



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.



June — 1985

DATES TO REMEMBER

June 3

GCSANE Superintendent-Greens Chairman
Tournament-Woodland C.C.

June 12

News Deadline for July Newsletter

June 14

Guy Tedesco Scholarship Tournament
Country Club of New Seabury

June 24

Superintendent-Club Manager Golf Outing
Rhode Island C.C.

June 26

U-Mass Turf Research Field Day
So. Deerfield, Mass.

July 8

GCSANE Regular Meeting
Dedham Golf & Polo Club

August 5

GCSANE Regular Meeting
Hickory Ridge C.C. So. Amherst, MA

Why Do Superintendents Belong To GCSAA?

They are proud of their profession and want to improve it.

They recognize that a strong organization can better represent the combined interests of the profession through its unified voice.

They are convinced that professional growth can best be achieved through the union of similarly minded colleagues.

They realize that their active participation in the Association can shape the future of their profession.

They have discovered that the Association's activities, programs and publications can keep them abreast of the latest technological information.

They believe that a strong Association can strengthen their regional and local turf organizations and programs.

They understand that their personal participation can assist other superintendents and the turfgrass industry.

They know that the resources of a vast organization can only act to increase their professional stature, knowledge and abilities.

They appreciate the opportunities they will have to attend national and regional educational assemblies, developed to meet their specific needs.

Thoughts on a Dry Growing Season

by C. R. Skogley

The 1985 growing season has started off very much on the dry side. Weather reports I have seen indicate that we are minus 16 inches of precipitation, from average, since last August and five to six inches behind for 1985. A marked contrast from the past two springs!

Region-wide there is always concern about low water tables and shallow wells, and ponds and reservoirs being low at this season. As we know, weather can change rapidly and these concerns may be alleviated. In case the dry weather persists, however, these are a few things we turfgrass managers can do to aid in water conservation and to keep grasses growing with less water than usual.

Spring weather such as we have had to date is probably favorable for grasses. It is during the period from March to May that most root growth occurs. When soils are constantly saturated during this season, root growth may be shallow and restricted. Root growth this spring has been excellent. There has generally been sufficient soil moisture, given the cool soils and weather, for excellent root growth. I have checked root growth on a number of golf courses and at the research farm during the past two weeks and have been pleased with what I have seen. If we manage well from this period, and can maintain healthy, functioning roots, water shortages will be less worrisome. Important considerations are as follows:

1. Don't let the soil get too dry or current root growth would stop and root injury could occur. If soils are drying, water thoroughly and wet the soils to a depth of 6-8 inches. Apply it slowly enough so the water percolates rather than puddles or runs off. A wetting agent treatment prior to irrigation might help. Don't water again until necessary. Avoid light, frequent, irrigation that merely wets the upper soil surface.
2. If possible, apply water during the less windy times of the day. Irrigation efficiency is decreased by evaporation as wind velocity increases. Also if winds are strong enough much of the water ends up in areas where it wasn't intended.
3. Watch application rates. If water starts to puddle before you have applied enough, shut the water off for a period of time to allow percolation. Then resume watering until you have adequately wet the soil.
4. Don't aerify too early. Wait until grasses are making good growth so recovery is rapid and aerifier holes are covered quickly. Soil drying may be accelerated through moisture loss from open aerifier holes.
5. Keep grasses slightly underfed if water shortage is a potential. This is particularly important. As nitrogen rates increase water requirement is also increased. It is, of course, necessary to maintain a reasonable rate of grass growth for routine surface repair and renewal but it is safer and healthier for the grass to be slightly hungry rather than "fat" and overfed. Nitrogen regulation has a profound influence on water requirement.
6. One last management item I can think of that we can utilize to reduce moisture stress and water consumption relates to cutting height. Raising the height of cut reduces stress on the grass and helps maintain a better root system.

Most of these suggestions are good management practices under normal conditions. They are increasingly important with restricted water availability. We hope a water shortage never occurs but it is good to know what steps we might take in case it happens.

Note: My thanks to Doc Skogley for sending this timely article to "The Newsletter". This article was also published in the RIGCSA Newsletter.

—Ye Ed—

Golf Course Superintendents Association



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

President's Message

Donald Hearn



It was too bad the weather didn't cooperate for our last meeting at Wollaston G.C. It was the first chance many of us had to play the "new" Wollaston. Those who braved the elements were happy to have had the opportunity.

Superintendent John Coffey and the entire staff of Wollaston did a fine job making all feel welcome.

The GCSA of New England and Club Managers Association of New England will again be sponsoring an annual meeting. This will be held at Rhode Island Country Club on June 24.

This is the one time each year when we have the opportunity to meet and discuss our concerns with the members of this important allied association. One of the reasons for this type of meeting is to become better acquainted with those who, along with other responsibilities, manage the food and beverage operations at our clubs.

It's easy to think you're the only one with problems and the manager is on 'easy street'. This is how I felt before temporarily taking on the responsibilities of manager at my club. Believe me, they have a difficult job which requires a lot of expertise and dedication.

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"When a Super's Home Is Not His Castle"

They say man's home is his castle - but not where the golf course superintendent lives.

That's the house that goes with the job, a situation which is gradually becoming an issue in salary negotiations between country clubs and superintendents.

The arrangement is archaic by some standards but still exists in many locales. Part of a superintendent's compensation for keeping the golf course ship-shape is a house but one he never can call his own.

Usually, the agreement starts out with the superintendent using the house, rent-free. In some instances, it is expanded into an inclusion of heat, electricity and what have you . . .

However, the additions often appear in lieu of salary increases and growing fringe benefits. So, it's conceivable that a superintendent could start a job at, say, \$25,000 per year and not receive a monetary raise for the next five years or thereabouts.

There appears to be a growing opposition to this setup, so much that it would surprise no one if it is phased out.

Needham's Ron Kirkman operates under the free-house plan and is outspoken concerning its negative aspects.

"For one thing, a superintendent never builds equity," Kirkman noted. "Sure, I know you're supposed to take the money ordinarily used for housing and save it. But that seldom happens. The superintendent's lifestyle follows his take-home pay and equity is nowhere to be found."

Kirkman has been housed by his club 24 years on a street between the third green and fourth tee. "I look out my window and the job stares back," he said. "As for an equity loss, it's staggering. One of my past presidents once told me not buying my house from the beginning probably has cost me around \$110,000. And that's just about what I'd have to pay if I wanted to buy the house."

Ron, who says his club has been more reasonable in recent salary negotiations, also reports it wasn't always like this.

"I remember one year my raise was electricity," he flapped. "The next it was oil and then it was Blue Cross. Regardless, the house always came into wage negotiations. As far as I can see, it's a great advantage for one side - the club."

Doug Johnson of Pine Brook claims the house-superintendent hangup may not be that for everyone involved in the situation.

"It has its good and bad aspects," offers Johnson who has managed to keep ahead of the game by attempting to build his own equity. "Of course, it all depends where the house is.

"Mine is in Weston and that's not a town full of shacks. Most of the homes run in the \$150,000 - \$200,000 range. Therefore, I would have a tough time duplicating my house and its location on my salary."

Johnson figures the true value of the average house-with-the-job dwelling is around \$10,000. "It means you can make it on a \$30,000 salary with a house or \$40,000 without one," he told. "But, in the end, it's what you do with your money that counts. And I'll have to admit that it's tempting to spend everything you make."

Hyannisport's Bob St. Thomas can

— "Super's Home" con't. on pg. 3

— Chip Shots —

Our new directory will be available June 1st, and will be distributed at the July 8 GCSANE meeting, anyone not able to attend should contact Tom Schofield for his or her copy . . . congratulations to Scott Reynolds, Charles Eiver C.C. on his being voted into the GCSANE as an associate member; . . . a hearty welcome is also in order to Bill Spence, The Country Club as a regular member, and Jim Passios of Middleton Golf Course as an associate member. Allan Singer, Cedar Glen G.C. received his first reading of our May meeting and should be voted in at the next GCSANE regular meeting . . . "The Newsletter" has a new FRIEND; Greg Moore from Agway Inc., he's been seen at the last few meetings so please say Hello to him.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

Newsletter — June 1985

"Letters to the Editor"**RE: Golf Course Superintendents Association Newsletter-May 1985**

Dear Mr. Hannigan:

As Chairman of the Green and Grounds Committee for the past four years, and as a member of that same committee at Kernwood Country Club for more years than I care to remember, I have enjoyed the informative articles appearing in the Newsletter.

However, as a person who takes his non-paying job rather seriously, I find it difficult to enjoy the "digs" that appear from time to time under the column "A Super's Prayer". In particular, I have reference to the most recent issue of the Newsletter where you invoke the assistance of the Lord "about grass" and "talent".

The job of a Green and Ground Chairman is probably on a level with that of a Super - "thankless at best". We do, however, serve a very useful purpose. We see to it, at budget time, that our Super receives his annual salary increases and sufficient monies to create a heavenly place on earth. We stand between the Super and everyone who can do the job better and for less money. But more than that, we are the best friend and fellow sufferer that a Super ever had.

As to my knowledge of grass, I certainly hope I am a better attorney, and color blind one at that. Dean Robertson once told me that all I really needed to know to be Chairman was the name Poa-Annua, that if ever there was a doubt the use of the word Poa would make everything right, because Poa made everything wrong on a golf course.

I for one recognize the enormous talent of our Super, Dean Robertson, and from the comments at our course, we believe we have the best.

Perhaps a former President of a very famous college said it best, and perhaps you can use this as your next "Prayer" with respect to Chairman, the member, the golfer, and the professional -

"It's not that they don't know, it's that they know so much that ain't so!!!"

Sincerely,

Harry Ankeles, Chairman
Green and Grounds,
Kernwood Country Club

Editors Note: My apologies to anyone that has been offended in any of our issues, our thanks to Mr. Ankeles for his comments. We appreciate any and all letters concerning "The Newsletter".

— GCSANE Golf Results**April Meeting**

Our April meeting was a joint meeting with the Cape Cod Turf Managers Association at the Oyster Harbor Club in Osterville, Mass. Host Superintendent Charlie Gardner had the course in excellent condition and the club staff was very accommodating to the large turnout.

The golf outing was a qualification round for the Tedesco Scholarship Tournament. As a result of their golfing prowess that day, the following people will represent the GCSANE on June 14. Steve Chiavaroli, Tatnuck C.C.; Doug Johnson, Pine Brook C.C.; Max Mierzwa, Chicopee C.C.; Kevin Lyons, O.M. Scotts; and Low Grosser Dave Adimonis, Old Fox Chemicals, Inc.

May Meeting

Our May meeting was held at the Wollaston C.C. Dave Moore, V.P. of Cape and Island Tennis gave a very interesting talk on tennis court materials and maintenance. After a delicious buffet lunch a few of us braved the elements and to our delight, found that Club Superintendent John Coffey had not disappointed us . . . what a course !!! The format was a 2 ball-best ball and the following teams brought home the spoils:

- 1st-Doug Johnson, Pine Brook - Paul Jamrog, The Orchards.
2nd-John Lenhart, Sawtelle Bros. - Rick Arzillo, Unicorn G.C.
3rd-Jim O'Kelly, Brae Burn C.C. - Dick Zepp, Whitinsville G.C.
4th-Mike Hannigan, Sawtelle Bros. - Art Washburn, Cohasset C.C.
5th-Ron Kirkman, Needham C.C. - John Coffey, Wollaston G.C.

□ □ □

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by Dr. H. Merriman

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"Super's Home" con't. from pg. 2—

speak out of both sides of his mouth on the issue since he's operated getting a house with his position and without one.

St. Thomas worked seven years at the Sunningdale Country Club in Scarsdale, N.Y. where a house was included in his compensatory agreement. His reaction: "The house never proved to be enough compensation and it formed false security. I had an opportunity to do the same at Hyannisport but it was only a suggestion and I declined."

Bob brought up an important point when he recalled his Scarsdale days. "It was tough bringing up a family there," he disclosed. "The house they gave me was in a ritzy neighborhood, so the kids had it rough. We were living in a neighborhood with maids and butlers and we just didn't belong.

"Naturally, the ideal solution would be to put away the money you'd be spending on housing. But it's a solution with a lot of drawbacks. For some reason, that money gets spent before you get to the bank. For all that it's worth, I still consider housing only a stipend in what a golf course superintendent is entitled to in compensation."

So, sometimes a superintendent's home isn't his castle - especially when the title and deed belong to another party. There's little doubt the super would prefer to try the real estate market, himself, instead of getting something which definitely is not for nothing.

—GERRY FINN

— 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: In these times of increasing on-the-job pressures and demands on your expertise and time, how do you rate the stress factor regarding your present position?

Mark Klimm, Country Club of New Seabury: "I guess you can call me one of the lucky ones because I don't have to deal with revolving green committees, chairmen and the like. I report to one person, the president of the corporation, and the arrangement is ideal.

"But that doesn't mean there isn't pressure here. I still have to give golfers the best playing conditions and engage in the on-going battle with the elements like other superintendents. And, I think I've hit the biggest stress nail on the head right there - the elements.

"It's tough operating under fluctuating weather conditions because there's no way you can plan for change. That can grind you up.

"Right now, my top priority is getting New Seabury ready for an important national tournament - the women's NCAA Championship - and I take the task home with me. So far, so good - though.

"I really like my job, probably because of the one boss situation. There's no politics involved. That's a cause of stress I don't miss."

Chris Jacques, North Andover Country Club (Chris is contemplating and in the process of joining NEGCSA): "I'm a good subject for measuring stress because I've been living in one hectic world for the last month or so.

"This is my first job, so everything seems to be crashing down on me at once. In fact, when you write this, I'll just about be finishing up my work on a

degree from Stockbridge. So, there's been pressure all around me.

"Probably, the first thing I've noticed is that I can't be everywhere at once. That's a fact of life some people don't seem to understand. But I'm making it under, uh, different circumstances.

"I have a green chairman who seems interested and is pleasant. It won't be easy here for me because I'm in charge of something for the first time in my life and I'm bound to make mistakes.

"But even in the short time I've been on the job, I've seen improvement on the course. That's a lift and it'll be nice if improvement continues. Actually, I don't mind pressure and I welcome the challenge here. Oh, I'm also a workaholic, so maybe I'll be too busy to recognize job stress in the future. At least, I like to feel that way."

Gary Mondor, Crestview Country Club: "This is my 15th year at Crestview and fifth as superintendent, so I have to know the territory. That has to be a plus, fighting stress.

"However, a certain amount of pressure comes with most jobs and I'm ready to handle it here.

"I suppose the pressure here was built-in because of the superintendent I replaced - my old boss, Dave Clement. He kept the course in good shape, so he's a tough act to follow.

"This time of year is apt to be more difficult on a superintendent because you tend to try and do too many things in a short space of working time. That can bring on stress.

"I'm just like the rest of the profession. I bring my job home with me and there aren't too many waking hours when I'm not thinking about it.

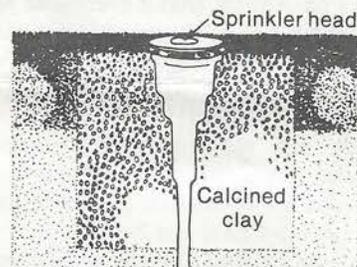
"As for pressure, I take the same approach as an athlete who usually makes his own pressure. In other words, the stress factor is what I make it. Right now, I feel on top of and ahead of it. But I feel it. It's always there."

—GERRY FINN



How to solve sprinkler head wet spots

Frequent watering with automatic sprinkler heads usually results in wet spots around some heads. I solved this headache by digging an 18-in. square around the problem head, filling the hole with calcined clay and replacing the turf. Using other materials like rock, pea gravel or sand doesn't seem to do the job as well because the materials shift, and none soak up the water as well as the clay.



Paul Voykin, Superintendent,
Briarwood Country Club,
Deerfield, Ill.

Work is the best thing ever invented
for killing time.



History of the Hole Cup

*Brad Earl Anderson, Ass't. GCS
Old Elm Club, Highwood, Ill.*

"Golf means the long and leary putt that glides into the cup," Robert K. Risk, *Songs of the Links*, 1919.

Golf historians believe that the first hold cup was a common length of land tile which golfers at St. Andrews placed in the holes of their greens. Legend has it that they were distressed over the constant degradation suffered of the hole and its rim, and that perhaps the land tile may have helped to control the problem. Apart from environmental wear of the hole, the golfer himself was largely responsible for degradation; for what with the wooden tee not yet in existence, the golfer would - upon holeing out - grab a handful of soil from the hole for shaping into a tee for his proceeding tee shot. Mid-nineteenth century photos of golfers on putting greens show that very often the hole was ragged, and in some cases at least one foot wide!

Some clubs had their own rules against "robbing the hole of soil" as it were . . . "No sand is to be taken for teeing within ten yards of the hole," and the 1834 rules of the Royal Mussellburgh Club stated that . . .

"The turf of the putting green shall not be raised up for a tee, and no caddy shall be employed who does not carry a bag of moist sand or clay for tees."

The legendary St. Andrews land tile/hole cup was in use as early as 1850. Its dimensions were 5½ inches outer diameter by 6 inches deep. The 5½ by 6 dimensions of the original hole cup has for years raised a serious question as to why the Royal and Ancient went on to lay down the law of 4¼ inches outer diameter by at least 4 inches deep . . . some 40 years later. Was the 5½ outer diameter too easy, or were other considerations taken besides that of degree of difficulty. The exact reasoning is unknown, but there are at least two very good theories as to how we have arrived at the present day dimensions.

1. It could be that the 4¼ by 4 was common for many years at many clubs long before the R&A made it rule. It is known that the oldest hole cutter in



"Careful. . . I think it's going to break to the left."

existence today (part of a collection of golf antiquities from the Royal Mussellburgh Club) had/has the very same dimensions of 4¼ by 4, and according to the Mussellburgh minutes of March 13, 1829, the Hon. Secretary was "authorized to pay the account of Mr. Gays for the instrument for forming the holes." So as early as 1829 these dimensions were common to at least one club.

2. The practice of inserting flag poles was not yet generally common at St. Andrews during the time when the land tile/hole cup was being developed. Perhaps the later use of flag poles may have been coincidental to the hole cup becoming standardized, and the metal cup being adapted to receive it.

In any event, the dimensions of 4¼ by 4 seems to be with us to stay, despite the various attempts throughout history to tamper with it. In 1934, at the Year-round Open at the Miami Biltmore Course in Coral Gables, Florida, Gene Sarazen actually convinced the officials to enlarge the hole to 8 inches! The event served only to prove that good putters still sunk them, and poor putters still missed 'em.

Reprinted from MAGCS, The Bull Sheet, 1984.



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