



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.



— NOVEMBER - 1985 —

DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER 4

GCSANE Regular Meeting
Lexington C.C.
Lexington, Mass.

November 21-22

RIGCSA/GCSAA Irrigation Seminar
Providence Marriott Inn
Providence, R.I.

December 16

GCSANE Regular Meeting
Franklin C.C.
Franklin, Mass.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Richard Cooper
Ass't. Prof. of Turf Science
University of Mass.

—NEXT MEETING—

Lexington C.C.
Lexington, Mass.

10:00 AM Board of Directors Meeting
10:30 AM Regular Meeting
11:30 AM Lunch
12:30 PM Golf - Shotgun Start

Reservations for carts and lunch no later than Oct. 30th - Call host Orrin Ellis at work —

862-5167 - or home - 933-4386

Directions to Club: Rte. 128 (95) to Exit 44 South; go 9/10 mile to yellow blinking light (Hill St.) and turn right. Lexington C.C. is 4/10 mile on right.

Superintendent Profile: Superintendent Orrin Ellis started his professional career as an aircraft mechanic, before coming down to earth in his present position. He is a graduate of the Stockbridge School Winter Program and is now in his 8th year at Lexington. He is a frequent contributor to "The Newsletter" and does a lot of interesting research at the club.

Orrin lives in Woburn with his wife Susan, son Michael and daughter Amy.

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—Doug Digs in and Things Happen—

Unlike some seemingly comfortable jobs that grow into monumental tasks for certain golf course superintendents, the challenge at the Springfield Country Club was spelled out at the start.

"I knew what I was getting into from day one," Doug Stachura said last month just after giving Hurricane Gloria the brush-off. "The club and course were stagnant and members were ready to put some modernization plans together. That fit right in with my attitude and approach to the profession. I mean, who wants to stand still?"

Stachura was just putting the finishing touches on seeding and setting up the 88-year-old layout for a winter's rest. Construction of five new holes and refurbishing of the others were right on schedule, so Doug's spirits never felt the ground.

"This is major," the six-year SCC super explained. "We're bringing everything up to date here - new pro shop, tennis courts, practice areas, more parking and a touch of condominium living for members who feel ready for that lifestyle. And I'm right in the middle of it. Nice. Exciting."

Stachura, in fact, has been deeply involved in the project - not only directing construction operations but being part of the planning team, together with the golf course architectural team of Geoff Cornish and Brian Silva and club members.

The replacement of the old holes with a more challenging set will perk up the attraction at the West Springfield layout where appreciable change has been on hold far too long. "The whole concept has stimulated our membership," Stachura disclosed. "For the first time since most can remember, there's a waiting list for new members. And the condo inducement has caught on to the point where a lottery probably will be held to see who's accommodated in that respect."

The project has had deep roots with deep thought attached.

"I've been into a giant think tank with a planning committee for the last two years," Doug told. "A lot of thought went into this, too. We started out with 20 different plans, worked our way down to five, then two and eventually wound up the THE choice. Originally, a condominium development had no place in the project. But it was added and it makes its contribution to the overall effect."

There has been a remarkable show of cooperation between Stachura and the membership as the superintendent conducts two orchestras - one playing songs out of the present, the other from the future.

"The members here have been extremely tolerant and patient about everyday playing conditions on the regular course," Doug revealed. "I have to admit that I've let certain maintenance work slip on occasions when I'm required to give the construction phase full attention."

"But the members understand. They put up with the inconveniences and seem just as anxious to see the end product as I am. That's the beauty of this thing. It's such a drastic change from what we've had here that most members are thinking more of the course than themselves."

Actually, reports are that Stachura's conditioning program at SCC hasn't suffered at all. Proof of this comes in comments from guests who have played the course. From all indication, their enthusiasm over present conditions mirrors members' enthusiasm over the future setup.

Stachura, who was in the swell of input that went into construction of the Century Hills Condominium-Golf Course project (a successful venture down Interstate 91 in Connecticut), is using bent for all fairway grasses on the new holes. This will expand into a conversion program for the rest of the course.

"I'd say that in two or three years, all of our fairways will be bent," he said. "That

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Golf Course Superintendents Association



— 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: Aside from the sneak attack from Hurricane Gloria, the golfing season in New England has been blessed with "near-perfect course-grooming weather" - so shouldn't it and not the supers be credited for generally, outstanding playing conditions?

John Almonte, Oak Hill Country Club: "You know what credit will get you? Well, I haven't been thinking about taking any bows and we've had pretty good conditions here for most of the 15 years I've been on the job."

"It's true that most of the rainfall was timely this summer. However, the turf still required the same, loving care it's received. Rainfall couldn't do it alone."

"What the rain did contribute in our case was fall just enough to create some 'rainouts' and give the turf a rest. We need it because Oak Hill is a very busy course."

"As far as reaction from our members, my experience is that the majority enjoys what they see and play on here. The only guys, who complain, are ones who can't hit the ball. The rest realize it's a combination of things that go into keeping the course well-groomed."

Ron Hansen, Spring Valley Country Club: "Right. We did have a timely rain cycle this summer, but it didn't help me

because this is a wet course to begin with.

"Fortunately, we have a green chairman who knows the score and realizes there are limitations to what I can do and produce. Those limitations, by the way, go hand in hand with the budget and condition-expectation is based on this."

"We have a problem at Spring Valley, mainly because of a tired and outmoded irrigation system. The members know this, along with the knowledge that we have a water-stress situation."

"It all ties into an equipment question. No matter who's calling the conditioning shots, he must have the tools to do it. Weather can be a help but it's just a small part of the whole picture. Here, we live with what comes from the skies and what we have to work with."

Jim O'Kelly, Brae Burn Country Club: "The weather certainly didn't hinder my operation this summer (except for Gloria who kicked out our power for four days and reduced our tree population, considerably)."

"However, as far as reaction from the membership is concerned, weather never has been considered the prime reason for the condition of our course."

"There are two things that maybe give me an edge on some of my fellow superintendents. First, conditions at Brae Burn usually run on the favorable side. Second, the members here are aware of what goes into maintaining a

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—Doug Digs con't. from page 1

seems to be the type of grass best suited for this area. I see where all new seeding at places like the TPC (Cromwell, Ct.) and Wethersfield has gone to bent. So, we'll be in good company."

Doug, a Stockbridge grad who went on to earn a degree in landscape architecture at the University of Massachusetts, welcomes this large order of responsibility he's accepted and makes no bones about the fact that it involves pressure.

"It also involves pride," he remarked. "Pride in my work and mostly, in the job my crew is doing. It really boils down to everyone pitching in and contributing beyond normal limits. To tell the truth, I'm as excited as the members about future possibilities here."

So, the super has dug in at the Springfield Country Club and Doug Stachura has things happening. It's a credit to him and his profession. And it has to have a happy ending.

It will.

—GERRY FINN

—LAST MEETING—

Oct. 8, 1985

GCSANE Invitational Tournament
The Kittansett Club
Marion, Mass.

What a day, what a course, what a meal!!! Our sincere thanks to host Superintendent Lenny Blodgett and the wonderful staff at Kittansett. It has often been said that this course is one of the best layouts in the country and now we know why.

Golf Results

1st Gross (62) - Tatnuch C.C.
Steve Chiavaroli, CGCS

2nd Gross - Pine Brook C.C.
Doug Johnson, CGCS

1st Net (52) - O.M. Scotts Team
(Match of Cards)

2nd Net (52) - Reservation G.C.
Norm Tessier, Supt.

3rd Net (52) - Bellevue C.C.
Bob DeRico, Supt.

Closest to Pin (7'9")

Wayne Ripley, Tom Irwin Co.

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Position Opening

Assistant Superintendent
Plymouth C.C.

Plymouth, Mass.

Ron Sherman, Supt.

Please Send Resume to/or call
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Donald E. Hearn, CGCS
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145 Dedham St.
Canton, MA 02021
Home Phone 828-7266
Office Phone 828-6540
Club Affiliation
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121 Granite St.
Medfield, MA 02052
Home Phone 359-7247

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Office Phone 234-2533
Club Affiliation
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Office Phone 235-2487
Club Affiliation
Wellesley C.C.

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173 Salem St.
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Office Phone 595-3107
Club Affiliation
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100 Airport Dr.
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Office Phone 477-0919
Club Affiliation
Tatnuck C.C.

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Home Phone 477-3516
Office Phone 477-0919
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— Roundup on a Green? —

Use of Roundup on tees and fairways has been accepted and very successful. So why not on a green? It's a pretty scary thought. Knowing that within five days following application, the green will be an off-shade of yellow-brown. I could visualize the membership's mental anguish during this process.

The first green at Lexington Golf Club is 8,000 sq. ft. The surface was mixture of 50% Velvet, 10% Pencross, and 40% Annual Bluegrass. With frequent topdressing, we had a good putting surface from mid-June through the season. However, the complaints year after year about the poor color, the many seed-heads, and poor putting early in the season, were driving me crazy. We had tried overseeding for years, but with very little success. I felt that Roundup, applied under certain conditions, at the proper time of the year, would do the trick.

When approached with the idea, the Green Committee voted unanimously to go ahead with the project.

Certain factors were taken into consideration concerning resurfacing this green. Was drainage a problem? Was the contour of the green satisfactory? The drainage on the first green was excellent. The contour was satisfactory. Roundup allowed us to kill the surface while keeping the soil and thatch intact.

First priority in this undertaking was to design and start a temporary green. This was in use for 10 weeks.

The new green, now 10 weeks old in mid-August has 100% turf cover and appears very healthy. Although there is a small amount of Annual Bluegrass in the green, I hope to eradicate it with the use of Ruibgan.

Any superintendent interested in playing this green would be welcomed at the November meeting at Lexington Golf Club.

*Orrin Ellis Supt.
Lexington Golf Club*

—CHIP SHOTS—

A warm welcome goes out to Dr. Richard Cooper, who is the new Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science at U-Mass, Stockbridge School. Some of Dr. Cooper's duties will be teaching, researching practical problems of turf management, and overlooking the activities at the So. Deerfield research facility . . . by now GCSANE President Don Hearn is back from his trip to Scotland, where he participated in the 5th International Golf Team Championship and Turf Management Conference at St. Andrews . . . word has it that the REAL winner of "closest to the Pin" at Kittansett was Dennis Friel - I've seen Wayne's play recently and would tend to believe it, any comments Dennis? . . . The nominating committee has been very active in recent weeks, any ideas - please call chairman Tom Schofield . . . Blodgett of Kittansett 34 years? Ron Kirkman (CGCS Needham G.C.) did a little arithmetic and says he feels 10-15 years younger now due to the editor's mistake! . . . Never Too Late Dept. - The Jim Fitzroys (CGCS, Presidents G.C.) are the proud parents of son Peter Thomas, born this past May . . . last minute arrangements are being put together now for the GCSANE Christmas Party, Chairman Paul Miller (GCS Tedesco C.C.) will give us the date and details very soon . . .

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Golf in the Later Years

My muscles are flabby;
I can't hit a drive.
My mind often doubts if
I'm really alive.
My chipping is lousy,
I never could putt.
I guess I'll just stay home and
just sit on my butt.
My iron play's awful,
my woods are as bad.
I'm describing my game as a
shade sort of sad.
So the outlook for today is for
grief and for sorrow.
Say! who can we get for a
fourth tomorrow?

Reprinted from "The Greenside," GCSA of New Jersey, Sept. '84.

—Super Speaks con't. from page 2

golf course and understand most of its technical aspects.

"I'm not trying to say that one thing or another wouldn't make playing conditions here better. There's always room for improvement. But, all parties seem to be satisfied with the course. That's the main point as far as the relationship here goes."

Jerry D'Anello, Winthrop Golf Club:

"We - and I'm talking for most of our members - really don't think of the weather this summer as that much of a factor. As a matter of fact, good weather 'greens' up the color of plants but has nothing to do with the quality of the turf. "I've always operated under the theory that if I show my members a good golf course, they appreciate everything I'm doing to keep it that way.

"Anyway, this is a unique situation at Winthrop - almost Utopia from a superintendent's standpoint. There are members here, so involved and interested in keeping the course in shape, they actually join my work crews at the end of summer when source of labor runs thin.

"Heck, we have a club treasurer who has learned to cut greens. And it has nothing to do with cutting financial corners. If it did, my budget wouldn't have doubled - as it has in the last two years.

"So, the weather doesn't get any credit for grooming our golf course. This is a total-involvement arrangement. Why, the members just raised an additional \$3,700 for my budget with a beautification tournament. They look at it like I do - good weather or not, we're going to have ourselves one heck of a course."

GERRY FINN

It was a glorious way to spend the day - wading a favorite trout stream after placing several hooks into deep, dark pools. The problem was, he was playing golf.

—Tom Stoeger, quoted by Alex Thien in Milwaukee Sentinel

Credit: On The Green, N.P. GCSA

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John Streeter, CGCS
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Michael F. Nagle
51 Lincoln Ave.
Holden, MA 01520
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PAST PRESIDENT

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Philip Wogan
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21 Budleigh Ave.
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