



THE NEW SLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents

Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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April 1996

Willowbend Club sets the pace in movement to spikeless golf shoes

Every day Chris Tufts lives the dream of every golf course superintendent.

"At 6 a.m. I set foot (spikeless at all times) on my greens and they're smooth as glass," the multi-talented Willowbend Club super revealed. "Ten hours later I repeat the process, and what do you know? They still look like they did at six o'clock. Just think, if I did the same thing two years ago, those greens would have been a disaster area in the afternoon."

So showeth the spikeless golf shoe movement at Willowbend, a private club located in Mashpee, Mass. under the sole ownership of Paul Fireman. He decided that his superintendent's nightmare (that of having to put up with and putt on spike-ravaged greens) was also his nightmare.

"You have to give Paul all the credit for taking a bold step," Tufts explained Willowbend's ban on conventional metal spike shoes, which Fireman decreed at the end of the 1994 golf season. "But, in this

case, being the sole owner is the key. He didn't have to go through a green committee, a club president, or a board of directors to put the ban in place. He just announced that (ban) was how things were going to be, and waited for members' reaction."

Surprisingly, that reaction was the way both Tufts and Fireman advocated, and pretty soon members found themselves policing their own group for spikeless violations.

Willowbend completed its first full spikeless season in 1995. The results were as expected – just like Tufts' morning and afternoon greens assessment described above. Fireman is pleased to the extent that he intends on tightening the spikeless movement.

"That means we probably won't have any relaxing of the ban for the outings and one-day member-guest tournaments we allowed in 1995," Tufts told. "We did that last season because of the projected inconvenience to guests playing the course for one day. Then, players could either wear regular spikes or the preferred spikeless shoes. However, from now on it'll be strictly spikeless."

Tufts, an accomplished player who once captained an outstanding golf team at Northampton High School, is the ideal example of a strong golfer that switched from spiked to spikeless shoes. Naturally, he's sold on the spikeless, but admits that his new belief came gradually rather than instantly.

"I had my reservations about how the spikeless shoes would affect my game," he offered. "In the end, it was a matter of overcoming a mental block that insisted my game would never be the same without regular spikes. So I had to get rid of that mentality. It took a while, but eventually I was sold on spikeless according to how my game went. Therefore, I think it's just a matter of a player having patience with the change. However, at Willowbend we don't give players such a luxury."

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***Chris Tufts
Willowbend Club***

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On the other hand, Chris reports that club of roughly 280 members had an advantage over other spikeless-bent clubs because of the makeup of its membership.

"Most of our members are relatively new to the game," he pointed out. "So, there was no traditional-versus-revolutionary factor involved when Paul Fireman decided he was sick and tired of coming down to the course in the middle of the day only to see the greens torn to shreds by golfers dragging their spiked feet. It was a rather easy sell. Most of the members hadn't played golf long enough to hold steadfast to spiked shoes. Besides, there also was something called a comfort zone to be considered."

At least to Tufts, that comfort zone was a big part of the changeover from spikes to spikeless.

"We found that once many of our members tried spikeless, the shoes were so comfortable they didn't care if the change hurt their games or not. Of course, if there was an adverse result because of not being able to take a deeper and stronger stance, it was offset by the presence of full-time smooth greens. Therefore, in technical terms, the change triggered a tradeoff."

Willowbend is just one of about 100 courses in the country to have placed a ban on spiked golf shoes. According to an article in the Wall Street Journal, that number represents one percent of all golf courses in the United States. On the surface, that appears to be a drop in the bucket. However, spikeless boosters are encouraged by some of the big-name courses making the switch.

One of those is the Riviera Country Club in Pacific Palisades, Cal. Riviera hosted the PGA Championship in August of 1995 and its soft, beat-up greens caught national attention during that event. After the tournament was over, Riviera shut down for a week to heal its wounds. Shortly thereafter the club announced a ban on spiked shoes.

Getting golfers to make the change is also a matter of education, since most of them view it as another added expense to their golfing budget. Well, in Willowbend's case, Fireman offered members a pair of spikeless shoes at wholesale prices, or a free set of spikeless replacements for conventional spikes on their present-day shoes.

At any rate, Tufts, who has been working on golf projects with Bob St. Thomas and Paul Fireman since 1986, looks at the spike ban as an unqualified success. Members now like golfing in a spikeless world, and the feeling is beginning to spread to guests playing Willowbend.

"I'm just hoping this (going spikeless) doesn't turn out to be a fad," Chris concluded. "But I know other clubs around us are aware of what we've done and are taking a close look at the results. If they follow suit, this could be the start of something big - but even better for all golf course superintendents."

GERRY FINN

Calendar

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| April 18 | GCSANE Joint Meeting with GCMA of Cape Cod
Hyannis Golf Club
Hyannis, Mass. |
| April 30 | Pro-Superintendent-Media Tournament
Sterling Country Club
Sterling, Mass. |
| May 14 | GCSANE Scholarship & Benevolence Tournament
Green Harbor Golf Club
Marshfield, Mass. |
| June 10 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Larry Gannon Golf Course
Lynn, Mass. |
| July 16 | GCSANE Joint Meeting with RIGCSA
Agawam Hunt Club
North Providence, R.I. |
| September 23 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Twin Hills Country Club
Longmeadow, Mass. |
| October 1 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Stow Acres Country Club
Stow, Mass. |
| October 23 | Shanahan Memorial Pro-Supt. Tournament
Willowbend Club
Cotuit, Mass. |
| November 4 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Nabnasset Lake Country Club
Westford, Mass. |
| Jan. 13-15, 1997 | Mass. Turf Conference
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, Mass. |

The Super Speaks Out

This month's question: *What are your thoughts on the GCSAA International Conference and Trade Show, and how would you rate this year's edition?*

Bob Piantedosi, CGCS, Oakley Country Club, Watertown, Mass.:



"I always tell everybody that I've never gone and not come back with at least one good idea. Whether it stems from a discussion with another superintendent or with a professor, it's always something.

"I'm really impressed with how it's grown, how it keeps changing, and how well-organized it is. I think the different locations make it either more, or less, pleasurable. Orlando was easy to get around. I could walk to the show from my hotel if I wanted to, and it wasn't overly expensive.

"I'm enjoying the fact that it's grown. I do think you need to train yourself to be better organized to achieve your goals while you're there. I think there's some time management involved, especially at the trade show.

"If I have a question on a certain piece of equipment I'll look for that. This year I found that a manufacturer had developed a machine that I looked for last year and couldn't find. It's a great place to go if you're looking for answers.

"Educationally, if I don't feel strong in a particular area I may look to do some brushing up. If I have a project on the horizon, I may look for offerings that are in

that area. This year I took a golf course architecture seminar. We're considering a long-range plan, and it allowed me to better get inside an architect's head.

"My objective is to gain information and answer questions. I always come back with a new way to do something.

"I can't recommend it enough to anybody. Where else can you go to see hundreds of manufacturers and vendors, and get educational offerings like that?"

Tom Flaherty, CGCS, Woods Hole Golf Club, Falmouth, Mass.:



"My first thoughts about the conference are about trying to get a handle on where I stand as far as CEUs and recertification. I try to do at least one or two one-day seminars, and I play in the golf tournament most

years. The location is important, as it can be a vacation opportunity.

"Most years the trade show piques my interest. I found it disappointing this year though; it seems that more new technology was put out the last few years. I didn't see anything strikingly new this year, just some new wrappers on old products.

"The size all depends on your intestinal fortitude and what your schedule is. I keep it to seven days, with golf practice round, tournament, seminars, trade show, and a day to 'chill'.

"I am very, very, impressed with the way the GCSAA has been handling the conference. I also thought the Orlando County Convention Center employees did an excellent job organizing the event, considering its size. As big as it was, the logistics were handled very, very, well. It went like clockwork.

"My focus this year was on changing our irrigation heads. I wanted to see what was coming down the pike in gear driven heads. I'm kind of a 'techie'. I'm very interested in new technology that's coming

along, especially tissue testing. But I do try to look at everything. My trade show strategy is to go by myself. If I run into someone I know I'll stop and talk, but as soon as they try to engage me for long I say, 'I have to go'. I don't allow distractions. You could say I'm a dedicated maniac to get the show done in one day."

Todd Sauer, Mount Pleasant Country Club, Boylston, Mass.: "I mainly go for the educational background and the trade show. I try to gather as much information as possible that can be applied to my needs.

"I thought the location was excellent. The size of the facility was very overwhelming. I think the size speaks very positively for the direction the GCSAA is going. It's definitely in the right direction.

"At the trade show I try to pinpoint products that I have predetermined that I'm interested in. If I've generated a new capital expenditure, that will be my focus. I then try to arrange an in-house demo and go from there. There are so many different manufacturers out there that you don't see in our area. I try to find out who the distributors are in our area in order to get a better understanding or what's out there.

"I give myself about 10 hours over two days. That's my general game plan. I went through the catalog and hit booths that I had picked out, and if I had time, I hit other booths.

"I took a disease identification seminar that I thought was excellent. I got generally positive ideas out of it as far as what to apply and when to apply, and established some basic guidelines for myself. It was very educational and gave me an idea of what's new and what's coming up for registration in terms of fungicides."

GLENN LaCHAPELLE
Assistant Superintendent,
Brae Burn Country Club,
West Newton, Mass.

"I always tell everybody that I've never gone and not come back with at least one good idea."

Bob Piantedosi
Oakley C.C.

President's Message

A Message from the President

Fellow Members:

On May 21, Green Harbor Golf Club will host the 4th Annual Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament. This event will be in memory of Manuel Francis, Sr. For those members that are unaware, Mr. Francis built, owned, and operated the Green Harbor Golf Club. A sincere "thank you" from the association goes out to Manuel Francis, Jr., who has allowed the GCSANE use of the facility for this event.

Every member of the GCSANE should feel proud of the fine qualities that this effort represents: respect and generosity. We show our respect by honoring past members who in their own way helped to shape our profession. Mr. Francis was world-renowned for his expertise and development of velvet bentgrasses. He also passed on his knowledge to many current superintendents. All of the past honorees had, each in their own way, an impact.

GCSANE News Notes

A letter of thanks from the Trolls

Dear Bob:

The reception planned by your Conference Chairman and his committee was just fantastic. Lonnie and I want to thank you and the GCSANE for such a gratifying evening. The buffet dinner was different. It was elegant and scrumptious.

I lost out on most of the food because all I did was BS instead of eating.

Inviting the UMass Chancellor gave me the opportunity to push the UMass Turf Program, and I am certain the large number of people that attended caused him to recognize the interest in turf.

Both Lonnie and I were pleasantly surprised with his presentation of the UMass recognition plaque. It was also heartwarming to be recognized by the Cape Cod Managers with a beautiful painting of the third hole on New Seabury, and by

Tom Schofield, as treasurer, made investments that became the seed money for the Turf Research Fund. Robert Johnston and Red Schultz were dedicated superintendents, and well-respected by their peers and club members. Joel McKoan, first in sales, then as part owner of Sawtelle Bros., helped numerous people in the business. Donald Marrone, Sr. was a strong supporter of the industry and passed this legacy on to his son, Donald Marrone, Jr. The generosity bestowed upon the GCSANE by Donald Marrone, Jr., Charlie Dickow, and Manuel Francis, Jr. has resulted in the growth of this fund. Their gift, as well as member support for the tournament and donations, has resulted in the first scholarships being awarded this past year.

The Scholarship and Benevolence Committee, headed by Chairman Jack Hassett, has dedicated much time and effort. We ask that you again show your support in any way possible. Please keep in mind that this effort is for our members and their families. Hope to see you at Green Harbor on May 21.

Sincerely,
Robert DiRico, CGCS
President, GCSANE

the National and Canadian Golf Course Superintendents, each presenting me with a plaque. But that wasn't all to be thankful for.

We thank you for our magnificent suite on the 38th floor. It provided us with a tremendous view of Boston and the Charles River.

Let me also be realistic and thank you for a most generous gift – the money allotted for travel.

Once more, I'd like you to know that I was elated by the article that appeared in Golf Course Management, and by the presence at the conference of many former students that I have not seen for years.

In general, a special thanks for an outstanding two-and-one-half days of an excellent show and pleasure.

Sincerely, **Joe & Lonnie Troll**

GCSAA News

GCSAA elects 1996-97 board

Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, Bob O'Link Golf Club, Highland Park, Ill., was elected president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America during the recent annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Williams succeeds Gary T. Grigg, CGCS, Royal Poinciana Golf Club, Naples, Fla., who will continue to serve on the board for one year as immediate past president.

Paul S. McGinnis, CGCS, Moon Valley Country Club, Phoenix, Ariz., was elected vice president.

Elected as secretary/treasurer was George E. Renault III, CGCS, Burning Tree Club, Bethesda, Md.

Re-elected as director was R. Scott Woodhead, CGCS, Valley View Golf Club, Bozeman, Mont. Ken Mangum, CGCS, Atlanta Athletic Club, Duluth, Ga., was elected for his first term on the board from a field of six candidates.

Michael Wallace, CGCS, Hop Meadow Country Club, Simsbury, Conn., was reappointed to the board. Wallace will serve the remaining year of Renault's term as director. Renault's position was vacated when he was elected secretary/treasurer.

Dave Fearis, CGCS, Blue Hills Country Club, Kansas City, Mo., and Tommy D. Witt, CGCS, Wynstone Golf Club, North Barrington, Ill., both have one year remaining on their terms and will continue to serve as directors.

Joseph G. Baidy, CGCS, Acacia Country Club, Lyndhurst, Ohio, completed his one-year term as immediate past president and will step down after serving on the GCSAA board of directors for eight years.

GCSAA officers serve one-year terms, and directors are elected to two-year terms.

The title "CGCS," which follows each director's name, stands for Certified Golf Course Superintendent. The CGCS title recognizes the high standards of professionalism achieved through education and experience.

Specific details on the vote count will be published in the March issue of Newsline and the April issue of Golf Course Management magazine.

Turf Science

Spring can bring Red Thread Disease

by Dr. Noel Jackson
University of Rhode Island

The weather conditions experienced during the major part of the current (1995) growing season were again particularly conducive to development of red thread disease in lawns and sports turf areas.

Although usually uncommon on intensively managed, close mown turf, extensive and often severe symptoms have occurred on all types of higher mown turf. Kentucky bluegrass swards generally were subject to only moderate invasion, but turfs of fine leaved fescues, tall fescues, and perennial ryegrass often were heavily invaded. Active red thread disease has persisted into July and some turf stands, predominantly perennial ryegrass, have suffered drastic thinning.

The disease is most prevalent on turf of low vigor under weather conditions of moderate day temperatures, cool nights, frequent rainfall, and high humidity with consequent long periods of leaf wetness. Given this scenario, resting structures of the fungus present in the thatch layer initiate new mycelial growth. The pink, stranded hyphae invest the leaf blades and penetrate the tissues through stomates or through mowing wounds at the leaf tips. The initial water-soaked lesions enlarge rapidly as colonization proceeds and the whole blade soon assumes a light straw color. The leaves of affected plants brown and shrivel to generate small patches of diseased turf that increase in size as adjacent plants succumb to infection. Under favorable conditions for the fungus, the irregular shaped patches may reach a foot or more across and the numerous centers of infection coalesce to involve large areas of diseased turf. If the grass plants are growing actively, damage by the fungus is usually confined to the leaf blades with the crowns remaining healthy. A gradual, but full, recovery from this superficial injury can be expected in most cases once the fungal growth is arrested.

The most noticeable feature of red thread disease is the presence of pink to red, gelatinous (when wet) outgrowths of

stranded hyphae that envelop and extend from the blighted leaves. These thread-like or antler-like, branched structures become dark red, brittle, and fragile on drying. They detach readily and fall into the thatch layer to serve as dormant survival structures for as long as unfavorable conditions for fungal growth persist. The return of cool wet weather in early fall could see another surge of red thread actively this year as the large amounts of inoculum already present resume growth. Fall outbreaks tend to cause more severe damage, especially to perennial ryegrass turf. As grass growth slows in the fall, the red thread fungus continues to make significant growth, even if temperatures drop into the low thirties. At these low temperatures, repair and replacement of damaged tissues by the grass plants are at a minimum, allowing the fungus unrestricted opportunity to invade the crowns and kill the whole plant.

The causal agent of red thread disease was first reported in Australia in 1854 and later was found in England, where the familiar name *Corticium fuciforme* was assigned in 1916. The fungus was unknown in the U.S. until 1932, but is now widespread and increasing in North America. Red thread, pink patch, or *Corticium* disease were the common names for this malady until the early 80s, when it became apparent that the initial herbarium collections of the causal fungus (on which the name *C. fuciforme* was based) were a mixture of two similar fungi. Investiga-

tions in Rhode Island and elsewhere confirmed that a disease complex could indeed occur. The two fungi subsequently were identified as *Lactisaria fuciformis* and *Limonomyces roseipellis*. The former is accepted now as the cause of red thread disease and the latter causes pink patch.

Both fungi have pink, stranded mycelium, respond to the same environmental conditions, and separately or combined they invade a wide range of turfgrass stands. Pink patch mycelium has clamp connections, tends to be faster growing, glues the leaves together, but does not produce the "red threads" typical of *L. fuciformis*. Authentic pink patch disease appears to be of much lower incidence than red thread disease in the Northeast, but extensive outbreaks have been seen occasionally and mixed infections are probably a lot more common than realized. Confirmation can only be determined by microscopic examination.

Is it important that a correct identification be made? From a cultural control point of view, the answer generally is in the negative. Raising the fertility level with a nitrogen fertilizer to improve plant vigor generally will alleviate the symptoms caused by these pathogens. However, red thread disease does seem to be occurring increasingly on well-fertilized turf and, in some instances, may well warrant chemical control measures in the spring. Outbreaks of these diseases, especially occurring late in the growing season, can cause serious damage that can only be prevented by fungicide use. The two fungi respond differently to the various turf fungicides that are commercially available, thus appropriate choice of control material is necessary. Fortunately, there are fungicides that are effective against both diseases; Bayleton and Chipco 26019 are examples in this category, so if you are in any doubt about which fungus is present, use either of these fungicides at the manufacturers recommended rate and all contingencies are covered!

From *Turf Notes* (July/Aug. '95),
a publication of the New England
Cooperative Extension Systems

The disease is most prevalent on turf of low vigor under weather conditions of moderate day temperatures, cool nights, frequent rainfall, and high humidity with consequent long periods of leaf wetness.

GCSAA News

Attendance record set at GCSAA Orlando conference

A record 21,784 registration total was one of many highlights of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America 1996 International Golf Course Conference and Show Feb. 5-11 in Orlando, Fla. The previous attendance record was 17,527 set last year during the conference and show held in San Francisco.

GCSAA's 67th annual event included more than 90 educational seminars, sessions and forums. Attending golf course superintendents, course officials, turfgrass professionals, educators and suppliers also were able to see the latest in golf course management products and services at the three-day trade show.

Other records that fell during the week at the conference and show:

- Registrants for the week's seminars exceeded 5,500, substantially more than last year's record of 3,412.
- Total exhibit space at the trade show was 208,870 square feet occupied by 693 exhibiting companies, more than

20,000 square feet greater than the 1995 record.

- The final tally of international attendees was 1,791, from more than 65 countries. The previous record was 1,716, set in 1995 in San Francisco.

Other highlights of the conference week included:

- Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, was elected president of GCSAA for 1996-97 at the association's annual meeting. Paul S. McGinnis, CGCS, and George Renault III, CGCS, were elected vice president and secretary/treasurer, respectively.
- Lou Holtz, head coach at the University of Notre Dame and one of the most successful college football coaches of all time, delivered the keynote speech at the Opening Session.
- Arthur R. Miller, Harvard law professor and legal editor of ABC TV's "Good Morning America", acted as moderator of a panel discussion at the Environmental General Session. Using his

signature "Socratic dialogue" format, panelists debated one of the golf industry's most critical issues: golf courses and the environment.

- Key sessions by the American Society of Golf Course Architects, the American Zoysiagrass Association, the National Golf Foundation, The Society of Golf Appraisers and the United States Golf Association Green Section rounded out the conference events.
- Tom Fazio, one of golf's top course designers, was presented with GCSAA's highest honor, the Old Tom Morris Award, at the Gala '96 banquet that closed out the week's events. After the banquet, country music star John Michael Montgomery provided the evening's entertainment.

GCSAA's 68th International Golf Course Conference and Show is scheduled for Feb. 6-12, 1997, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas.

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

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members: Brian Linehan, Associate, Furnace Brook Golf Club, Quincy, Mass.; Michael S. Gunn, Regular, Wahconah Country Club, Dalton, Mass.; Russell Heller, Assistant, Andover Country Club, Andover, Mass.; and Michael Kroian, Affiliate, ProLawn, Inc., W. Greenwich, R.I.

Proposed for Membership: Michael Guibord, Assistant, Mt. Pleasant Country Club, Boylston, Mass.

INFORMATION

Congratulations to Philip Schultz of Sterling Country Club on becoming a Certified Golf Course Superintendent.

Although he was not a part of the GCSANE, Earl Simmons was one of the founders of Hopedale C.C. and worked for Ken Mooradian as his assistant for about 15 years. Because he was well known among our members, Bob Dill wanted to inform us that Earl passed away recently.

Congratulations to Richard Derby of Longmeadow Country Club on becoming a Certified Golf Course Superintendent.

We have a newsletter name contest! So far, we have over 10 suggestions for naming our publication. There's still plenty of time to get your entry in, if you haven't submitted one. (The contest ends April 30; the prize is \$100 towards dinner for two.) The editor's fax number is (508) 856-7170. Speaking of the newsletter name, I can't remember when we've had such an extensive discussion about any one topic. Our association takes over the Mass. Turf Conference, moves it 100 miles away, we manage money in two large accounts, but not one of those issues got people talking like this. Sometimes you just can't figure!

Congratulations to Paul Miller, who placed 7th gross in the 2nd Flight; **Steve Carr**, who took 6th gross in the 3rd Flight; **Paul Jamrog**, 3rd Net in the 4th Flight; and **Barrie Robertson**, who placed 3rd gross in the 8th Flight at the GCSAA Golf Championships in Orlando.

Dave Comee, Winchendon G.C., is the new handicap chairman on the Golf Committee. Anyone needing to establish a handicap or submit scores, please send the scorecards to Dave at 65 Marquette St., Gardner, Ma 01440. If you wish to have the same GHIN number with the GCSANE and your own club, please notify Dave of that as well.

By a unanimous vote of the GCSANE Board of Directors, Beginning with the Scholarship & Benevolence Tournament, all golf tournaments sponsored by the GCSANE will be played without metal spikes on any participant's golfing shoes.

MEETING NOTES

Thanks to Gary Luccini and his staff at Franklin C.C. for their job hosting the March GCSANE monthly meeting.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Assistant Superintendent, Newton Commonwealth Golf Course, Newton, Mass. Send resumes to: David Stowe, Newton Commonwealth G.C., 212 Kendrick St., Newton, MA 02158.

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

300 gal. Smithco tow-behind sprayer with 8HP engine and Ridgeway foam marker. Very good condition. Also 5-gang Toro Roughmaster with 5-bladed reels and all frames. Call Todd Sauer at Mt. Pleasant C.C., Boylston, Mass. at (508) 869-2328.

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Brad Chapman - (401) 846-3515;
FAX (401) 846-8012

Best Bent Turf, Inc.
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Advanced Agronomic Services, Inc. was established in 1995 by Jim Favreau. Jim, a graduate of the Stockbridge School of Agriculture, had previously worked as an

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