



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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

April 1987

-NEXT MEETING-

Monday May 4, 1987
Ocean Edge Country Club

9:30 Directors Meeting
11:00 Regular Meeting
12:00 to 1:00 Buffet
1:00 to 2:30 golf times

Directions to Club: Rte. 6 east to exit 11 go right on rte. 137 north and entrance to Ocean Edge is 2.5 miles on the right.

Host Superintendent - Jeffrey Carlson.
Reservations Required -
(617) 896-5911

Name the Hat and Al Auger's Been Under It

Al Auger admits it.

"Yeah, I guess I could write a book," he flapped. "All I'd have to do is fill out my resume. That would fill a book, all right."

Which narrows Auger's work load down to about a thousand jobs. If he hasn't done one associated with golf, it hasn't been invented.

"Right," replied the cook, bartender, dishwasher, electrician, plumber and sometimes-golf course superintendent at the Beverly Golf and Tennis Club. "You name the hat and at one time or another, I've been under it."

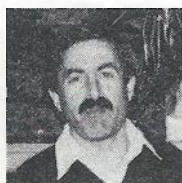
These days, Auger who just entered his 27th year in the golf course maintenance profession, leases the city-owned facility and runs the show there. The arrangement began last year after Al

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Three Take The Plunge

At the recent Massachusetts' Golf Association Spring Conference held at the Marriott, Ted Horion, CGCS, of Westchester Country Club gave an interesting and informative presentation on his experience with triplex mowing of fairways. If some in the crowd had feelings of deja vu, it was not without reason. In February of 1982, Ted gave an earlier version of the triplex mowing story at Westchester at a USGA Green Section Conference held at International Golf Club in Bolton.

I know what you're thinking. Sure, that kind of stuff gets done in Westchester where money is no object. Interestingly enough, today it's done from coast to coast and even conservative New England is beginning to follow suit. This year, Art Silva at Belmont, Mike Nagle at Worcester and Dan Higgins at Cohasset will be putting the lightest of fairway mowing units to the test.



At Belmont, Art Silva headed in the triplex mowing direction due to member desire for the improved cut and aesthetics resulting from striped fairways. The units ready to hit the fairways are the Jacobsen TF-60 diesels. Silva will use six of these machines equipped with five bladed reels and large treaded traction tires.

Art plans on cutting fairways at one-half an inch four times per week and will be picking up clippings. The clippings will find their way to trailers parked between fairways and eventually

be disposed of in the club dump or compost area. When possible, fairways will be cut dry and with the disposal of clippings, Silva anticipates no need to blow off fairways after mowing. The units will not be set up with Wiehle rollers due to the tendency of these rollers to clog under wet conditions.

In the past, fairways at Belmont were cut with a Jacobsen HF-15 and required a total of 17.5 man hours per mowing to handle fairways with the HF-15 and extended approaches and par-3's with a triplex greensmower. With the four machines purchased this year and two models purchased earlier, a fleet of 6 machines will be attacking the 30 acres of fairway at Belmont. Silva expects mowing time to jump to 36 man hours per mowing, has hired two additional men and increased his labor budget by \$30,000.

Additionally, Silva expects more preventive maintenance on the smaller machines in terms of adjustments, greasing and oil changes. In this regard, Art suggested that it will take a season or two to get a finite handle on the extra maintenance costs. As well, with the sophistication of today's machinery and the high quality demands imposed by the golfer, Silva offered the thought that many clubs will soon be retaining a pair of mechanics.

The fairways at Belmont are aerified and sliced prior to being overseeded with bent grass at the rate of one pound per thousand square feet. That orange fleet that you'll see in the distance from Rt.

Continued on page 2

Commercial Clippings

At the recent Master Turf Distributor Meeting in Annapolis, Maryland Bob Dalrymple, ASC Technician for Larchmont Engineering & Irrigation, was awarded the Rainbird Tech Master Award. One of only five people in the United States to have ever received this award, Bob was recognized for his superior knowledge of Rainbird controller repair and irrigation system trouble shooting. This award makes Bob a consultant to Rainbird in field test situations.

Receiving an award for specifications effort was Brian Vinchesi, Design Engineer for Larchmont. This award recognizes Larchmont advances in specifying Rainbird products at the beginning of many projects with many green industry professionals; such as landscapers, landscape architects and site engineers.

THREE TAKE PLUNGE

Continued from page 1

2 this summer will merely be Arthur's fairway mowing crew!!!



At Worcester, Mike Nagle experimented quite a bit on fairways, trying both hydraulic triplexes and the new five gangs

before settling on four new Jacobsen TF-60 diesels for 1987. Prior to this year, the fairways off of Rice Road had been cut with an F-10 with par-3's and approaches handled with the TF-60. Mike anticipates total mowing time on fairways and approaches to increase from 11 hours to 25 hours, with the 23 acres being handled by a five man mowing crew. Mike's reasoning behind the switch to triplex mowers is straight forward — he feels the machines will

give the best cut.

Fairways at Worcester will be cut four times per week at a height of seven-sixteenths of an inch. Clippings will be collected and dispersed in the rough with a PTO blower used to scatter any clumps. The triplex will be set up with Weihle rollers to keep the grass from getting puffy. While Mike would like to mow dry, heavy play virtually rules this out and fairways will be dragged with hoses prior to mowing.

Fortunate to have good part-time help, Mike anticipates a labor budget increase of only \$9,000. Aside from bedknife replacement, Nagle anticipates no other immediate cost increases. The experience of others with regard to triplex mowing has shown a marked increase in the percentage of bent grass on fairways. Mike's program of aerifying 6 to 8 times in the late summer, followed by overseeding with Penneagle at 2 pounds per thousand, will certainly help along the increase in the population of permanent grasses.



Just down the road at Cohasse, Dan Higgins is geared up for triplex mowing of fairways on his nine hole course. Dan

points to the many agronomic advantages associated with triplex mowing, i.e., greater bent grass populations, cleaner cut, greater summer and winter survival of permanent grasses and the like, as the driving forces behind his decision to go with the light-weight units. The good folks at Cohasse purchased three Jacobsen TF-60 diesels with five bladed reels and smooth tires.

Over the years, the fairways at Cohasse have been cut at one inch, in most recent years with an F-20. The 11 acres required 3.5 man hours per mowing. This year, fairways will be cut four times per week at three-quarters of an inch with 10.5 man hours required per mowing. Clippings will be picked

up and dispersed in the wooded areas around the course. Where possible, fairways will be cut dry and mowing units will not be set up with Weihle rollers. Dan will increase his labor budget \$5,000 to cover the triplex mowing.

Other than bedknife replacement and additional grinding, Dan anticipates no other cost increases for the change to triplex mowing. At the present time, the bluegrass fairways at Cohasse are not overseeded, however, as cutting heights are further lowered, Dan feels an overseeding program may be necessary.

So there you have it, three locals trying something a little different so far as New England is concerned. Will they come out of the year as heroes or something less than that? With triplex mowing firmly entrenched in the Chicago, Illinois; Columbus, Ohio; Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota and Westchester County areas, among others, Art, Mike and Dan have some proven track records to call upon. We'll keep track of their '87 experiences and let you know how they've made out.

Ron Kirkman

The author wishes to state that no endorsement of name products is intended, nor criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned in this article.

If you have a new Green Chairman or President write the name, address, zip code and send to Tom Schofield. Two club officials are entitled to receive the newsletter. Get up right now and send in their names and addresses. Some superintendents don't want their club officials to get the newsletter. **WHY?**

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NAME THE HAT
continued from front page

had "more or less been doing the same thing" since 1975.

A little back-up music's in order here.

Auger had been the superintendent at the South Shore Country Club for 11 years when the private interests, who had bought the old United Shoe Country Club and changed its name to Folly Hill Country Club, offered him the same position there.

"It was an attractive opportunity, better things were going to happen for me and my family if I changed jobs, so I took it," Auger recalled. "That was in 1971, I was young (32) and looking for bigger challenges. You can't stand still."

Well, Auger's been hopping ever since. Not in one place, mind you, but in the same environs of a country club locked into a transitional life for quite a while.

The Folly CC post became more challenging in 1975 when its owners asked Auger to become the clubs superintendent-manager. That put him into his second hat which he wore well.

In fact, when the City of Beverly bought the club three years later, there was no question as to who would head the operations.

"They (city) weren't in the golf business, so they turned the business over to me", Auger told. "Therefore, from 1978 to last year, I ran things to the point where I was treating the place as if I owned it but drawing a salary not in keeping with the 90 to 100-hour work week I was putting into the job."

-NEW MEMBERS-

Kevin Ross, Regular member
Falmouth C.C., Maine

Michael Cerveny, Associate member
Tekoa C.C., Westfield, MA

Michael Iacono, Regular Member
Metacomet C.C., Rhode Island

Dave Heroian, Regular member
Myopia Hunt Club
South Hamilton, MA

"That's when I approached the city about a leasing arrangement. That is I suggested that they open the club operation for bid. I came in with a fair bid and I got it. After all, the club was successful which meant the city was satisfied with the way I was running it. Therefore, as of Jan. 1, 1986, I was in business for myself."

And he's put everything into it — Al and his wife, Ann, who is a very important member of the Auger Management, Inc. team.

"I couldn't do it without Ann," Al emphasized. "This really is a family involvement endeavor. There has to be input, as well as understanding, from all directions. I'm lucky, too, because it's there and it looks like we're going to make it."

The club is much more than the typical municipal layout. Beverly has an 18-hole golf course, 12 clay tennis courts, a swimming pool, clubhouse with restaurant — the works.

"We're operating as a year-round club in that we keep the restaurant open in the winter," Auger explained. "We've developed a steady line of customers for the restaurant. We're into banquets, weddings and other food-related ventures. Hey, we're really into it."

Obviously, there have been a few wrinkles in the first year of operation but they have or will have been ironed out before long.

"We had to take over inventories, things like that," Auger said. "There's been capital outlay and other expenses we expected to have in the first year. However, we're getting busier all the time and the future looks very bright."

Success is nice, very nice. But it also breeds more responsibility and the Augers are responding with more of those eight-day weeks.

"Sure, we're working harder than ever but with a more meaningful purpose," Al disclosed. "It's our business and the more we put into it the more we'll get out of it. That goes for the city, too. It'll be more successful, financially, as we are."

Auger employs around 100 people at the peak of the summer season and hires

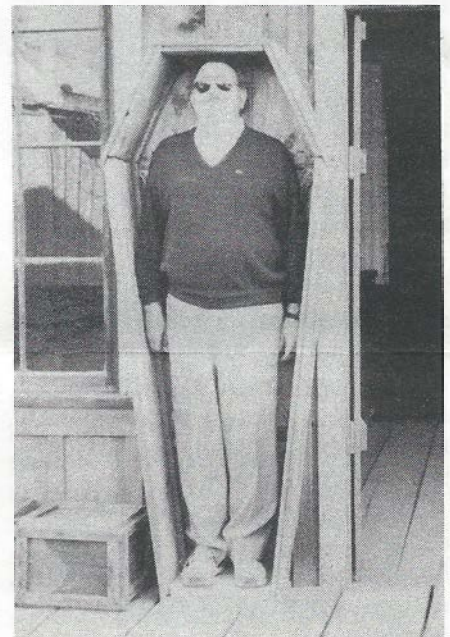
everyone on the Beverly scene — managers (golf pro, tennis pro etc.), included. This includes a fill-in which happens to be Al, himself, who jumps into the opening when someone doesn't show.

The golf club has a waiting list (325 Class A members in the fold) and the facility teems with activity.

"I'd like to do more superintendent's work," Al sighed. "But I just have my feet in too many doors around here. Fortunately, my assistant (Dave Tormey) has been with me since I came here. He knows the ropes and does a good job. Just ask anyone who plays here."

Anyone and everyone, it seems. The Beverly Golf and Tennis Club is one of the liveliest places in town. Al Auger has seen to that. He's its MVP, first "owner" in history to win that award.

GERRY FINN



*Steve Butler, Shot at Old Tucson
ready for Boot Hill*

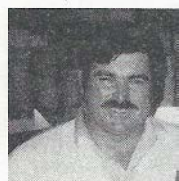
-Dates To Remember-

Monday June 8, 1987
Executive Invitational at
International C.C.

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: *What is your and the policy of the country club, by which you are employed, concerning the hiring of members' children/relatives and what are your views on the subject?*



Mark Taylor,
Haverhill Golf
and Country
Club:

"My club has no policy on hiring members' relatives,

friends or whomever. However, as a rule of thumb, I'm inclined to avoid getting into that situation if at all possible.

"Frankly, I've never had any trouble along these lines and there have been times when I did hire a member's son. Whenever that happened, the person turned out to be a good worker and there were no problems.

"If a member approaches me, asking about employment for a relative, I make it clear that I have standards and guidelines for hiring people and everyone applying for a job is judged according to them. Therefore, there's no inside track to a job around here.

"Since I am the one, who makes the decisions on hiring, I prefer not to be faced with the possibility of employing relatives of members or even my friends.

"There is a potential for trouble when members' sons or daughters are put in a two-way position — an employee of the club and, yet, technically, a member after working hours, if you will.

"As for pressure to hire someone in the members' family, there is none here. My members have come to realize that I

hand-pick my staff and, whenever possible, I like to hire as many returnees as I can. Overall, that approach has worked just fine for me and my club."



John Streeter,
Cliffside Country
Club: "New job, new policy, no relatives, please.

"That sums up the attitude at Cliffside. There are no ifs, buts or ands. It's written out, so there'll be no questions. Absolutely no relatives of members will be hired by any department head.

"That means me and last year, my first here, it worked out very nicely for all concerned.

"Although there was no such rule at my last club (Alpine) and that situation was one I could live with, I think I'd just as soon live longer with this one."

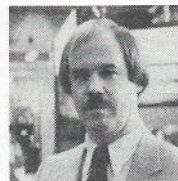
"I feel it's a good idea not to be faced with the situation of having to hire and then supervise members' sons or daughters. It avoids any chance of bad communications between members and me, and it wipes out the possibility of what could develop into an unnecessary problem.

"Regardless, I believe a superintendent has to look at the employment situation without prejudice. If I was confronted with the relatives' hiring principle, I'd adhere to the same application process I do for all my help.

"Anyway, I don't have to worry about it which probably means I'm situated in the best-policy position."

"As long as man's activities are in sympathy with nature, or are on so small a scale that they do not interfere with nature's self-renewing cycle, the landscape survives, either in a predominantly natural form or as a balanced product of human partnership with nature. But as soon as the growth of the population or its urban activities are sufficient to upset nature's balance, the landscape suffers, and the only remedy is for man to take a conscious part in the landscape evolution."

SYLVIA CROWE



Neil Wendell,
Wannamoisett
Country Club: "As for club policy in the employment area, my members have told me

that with the responsibilities and respect which go with my position, I run the golf course and I do the hiring. Period.

"However, there's nothing that says I do or don't have to hire relatives or friends of my members. In other words, there's nothing that binds me in either direction.

"Personally, I am the product of a father-son employment relationship. And I have to admit, it worked out well — even though there were some things my father (Mal Wendell, Rhode Island CC superintendent) made me do that I didn't agree with. But that was then. Now, I know all those things were for my own good. After all, I worked 13 years for him.

"That experience probably helps me in the members' relation business here. I've had as many as four sons of members working for me at one time. Presently, I have one. In either case, there never was a problem.

"I really think it's harder on the member-relative you hire than it is on the superintendent. At least, this is the kind of offspring I've been associated with at Wannamoisett.

"Above all, though, there is no pressure from members to influence who gets the job. By the way, one of those I hired is going to the University (Rhode Island) to become a superintendent. So, if there's a problem out there in this area, certainly I haven't had to solve it."

GERRY FINN

Divot Drift

Our congratulations to Dr. Joseph Troll for another excellent Mass. Turf Conference. This is your editors' thirty-first conference and if you remember the white horse galloping through the Hotel Northampton, you've been to quite a

Continued on page 5

DIVOT DRIFT *continued from page 4*

few yourself. The show was dedicated to Anthony Caranci Jr. and Manuel Francis Sr. Each received a chair and Mayor Caranci promises to put his on the flagpole in order to see more of his golf course. Manny will place his on the first tee but don't be surprised if Dan Tibbetts uses the chair more than Manny.

In the industrial show a superintendent was purchasing one of those mechanical monsters that give the golf course technician fits (not called mechanics anymore) and golf club treasurers an ulcer. This superintendent was actually trying to figure out which teenager on his crew making four to five dollars per hour will operate these \$15,000 to \$40,000 beauties. Hopefully, they won't work for the local hamburger establishment where they flip burgers for six to seven dollars an hour.

Seed, especially bent is becoming more difficult to purchase. If you can find any it's usually at an exorbitant price. One quickly gets the impression that seed companies are trying to pull off the same stunt oil companies did and inflate the price. Imagine, if we could put all monies into Poa-Annua Research and make it a more desirable weed there would be no need to worry about the price of seed.

Did you know that Tony DeBettencourt, superintendent, Andover C.C. served in the same outfit in Vietnam with Oliver Stone, U.S. Army 1st. Cavalry Division; Stone wrote and directed the movie PLATOON.

Question never asked: What is the maximum weight limit of an operator that triplex green and tee mowers can support before damaging the efficiency of machine? If there is an answer, we'd like to hear it.

I'd like to thank Jim O'Kelly and Steve Murphy for their help with the

suite in Phoenix. These gentlemen did the shopping for all refreshments which filled the trunk and back seat of their car and they helped in organizing the room. These are behind the scene guys. The ones that do all the work and never get credit for it. My apologies for not including them in last months newsletter. Rumor has it that John Pluta and Steve Carr are looking for the associate editor, Doug Johnson. D.J. has a way with pictures.

It appears the theory of warm and snowless winters forgot New England. Judging by the comments of superintendents the fairways and tees were devastated by pink and grey snow mold. Some golf courses have reported severe ice damage to their putting greens.

Our sincere thanks to Gary Lucini, superintendent, Franklin C.C. for hosting the winter meetings. The Association expresses its gratitude to the Board of Governors at Franklin C.C. and to the manager and clubhouse staff.

Sabbatic Update

For those of you who may have missed the "news", Pat Vittum will be spending a full year sabbatical leave in New Zealand, studying the biology and control of the Argentine stem weevil. This weevil is very closely related to the *Hyperodes* weevil which causes damage on annual bluegrass turf in the Northeast.

Pat will be concentrating on looking at daily temperatures and working on a way to use those temperatures to predict weevil activity. She has reason to believe that the behavior of the Argentine stem weevil is very similar to that of "our" *Hyperodes*, and suspects that a predictive system which works in

New Zealand will also work here.

The Argentine stem weevil is a problem on sheep pastureland. Since New Zealand has about 3 million people and 60 million sheep, New Zealanders take their pastureland very seriously. The research efforts of the pasture entomologists include a variety of studies on different biological control approaches to some of the insect pests. Pat plans to spend a good deal of time learning about some of these efforts, and hopes to be able to incorporate some of them into turf maintenance efforts back in New England.

Pat will fly out of New York City on June 22, spend a few days in Hawaii, and then arrive in Christchurch, NZ, on July 1. She expects to return to New England around June 15, 1988. During her absence, her technician (many of you know Reggie Mimms) will be conducting the usual range of insecticide screening trials, especially on Japanese beetle grubs, so in many ways her program will continue "as usual".

University administrators are in the process of working out a system of handling insect questions which are normally directed to Pat. She suspects that some of those questions will be shifted to some of the county extension agents, and some of them to Reggie Mimms. We will provide the announcement of the final arrangement in a subsequent newsletter.

Pat is understandably very excited about the upcoming year. Everything she has heard about New Zealand, and particularly the people, has been very positive. If you are looking for a place to spend a vacation (!), think about visiting New Zealand and stopping in to say hello. The golf courses are reputed to be very pretty, with a very different approach to maintenance than we use.

Pat has promised to send us some updates from New Zealand during her sabbatic. Stay tuned!

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