score. He served the golf course superintendent's profession with distinction for the better part of 30 years, then moved along the expansion highway to the position of general manager.

The Brae Burn Country Club's where you'll find Bob nowadays. In fact, this is his 22nd year there and the relationship with members couldn't be finer. He's done it all at Brae Burn and, needless to say, all's well there because of that input.

Naturally, everything was planned from day one. Right, Bob?

"Are you kidding?" he corrects the assumption that golf, the course and club were his vocational dreams from the first moment he can remember hitting a pillow. "I was an aviation mechanic, even had my license, until I found out it wasn't for me."

Actually, the Northampton native, had a tough time deciding what road he'd take after enrolling at Stockbridge School. His first thought was horticulture but the classes were full. So, he sort of drifted to turf but still with the idea of parks and beautification stuck in the back of his mind.

"But that was before Lawrence Dickinson and Geoff Cornish (teachers) got their golf holds on me," Bob recalls. "They convinced me that the only place for me was the golf course and career was born."

Grant took to the profession like Larry Bird took to basketball. He had placement training at Indian Hill, pulled his first superintendent turn at Bellows Falls, hopped off for stints in New Jersey, the old International layout in Bolton and Woodbridge before accepting a call to succeed Arthur Anderson at Brae Burn.

Of course, all the while Bob's talents were approaching full bloom. So, by the time he got to Brae Burn, he had the tools to keep what he calls following Anderson, "a good thing going."

Peer recognition accompanied him up the ladder, too. Grant was active in the professional ranks and served two organizations as president - the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Massachusetts Turf Association.

Therefore, there Bob was - sitting in life's cat bird's seat, almost turned into a throne - just as happy as happy can be with wife, Gladys, and children - Doug, Rick and Linda - making things all the sweeter at the top of his profession.

Bingo! Then, it happened. The 40-year manager of Brae Burn retired, replacements came and went and there was Bob - resting on his laurels until Brae Burn's board members leaned on his expertise in handling people and potential for running the whole show.

"At first, becoming manager was supposed to be temporary," Bob recalls. "Only until things got squared away. And I sweated it out. However, the board members were a big help."

"The club was going through a bad time, but everyone had patience and faith in the future. Eventually, things did get squared away. But, instead of me going back to the maintenance building they pushed up my title to 'general manager'. And that was that."

Since then, though, the club has hired a food and beverage manager and elevated Bob's capable assistant - Jim O'Kelly - to head superintendent. Everyone's responsible to Grant. He oversees everything and, from all reports, things are looking good at Brae Burn.

Bob's world and relationship with members is a little different in his new

— Bob Grant—con't. on page 3

## — Chip Shots —

... Things are so busy all around that no one has had the time to fill this column this month - I need help, fellas! Unless you want me to fill this space with, "The successful outings of a legitimate 28 handicapper" you had better call me with your news (878-7203) before the news deadline printed on the first page each month ... enclosed to all regular and commercial members you will find an Application for Membership; this is for you to give out to prospective members ...

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## ATTENTION TURFGRASS STUDENTS!

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# Golf Course Superintendents Association



Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund - Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

## — NEXT MEETING —

**July 8, 1985 GCSANE-Dedham Golf and Polo Club**

**10:00 A.M. Directors Meeting**

**11:00 A.M. Regular Meeting**

**12:00 Noon Buffet Lunch**

**1:00 P.M. Golf Shotgun-**

**Blind Draw**

**(Carts available @ \$20<sup>00</sup>)**

### Superintendent Profile:

Host Bob Mucciaroni has been the superintendent of Dedham for the past 25 years.

After his graduation from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture (U-Mass) in 1948, Bob started his career at the Chequesett Club in Wellfleet, Mass. Spending 5 yrs. as Supt. at the Merrimac Valley Club in Methuen, then 5 years at Wayland C.C. he moved to his present position at Dedham.

He is a longtime member of both the GCSANE and GCSAA. Bob resides in Westwood with his wife Pauline and one of his three children. Son Bob, Jr. is the Assistant Superintendent at Dedham Golf and Polo Club.

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## —The Super Speaks Out—

*(Welcome to The Super Speaks Out - a monthly feature which offers the golf course superintendent a forum to express his views on topics and issues relating to his profession.)*

This month's question: With the knowledge that the superintendent often is saddled with the unenviable task of hiring seasonal and summer help, what steps do you take in that direction and what are your thoughts on the subject?

**Joe Rybka, Thorny Lea Golf Club:** "I guess I'm one of the lucky ones because I don't have much trouble getting and keeping good seasonal help. It can't be that I'm such a good guy to work for because I have trouble working for myself.

"Seriously, I've been at Thorny Lea for 19 years and I know how hard it is to have to lay off somebody who has to eat. What I've done is to work out a system where I hire four new people a year.

"As I said, how I get them, I don't know. I pay around \$4.50 an hour which is about one dollar above the minimum wage. I don't bother with students because my 'summer' help schedule runs from March to October or November - depending on the weather.

"Then, I'm also able to offer some overtime. I also can manipulate labor hours because I'm allowed extra work time for golf cart and clubhouse maintenance. Whatever, so far, I can't complain about the situation. If it's luck, I want it to stay right where it is."

**Art Silva, Belmont Country Club:** "My situation is this: I employ five people full time and seven seasonal. Mostly, the labor force comes out pretty good - only because those seven seasonal workers usually are the same people from the year before.

"I suppose the toughest part of getting good help is finding it early enough. This means March for me which eliminates students, so I have to find the guy who's satisfied working

eight or nine months.

"My one fallout is getting local kids for the summer months. In fact, I've had an ad in the local paper for a month for somebody to work a few months. I haven't had one reply and I'm willing to pay between five dollars and five-fifty an hour.

"I can't understand that. Some kids just don't want to work anymore. So, I may have to import my summer help. It's too bad but that's the way it is. It really boggles my mind. Five-fifty an hour and no takers. I guess this (Belmont) is a rich neighborhood, all right."

**John Sperandio, NEGCSA Lifetime Member and former superintendent at Spring Valley Country Club:** "When you're at one place for a long time, like I was, you develop a pattern for hiring help. I think every superintendent does that but I went beyond it.

"Although, the problem always was getting people early (March) and having them stay late (November), I had a training system where I started out with high school kids and kept them all through college.

"Sure, there were changes because of logistics. But it worked pretty well for me. So, much of my help was holdover which made things much easier. Matter of fact, by the time a kid was into his junior or senior year in college, I had him training the younger ones.

"The pay scale ranged from four to six dollars an hour, depending on experience. That was another incentive for a kid to return.

"As for the seasonal (nine or 10 month-workers), I had between four and six people who could swing staying on the sidelines for a couple of months. As for overall peak help, at times we operated with a crew that ran up to 14 people.

"Therefore, a lot of my effort was keeping the help rotation going. But I was fortunate. I've heard sad stories from other supers and I can feel for them. After all, this is not the most glamorous job in the world."

—GERRY FINN

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## — GOLF RESULTS —

### GCSANE Superintendent—Green Chairman Tournament

June 3—Woodland C.C.

- 1st Gross (72) Gardner G.C. - Mike Hermanson-Mr. Owen  
 1st Net - Ledgemont C.C. - Tony Caranci-Mr. Mann  
 2nd Net - Manchester C.C. - Jim Diorio, C.G.C.S.-Mr. Dunn  
 3rd Net - Pine Brook C.C. - Doug Johnson C.G.C.S.-Mr. Weinberger  
 4th Net - Hopedale C.C. - Ken Mooridian-Mr. Luce

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 2nd - John Lenhart - Mr. Hannigan (Team Sawtelle)

*Many thanks to the membership, management, and staff of Woodland C.C. for a great day and great course. Our special THANK YOU to Norm Mucciarone G.C.S. for so graciously hosting this tournament.*

## Playing Golf Is Good Public Relations

Should a golf course superintendent play golf himself? Many golf course owners and directors believe that having a superintendent who doesn't understand the game is something like having a mechanic who doesn't drive work on your car.

Seeing the course as the golfers do and good public relations are the biggest advantages to playing golf for a golf course superintendent. When it's time to explain to an unhappy member who his favorite nine is closed or why an aerified green looks the way it does, your credibility is much better if you can explain what you're doing and why in golfer's terms. Don't give a player a reason to walk away muttering, "But he doesn't even play the game!"

Playing golf with members also offers you a way to let them get to know you. While playing, you can discuss the course's condition, answer questions and tell them about your plans in a friendly, low-key manner.

You may even want to suggest to your employees that they learn to play golf, if they don't know how already. When employees understand the importance of the fine points of golf course house-keeping, good bunker maintenance, for example, the quality of their work is likely to improve.

It isn't important that they play well. Your club's pro may be willing to give a few group lessons and a friendly handicap competition now and then

among your employees will encourage them to learn.

Finally, playing golf yourself is a most enjoyable way to conduct an inspection of your course from a golfer's perspective and note small changes that could be made to improve your facility.

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### The Trouble...

... with letting sleeping dogs lie is that they're usually in the chair *you* want!

— *Funny Funny World*

*Success isn't* how far you got, but the distance that you traveled from where you started.

— *Bob Grant con't. from page 1*

position.

"For one thing, I come in contact with a lot more members now," he explains. "And I'm dedicated to giving them the complete package - my members and their guests. It's more challenging, all right, but it's rewarding - all the way around.

"There's a lot more to it, though. But I believe there are many superintendents who could do the same thing. The training, handling budgets, really are foundations for becoming a general manager. All that's needed after that is an understanding of people, human nature and dealing from a common sense posture."

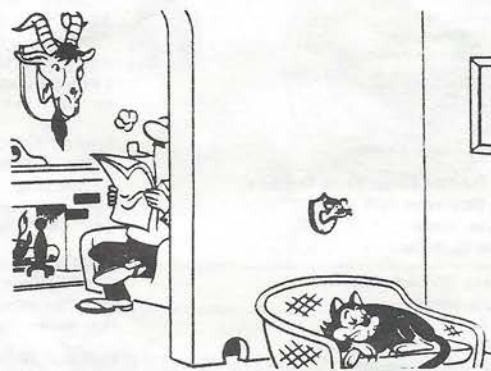
Bob admits his heart still is in the course. "You know, being in the outdoors and things like that," he adds. "But Gladys and I manage to play some golf now and it suffices. She, in fact, has been a big plus for in the transition. She's the receptionist at the club. She knows what the job entails. So, my situation couldn't be better."

Grant does have one or two tips to throw out from his two worlds. "One has to do with greens and the trend to make them faster," he tells. "I see danger signals there.

"The other concerns the overall picture of country club life. It's on a roll now, the good times abound. But, we at Brae Burn hold to the rainy day tradition. We're tucking a little away for times that aren't so good."

Bob Grant. He's lived in and reached the tops of both worlds. And, yet, he doesn't have his head in the clouds. Then, too, he's one of the gang. No wonder his story is so easy to write.

—GERRY FINN



*Blessed is the man who is too busy to worry in the day and too tired to lie awake at night . . .*

□ □ □



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