



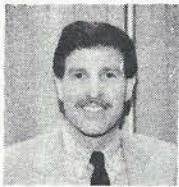
THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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September 1989

Pleasant Valley in Recovery Mode



This month is the beginning of the end. Or at least Pleasant Valley Country Club superintendent Paul Veshi hoped so.

"I think we've turned the corner," Veshi remarked with the Bank of Boston Classic breathing down his neck again. "I don't know if we'll ever get it all together. I mean when the greens are true, the fairways are spotless and even the rough inviting to the eye. When that day happens, I'll be hootin' and hollerin'."

Veshi, you may recall, was the superintendent with Mother Nature on his back a year ago. Smack in the middle of his preparations to give the PGA touring pros a finely tuned golf course, Paul got hit with a left hook, then a right cross from the weather.

"Remember Black Saturday?" he went back in time to July 30, 1988. "That's when the bottom fell out, when all that rain and all that heat ganged up on a lot of golf courses. That day we were cooked to death. No. 16 (green) was completely wiped out and the damage was strung out from there.

"We had to re-sod that 16th and go on from that point with around-the-clock measures to try and shape up the course so that it would be fairly presentable to the best golfers in the

world. We survived but it was a struggle. I got some unexpected help, too."

When the players came in for the big event, Veshi didn't know what kind of response he'd hear since Pleasant Valley had gone from its best condition in years to a shaky state because of the worst weather conditions veteran superintendents could remember.

"What really picked me up were the comments of some of the pros who were aware of what we had to go through," Paul turned back his mind in time. "Dave Stockton was one person who went out of his way to put everything in proper perspective. He let it be known that there were turf problems all over the place and we weren't alone.

"Then there was Larry Renker. I'd been through the ringer and I read in the local paper that Larry had said the course wasn't all that bent out of shape. I felt nice about what I read. The next day I went up to him on the putting green and thanked him for the boost."

That's how Veshi got over the hump a year ago when the Bank of Boston Classic and such Tour stops as the Canadian Open had to gut out the effects of a golf course killing summer. This year he was on an upbeat route but still cautious.

Not that PV had made a 180-degree turn.

"We're still in a recovery mode," Paul explained. "We have a new irrigation system and there are some scars from the installation. However, most of those show up in the rough. Regardless, there may have to be a few rulings made to equalize playing conditions."

Recovery mode means better mood for the likeable Veshi who had Pleasant Valley perched like a peacock just before it took a weather beating a year ago.

"Oh, I'm feeling pretty good about things this year," he said. "But we're working just as hard as ever to get this place back to where I think it should and will be. I'm still trying to get used

Continued on page 2

-PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS-

Dean Loomis, Associate
South Shore C.C.

Chris Bowen, Associate
Saddle Hill C.C.

Jeffrey Nealy, Assistant
Plymouth C.C.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

October 16 - Brae Burn C.C.—Supt. & Pro
October 19 - Hyannisport C.C.—Supt. &
Green Chairman
November 2 - Mt Pleasant C.C.—Lowell,
MA

PLEASANT VALLEY

Cont. from pg 1

to the irrigation system and I'm getting a handle on a labor problem that made its appearance. There's always something."

Veshi terms the condition at PV, "pretty good", although he tends to underestimate the results of his diligent approach to his job. Perhaps it was his cautious side talking when he viewed the difference between this and last year a couple of weeks before the 1989 Bank of Boston Classic.

"People seem to overlook the fact that other things go on here despite all the emphasis on the big tournament and the attention it gets from the outside," Paul told. "There's still a membership that has to be satisfied along with a boss who has the same ideals as I when it comes to presenting the course for play."

Ted Mingolla is the PV owner and Veshi acknowledges that he puts as much of himself into the golf course as perhaps any other person except Paul, himself.

"He (Mingolla) has high standards where the condition of the course is concerned and so do most of our members," Veshi disclosed. "But I'd like to think my standards exceed those of anyone here. That's why I'm so particular about the way my staff and I take on the task of producing top-shelf conditions."

Through all the preparation, Veshi always relates to last year and the horrible experience of having his expectations blown to bits. "I won't say it was a humbling experience," Paul concluded. "But it made me realize you can never take things for granted, that you can lose the course

at any time. I take that feeling with me to the golf course every day. But I have to say that things are looking up."

Which is another way of saying Paul Veshi has things under control at Pleasant Valley...even if he won't say it, himself.

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 or her views on topics and issues relating to their profession.

This month's continuing question:
With the attention-getter of summer centered on speed of greens, who should and who does set their speed at your course and how important is the subject anyway?



Kip Tyler, Salem Country Club:

"Maybe we're the exception here but there doesn't seem to be that much concern voiced about the speed of our greens. In fact, I've noticed that three or four weeks will have passed before I hear a comment on them.

"I suppose the superintendent lives under the syndrome that suggests he doesn't want to hear that his greens are slow. Is it a case of building prestige at the club as you increase the speed of the greens? Good question.

"I really don't wish to discuss Stimpmeter readings. We kind of go by the USGA recommendations for green speed. However, as far as the members are concerned, you're always going to get a few who won't be satisfied no matter how fast or slow the greens are.

"My average cut on the greens is one-eighth after the first couple of cuttings come at 5/32s. But I think their speed is what most of the membership wants. I do know that my chairman thinks the speed is just fine.

"Frankly, I see this whole idea of speeding up the greens as a means of impressing people. Sometimes we're more concerned with what the playing guests say about the greens and the course than what our members say. It's part of the business.

"But I really don't see speed of greens as an issue. I think it's losing its clout."



Leon St. Pierre, Longmeadow Country Club:

"I don't know how this all started...that we have to have the fastest gun in New England, us, the fastest greens. However, it's definitely a topic.

"What many people don't realize is that there are a lot of factors, other than height of the plant, that determine speed of greens.

"You can have a hot, muggy day with heavy air in July and the greens slow down. Then, you can have a dry, low humidity day in September and the greens speed up.

"That's not all. There's a grooming device, which when applied, can mean as much as an additional 1/16th of an inch to the cut of the greens. And

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Research Drive Update

As you already know, our research drive is in full swing. We have established a goal of \$15,000 to be raised through donations from each club in the golfing fraternity. We are taking the opportunity to suggest to those of you who have not donated to this deserving cause due to budget restraints, to be creative. Some superintendents are organizing a golf tournament with proceeds going to turf research. Others are convincing their clubs to ask each member to donate \$1.00. If research is to be conducted we golf course superintendents must be the catalyst and the golf participant must support it.

The following is a list of clubs that have already contributed as of July 10, 1989.

Thorney Lea	Wollaston
Nashawtuc	Twin Hills
Ipswich	Hatherly
Poquoy Brook	Agway Chemical
Mt. Pleasant-Boylston	The Country Club
Tara-Ferncroft	Falmouth Country Club-Maine
Kittansett	Blue Hill
Wellesley	Eastward Ho
Waubeeka Golf Link	Framingham
Pinebrook	The International
Brae Burn	Oakley
Needham	Larry Gannon
Tatnuck	Salem
The Orchards	Woodland
Whitinsville	

Thanks to those who have given.

Sincerely,
The Research Committee

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THE SUPER SPEAKS OUT

Cont. from pg 1

you can get into double-cutting to pick up more speed.

"Regardless, it's ludicrous to drop the cut of the greens in July and August. Here, we set the cut at the beginning of the season with USGA guidelines helping that determination—and we stay with it the rest of the summer.

"It's true that superintendents tend to make the greens faster when member-guest tournaments are on the schedule. Why? I suppose it makes the club look good. Whatever, it happens. Heck, during our four-ball the greens are cut 14 times a week.

"Oh, who determines the speed at Longmeadow? The man who should and does—the superintendent. I just let sanity be my guide."



Bert Frederick,
Vesper Country Club: "First of all, let's not talk about the Stimpmeter. I never have believed in it. I mean, do they use one

in Scotland?

"That thing created nothing but controversy. You know the story. They started tossing out readings on television and a lot of members thought this was the way it should be at their clubs. It's just another example of trying to make something very simple too sophisticated.

"I have to say that our greens are fast most of the time. I have the cut set at 3/32s but since our greens are velvet bent they can take that low a cut.

"However, I let the weather conditions dictate how long the cut remains at that figure. For example, if we experience an extended period of hot

and humid weather, I raise the height of cut. You know, plants are just like us. The hotter it gets the more they sweat and the more sensitive they get. Therefore, I don't take chances with losing a green when the heat and humidity won't go away.

"At Vesper I'm the person responsible for the condition of the course and that goes for the speed of the greens. In fact, no one asks me about it, so I guess the members are satisfied.

"One more thing. I hear the next thing to be tested is hardness and softness of greens. Do you believe that? I wonder who dreamed that one up?"

GERRY FINN

Tournament Results South Shore C.C.

Club Championship
Steve Chiavaroli-Tatnuck C.C.
Gross 75

Seniors Club Champ
Len Blodgett-Kittansett C.C.
Gross 80

Sales Division Club Champ
Dave Farina-Country Club Enterprises
Gross 74

Club Championship Net Division
Jack Hassett-Mt. Pleasant C.C. (Lowell)
69

Seniors Net Champion
Art Washburn-Cohasset C.C.
73

Sales Division Net Champion
Bob Brown-Sawtelle Brothers
65

In the Club Championship Jack Hassett shot 75 but lost by matching of cards to Steve Chiavaroli

Rick Arzillo, Unicorn G.C., shot 69 Net but lost by matching of cards to Jack Hassett

Closest to Pin Ron Milenski-Lesco Inc.

Longest Drive Rick Arzillo

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