



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.

March 1994

Dr. Houston Couch: always a favorite at Mass. Turfgrass Conference sessions

April Meeting

Tuesday, April 19, 1994
Pine Ridge Country Club
Oxford, Massachusetts

Host Superintendent
John Kotoski

9:00 AM Board Meeting
11:00 AM Regular Meeting & Education

Nora Berard
Golf Direction Assoc.
Record Keeping Forms

Tom Landry, Mass. Golf Assoc.

12:00 Lunch
1:00 PM Golf
(Cost - Lunch only, \$12;
Lunch and Golf, \$37)

Reservations Required
Call by April 14, 1994
(617) 328-9479

You must pay by check—No Cash!
Checks payable to GCSANE

John Kotoski has been the golf course superintendent at Pine Ridge C.C. since 1990. Prior to that he was the golf course superintendent at Berkshire Hills C.C. in Pittsfield, Mass. for four years and the assistant superintendent at Framingham C.C. for two years. John and his wife Donna reside in North Oxford and have one daughter, Katie, and another child expected in June. John's leisure time is spent woodworking, golfing, or hunting.

Directions: From the Mass. Pike, take Exit 10. After the tolls, bear right to Route 12 S./Route 20 West. Follow Route 20 West for 2-1/2 miles to Route 56. Take right on Route 56 North for 1-1/4 miles to Pleasant Street. Take left on Pleasant Street and follow 1/4 mile. Club is on right.

The book on Houston Couch is long and laudatory. Fittingly, some of its more profound pages were inspired by memorable appearances as guest lecturer and sometime-humorist at the Massachusetts Turfgrass Conference. Therefore, when Joe Troll put his most recent show on the road in Springfield, the announcement that this year's conference was being dedicated to Dr. Couch drew applause from every corner of the turfgrass world.

Even Houston was impressed. "I've been here (New England) so many times I'm beginning to sound like one of those old Yankees," he quipped. "Naturally, I'm flattered to be honored like this. But, after all, I paid my dues, didn't I?"

That's a Houston Couch joke. However, a few of his visits to the conference were laced with unusual incidents.

"Like the time I skidded all the way from Blacksburg (where Houston hangs his academic hat as pride of the Department of Plant Pathology at Virginia Tech) to Chicopee," he recalled. "Then, when I got there, here comes another six-inch snowstorm. I think the title of my talk that year was 'Disease is Absolute...Health Relative'. I don't know if I meant the plant's health or my own."

Houston also likes to bring up a little sideshow at that same conference.

"How could I forget the act that went on the first night I arrived?" he added. "That was the time when streaking was the fad and, wouldn't you know, a few of the superintendents warmed up for the occasion by putting on a little streaking exhibition

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Mass. Turfgrass Conference dedicated to Dr. Houston Couch

Anthony Caranci (right) presents Dr. Houston Couch with a photograph of the chair he will receive as the Mass. Turf Conference's 1994 honoree.

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of their own. That was quite a show. And so was the one the next morning when Joe Troll (conference director) read the riot act to those guys."

So, education and entertainment have combined during his 25 conference years since 1970, when he debuted as star of a session dealing with the relationship of nutrition to turfgrass disease.

"The thing about Houston, the thing that appeals to his audience, is his ability to keep interest in the subject at a peak with his natural humor," Troll explained. Dr. Couch's genius on the podium. "You've heard the expression, 'never a dull moment'; well, there's never a dull moment when Houston gives a talk. His listeners seem to hang on every word."

And why not? Houston's been on the seminar circuit since 1965, the same year he became head of the Department of Plant Pathology at Virginia Tech, after 10 years of teaching and research at Penn State and earning his Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of California.

Regarded as a giant in his specialty, Houston likes to make continuous note of his respect and affection for golf course superintendents. As Troll reminds, he's one of the best friends the super ever had.

Houston is one of the pioneers in the field of plant pathology where the science relates to the golf course. He and Frank Howard of Rhode Island University were the country's only turf pathologists at that study's inception in 1955. In 1956 he was engaged in his first practical venture of field research at the Merion Golf Club.

Since then, Dr. Couch has become one of the leading forces in both research of golf course grooming and continuing education for superintendents. A former member of the GCSAA Educational Advisory Committee, he has become more active in the national's reach-out gesture to members as a teacher in the certification program.

"I'm probably one of the biggest salesmen for the certification program," Houston offered. "Don't forget. I've been in this (continuing education mindset) since the beginning. I've seen all the technical changes in an industry that has evolved from what was once thought to be a simple form of job application to a very complicated one.

"That's where the certification program plays a big part in keeping the golf course superintendent in tune with the changes his profession has undergone. The job (of grooming the golf course) is just too technical to tackle without a strong dedication to education. As far as I'm concerned, a superintendent must accept this mental-ity or get passed by in the process."

Dr. Couch goes a step further as champion of education. "I think it's a foregone conclusion that the superintendent of the future will be required to have a four-year college diploma. And I don't look at this as a bold statement. I can see competition for jobs heating up just by the intensity of my students at Virginia Tech. Eventually, they're going to be getting the top jobs."

And of that, Houston adds something that underscores the impact of education on the superintendent's professional status. "I can see a change in the profile of my audiences on the seminar trail," he remarked. "They're sharper than ever and that sharpness shows up in their rewards for the trait. I look out and see people who are making three times my salary."

Houston Couch, then, knows the value of education. He means it when he says, "I Never Met a Golf Course I Didn't Like" (title of a past conference talk), and he carries that feeling over to the golf course superintendent. The profession is better because of it, too.

GERRY FINN

Calendar

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|-------------------------|--|
| April 5 | USGA Regional Seminar
Holiday Inn, Taunton, Mass. |
| April 19 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Pine Ridge C.C., Oxford, Mass. |
| May 3 | Pro-Super-Press-Press
The International, Bolton, Mass. |
| June 6 | Manager-Pro-Superintendent-
President Tournament
Kernwood C.C., Salem, Mass. |
| June 13 | Superintendent-
Green Chairman Tournament
Belmont C.C., Belmont, Mass. |
| June 27 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Gardner Municipal G.C.
Gardner, Mass. |
| Aug. 1 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Dedham Polo and Country Club
Dedham, Mass. |
| Aug. 16 | 2nd Annual GCSANE
Scholarship & Benevolence
Fund Tournament
Wachusett C.C., W. Boylston, Mass. |
| Sept. 6 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Twin Hills C.C., Longmeadow, Mass. |
| Sept. 26 | 6th Annual GCSANE
Turf Research Tournament
Worcester C.C., Worcester, Mass. |
| Oct. 17 | NEPGA Pro-Supt. Tournament
Spring Valley C.C., Sharon, Mass. |
| Nov. 7 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Mount Pleasant GC, Lowell, Mass. |
| Dec. 7&8
(Tentative) | GCSAA Regional Seminar
Golf Course Construction
and Techniques
The International, Bolton, Mass. |

The Super Speaks Out:

This month's question: *What is your reaction to the fact that less than 18% of the GCSANE membership has taken part in the GCSAA certification program, and what are your thoughts on the overall venture?*

Bob Ruzala, Hickory Ridge Country Club: "I am not certified, but that doesn't mean I don't support the program. In fact, I'm making plans to take the test in the future. When? That's a good question.

"I like the underlying theme of certification because it represents a form of ongoing education for the golf course superintendent, a facet of the job he must address because of the continuing changes in technology and, even more important, changes in the application of his expertise.

"There's no doubt that the profession is moving in the direction of future supers being required to reach much higher levels of educational achievement than they were in the past. I'm aware of this movement and that's why I'm in the process of setting up a study plan to get ready for a certification try.

"The educational drive already has come into a mandatory position since supers are now required by law to obtain a pesticide license. There's an exam and study along those lines, so we have to keep our educational fires burning whether we like it or not.

"I haven't put any timetable on my plans to take the certification test. However, it's on my agenda. I consider certification a strong example of professional upgrade and I can see the day when all golf course superintendents will have to be part of the program."

Phil Schultz, Sterling Country Club: "I'm looking at the possibility of attempting to become a certified superintendent even though I'm not sure how much clout it has in the matter of competition in the job market.

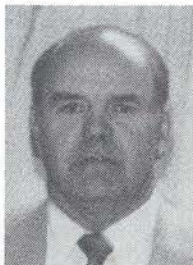
"I've never been able to tell whether or not the rank and file of country club members know of the certification program or whether they attach all that much importance to it, if they keep up on these things.

"Certainly, the educational value of having to study for a six-part exam in the profession has its benefits, even if the aspiring superintendent fails it. I suppose the preparation might be more important than the result because something has to be gained from boning up for the exam.

"I think one of the unknowns attached to the certification is to what extent it makes one a better golf course superintendent. Better yet, I'm not sure if superintendents can be classified according to how they fare in the certification program. I mean, if you pass, does that guarantee your effectiveness?

"Regardless, with the increased emphasis on education in our business, I vision the situation where certification definitely will be a factor in determining logical candidates for the so-called big-time jobs in the profession. At any rate, I can see it in my future."

Brian Cowan, Eastward Ho (CGCS): "I have been a certified golf course superintendent since 1977. So, if you put two and two together in terms of having to become re-certified every five years, you come up with the realization that there's been a whole lot of education going on in Brian Cowan's life.



"And that's good. That, in fact, is the reason I think certification is working for the overall betterment of the profession. In my case, the mandatory additive of having to be re-certified periodically gives me the incentive to keep my educational juices flowing. It's a strong reason why I keep attending all those seminars that the national and regional groups make available.

"Those seminars, by the way, are the one guaranteed opportunity the super has to keep abreast of the changes in the profession. Is it forced feeding? I really don't know. But, because I know that seminar attendance is one of the requisites for keeping those letters after my name, I make an almost exaggerated effort to take in as many as I can.

"There always has been the question as to how much certification means in the practical aspects of the profession. Well, for one thing, it makes a super more knowledgeable about the methods of grooming a golf course; and, with an expanded grasp of his job, gives him an edge in acquiring

alternative solutions to turf-related problems.

"But...I'll never adhere to the premise that being certified, the fact itself, makes me better at my job than someone who is not certified. I know of a few supers who have done excellent work, some who never even thought of becoming certified. So, the program is not the last word in producing successful members of the profession. It certainly helps, though.

"Lastly, at least in my case, I think certification does a lot for a super's self-esteem in that the CGCS label means I'm respected and recognized by my peers. That's one of the reasons I'm looking forward to re-certification again."

Paul Johnson, Tara Ferncroft Country Club: "Certification puts me in sort of a Catch 22 situation. I think it's good in a way, but I never have pursued it. I've been at the same club for 23 years. I just got promoted to director of golf operations here, so I can honestly say certification never has been an issue.



"Ah, but on the other hand, I think it's the right way to go for the coming generation of superintendents. In fact, I've encouraged young supers to take advantage of the program, some who work for me.

"I don't know if keeping certification motors running all the time is an example of forced education. Maybe in some cases having to attend all those seminars under the threat of losing that CGCS title is necessary. I've always done it on my own because I realized early in my career that keeping up with technical changes promoted on-the-job success.

"So, what I'm getting at is a two-pronged assessment of the certification program. I advise young superintendents to get involved in it, but I think that at my stage of the game I don't need it. I can't criticize something that may be good for someone else. It's not right."

GERRY FINN



Recipients of Troll-Dickinson Scholarships (l. to r.) are James LaPorte, Daniel Lasdow, Stephen A. Rabideau, Edward Hall, Jr., and Christopher LeBlanc.

Grace-Sierra pulls Calo-Clor and Calo-Gran, the last two mercury-based pesticides in U.S.

WASHINGTON, DC—The Environmental Protection Agency has canceled the registration of the mercury-based pesticides Calo-Clor and Calo-Gran as voluntarily requested by the registrant, Grace-Sierra.

Both pesticides contain two active ingredients—mercuric chloride and mercurous chloride—at different percentages. Used to control pink and gray snow mold, Calo-Clor and Calo-Gran were the last two mercury-based pesticides registered for use in the United States. Approximately 21,000 combined pounds of the two pesticides were used annually. The cancellation action was effective November 1, 1993. But under the terms of the action, Grace-Sierra may sell and distribute products which had been labeled for release or shipment on or before June 25, 1993, until June 24, 1994.

Retailers and other distributors may sell these products until their stocks are gone. Likewise, users may use these products until their stocks are exhausted.

(Thanks to Dick Duggan for this news.)



GCSANE President Ed Brearly accepts a check from Robin Hayes of Tee and Green Sod for \$1,783 towards the GCSANE Turf Research Fund.

Newly elected GCSAA Board of Directors

The new members of the GCSAA Board of Directors are:

President Joseph G. Baidy, CGCS

Vice President . . Gary T. Grigg, CGCS

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. Bruce R. Williams, CGCS

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. Randy S. Nichols, CGCS

Tee & Green Sod makes generous donation to GCSANE Turf Research Fund

Memorandum from Robert DiRico, CGCS, Research Committee Chairman:

On behalf of the Research Committee and GCSA of New England, I would like to thank Dave Wallace, Tee & Green Sod, for the generous donation of \$1784. Donations to the Research Fund from the private sector are greatly appreciated. Again, thanks Dave, we appreciate the strong support



A comely looking group at the GCSAA banquet and show.

Notes on GCSAA's mortality study among golf course superintendents

On February 7, 1994, the GCSAA announced plans to implement the second phase of the association's planned in-depth study of occupational health issues. GCSAA will launch a new series of health research projects and expand its commitment to chemical applicator education. This new series will advance the preliminary statistical study that was recently conducted by an independent research team from the University of Iowa (UI) College of Medicine. The UI research team was led by Dr. Burton Kross, UI associate professor of preventative medicine and environmental health.

GCSAA originally contracted with the University of Iowa to conduct a statistical mortality study for its membership and to evaluate the need for additional data regarding occupational risks and exposures encountered by golf course superintendents and their workers. For this study, the cohort of interest consists of deceased GCSAA members for the period 1970 to 1992. This occupational cohort is characterized by individuals who, presumably, all shared a common work history and similar work practices. GCSAA was able to provide records for 750 deceased members who died during this 22 year period.

Results from the study indicate that golf course superintendents died from cancer more often than the general population. The most important result of this statistical mortality study related to lung cancer. Results clearly show an excess number of deaths among golf course superintendents from lung cancer. Two other cancer types, brain and lymphoma (non-Hodgkin's lymphoma-NHL) occurred at increased levels among this cohort. Two more common cancer sites, relatively speaking, are also significantly elevated among cohort members—cancer of the large intestine and prostate cancer.

From a public and occupational health perspective, the excess number of lung cancer deaths among this cohort is a primary concern. Lung cancer is strongly associated with smoking rates, as are cancers of the esophagus, mouth, and other respiratory system areas. The PMRs (proportional mortality ratios) for these smoking-related cancers are high, particularly when compared to other studies of occupations who work outdoors, such as

farmers. Smoking-related cancers account for about 39% of the total cancer deaths in the studied cohort. Preventative strategies, such as smoking cessation programs and no-smoking areas at golf courses, would likely have a significant impact on reducing overall mortality among golf course superintendents.

Conclusion: The preliminary results of the statistical mortality study clearly indicate an excess number of deaths among golf course superintendents from lung cancer. Based on numerous other studies, the most likely cause of this elevated risk is the smoking habits of this cohort. However, this study was not able to determine smoking rates for this cohort, because smoking status and history are not recorded on death certificates. Future health promotion programs should focus on smoking cessation and controlling areas of secondary exposure to passive smoke.

Preliminary results of this mortality study of golf course superintendents support the need for further investigation of the relationship between pesticide exposure and specific cancers. In light of uncertainty, a prudent strategy for golf course superintendents and their workers is to minimize exposure potential to pesticides. Generally recommended practices to minimize pesticide exposure include reading the pesticide label, carefully following label directions, participating in professional training programs, and using personal protective clothing and equipment as much as possible.

Key points of the study:

1. The study results are preliminary. The study has yet to go through the scientific community peer review process and be formally published before results are "final".
2. The study is only a statistical analysis of mortality. It does not address what caused the deaths. No cause and effect can or should be drawn from the study.
3. The scientists said specifically that golfers are not at risk. The study also does not address or conclude any possible relationship to wildlife.
4. GCSAA initiated and financed this study because the association has an obligation to its members to help ensure their health and safety. GCSAA and the Univ. of Iowa together released the results of the study to the public and to the media.
5. Once results are final, GCSAA will have a baseline to decide what merits further investigation.
6. This study is only the first phase of a long-term commitment by GCSAA to study overall occupational safety and health for its members.
7. GCSAA will work closely with the golf industry, health organizations, and the EPA throughout the process.

(All of the above information has been taken directly from recent GCSAA News releases and direct correspondence from the GCSAA management staff to the GCSANE Board of Directors.)

Prepared by
STEPHEN CHIAVAROLI
Associate Editor



The newly elected GCSANE Board of Officers (l. to r.) are Past President Stephen Chiavaroli, CGCS; Golf Chairman Richard Tworig; President Edward Brearly; Secretary Kevin Osgood; Trustee James Fitzroy; Education Chairman Richard Duggan, CGCS; Treasurer Robert Ruzsala; Vice President Robert DiRico, CGCS; Trustee Scott Reynolds; Trustee John Hassett; and Newsletter Chairman Michael Nagle, CGCS. Missing from photo is Finance Chairman Paul Jamrog.

***DIVOT DRIFT...announcements...educational seminars...job opportunities
...tournament results...and miscellaneous items of interest to the membership.***

POSITION AVAILABLE

A job opening has been announced for the position of 2nd Assistant Superintendent at the Pine Brook Country Club, Weston, Mass. Send resume to: Michael V. Iacono, CGCS, c/o Pine Brook C.C., 50 Newton St., Weston, MA 02193

USED EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

7-Rain Bird SC-18 satellite controllers w/cabinets; 5-Rain Bird SC-12 satellite controllers w/cabinets. All with complete internal wiring. Good for replacements, spare units, etc. All run well. \$100 each or best offer.

300 gal. Broyhill Sprayer w/13 hp Briggs & Stratton engine, Hypro pump, and 27 ft. boom. Great condition. \$2000 or best offer.

2-75 hp Marathon electric motors for centrifugal pumps. Both serviced with new windings and bearings. \$250 for both.

Tennant sweeper with 20 hp Kohler engine. Good cond. \$1800 or best offer.

Call Mike Nagle or Joe Dumas at Worcester C.C., 508-853-6574.

MEETING NOTES

Thank you to both Wayne LaCroix of Andover C.C. (February) and Jack Hassett, Mt. Pleasant G.C. (March), and their respective staffs for hosting recent GCSANE meetings.

INFORMATION

Rick Trombi, formerly at Pleasant Valley C.C., is the new superintendent at Oak Hill C.C., Fitchburg, Mass.

Phil Schultz, formerly at Oak Hill, is the new superintendent at Sterling C.C., Sterling, Mass.

Ron Dobosz, formerly at Presidents G.C., is the new superintendent at Cedar Hill G.C., Stoughton, Mass.

We were sorry to learn of the passing of Bert Frederick's mother. Our condolences to both Greg and Bert.

We wish a speedy recovery to Jim Leighton of Framingham C.C. who is recuperating from back surgery.

Congratulations to John Petraitis of Crestwood C.C., Rehoboth, Mass., for capturing 2nd Net in the Super Senior Division at the GCSAA Tournament in Texas.

At the March GCSANE Meeting, By-Law Amendments concerning the Scholarship and Benevolence Committee were passed.

Any Friend of the Association that has not submitted a Friend profile for the Newsletter, this is your last chance! Send it or fax it (508-856-7170) to your humble editor and it will be printed ASAP.

The deadline for the Newsletter will be the 15th of the month. This will give the committee and Zip Type Service time to assemble information, proofread, get it printed, and mailed out.

MEMBERSHIP

Proposed for Membership: Paul F. Prisco, Assistant, Heritage Hill C.C.; David A. Stowe, Assistant, Newton Commonwealth G.C.; Jeffery D. Baker, Assistant, The Country Club.

Welcome New Members: Douglas Preston, Associate, Bedfordshire; Jeffrey Houde, Assistant, Thompson C.C.

New Life Members: Nick Cammuso and Mal Wendell.

USGA CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

The following is a schedule of the USGA Regional Conference on April 5, 1994 at the Holiday Inn, Taunton, Mass.

Morning Session:

- 8:00 Registration
- 9:00 Welcome.
- 9:15 **Preserving the Challenge: Golf Equipment Testing**
John Mutch, Manager, USGA Technical Communications, Research, & Testing, United States Golf Association, Far Hills, New Jersey

- 9:50 **More Maintenance Pitfalls; The Journey Continues**
Robert A. Brame, Agronomist, Mid-Atlantic Region, USGA Green Section, West Chester, Pennsylvania

- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 **Accessibility Issues for Disabled Golfers**
Dr. Jim Murphy, Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
- 11:25 **Covering Up For Winter**
Jim Skorulski, Agronomist, Northeastern Region, USGA Green Section, Far Hills, New Jersey
- 12:00 Luncheon

Afternoon Session:

- 1:00 **Marking and Defining the Golf Course**
James A. Farrell, Manager, Northeast Region, USGA Regional Affairs, North Kingstown, Rhode Island
- 1:45 **Golf and the Media—Fact or Fiction?**
Donald E. Hearn, CGCS, Golf Course Superintendent, Weston Golf Club, Weston, Massachusetts
- 2:15 **The Emergence of Women in Golf**
Heidi Olson, Manager, Northern Region, USGA Women's Regional Affairs, Detroit, Michigan
- 2:45 **USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Update**
David A. Oatis, Director, Northeastern Region, USGA Green Section, Far Hills, New Jersey
- 3:30 Adjourn

IMPORTANT DATES

Please mark your calendar!

Tuesday, August 16, 1994 - 2nd Annual Scholarship and Benevolence Fund Tournament at Wachusett Country Club, West Boylston, Mass.

Monday, September 26, 1994 - 6th Annual Turf Research Tournament at Worcester Country Club, Worcester, Mass.

Friends of the Association profiles

Sports Club Management, Inc.

Sports Club Management, Inc. is a full-service safety training company that specializes in working with golf, tennis, and health clubs and getting them in compliance with various Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) laws such as HazCom (Employee Right-to-Know Law) and other employee protection

requirements. Sports Club Management, Inc. provides the required written programs tailored to the club they are working with, and trains the club's employees on-site at a club facility using an OSHA-certified instructor

Sports Club Management, Inc. was founded in 1992 by Ron Smith. Ron is a graduate of Dartmouth College and he cur-

rently resides in Braintree, Massachusetts along with his wife and three children. Prior to starting the company, Ron worked for 14 years in the corporate world with AT&T and NYNEX holding a variety of management positions ranging from being an Engineering and Construction Manager to being the Project Manager of Corporate Management Development programs. Included in his management career was an assignment as a Safety Director where he was trained and certified by AT&T and OSHA and he was responsible for the safety training and performance of 1400 employees. Ron started Sports Club Management, Inc. in an attempt to combine his safety and training experience with his love for golf and racquet sports.

In addition to HazCom training, Sports Club Management, Inc. also offers the following compliance services and products that are required at most golf courses and clubs: OSHA 200 Log Reporting, Respirator Protection Program, Noise Protection Program, Emergency/Contingency Plan, Safety Training Program, Bloodborne Pathogen Program.

If you would like any information about the HazCom training program or any of the other services, you can call Ron at 617-848-5978. Ron is willing to visit you at your course for no charge to discuss your training needs.



Last fall's Islands Invitational Tournament

Some ancient history: a view of the field from last fall's Islands Invitational Tournament gathered on the bow of the Island Queen ferry. Also a view of the Sankaty Head Golf Club.



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