

of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc. Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund – Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

Brodeur leads the "New Englandization" of the TPC Boston

By Mark Gagne

Tom Brodeur had it all. A successful PGA TOUR tournament each year, a layout that was praised by both the members and TOUR players alike, and a maintenance program that produced outstanding results. However, it goes against Tom Brodeur's nature to ride the wave of complacency. When he saw the opportunity last year to be a part of improving on what had been established, he jumped at it. The resulting transformation of the golf course is nothing short of amazing.

For several years now, the TPC Boston has been favored by past winners and long hitters such as Tiger Woods, Adam Scott and Vijay Singh. However, when the TOUR pros show up for the Deutsche Bank Championship this Labor Day weekend, they will be in for a surprise. Actually, a lot of surprises in the form of new bunkers, greens, mounds, stone walls and a new design philosophy; strategic shot placement in a rustic New England setting.

This winter, during a lull in the renovations, I sat down with Tom to hear him tell the story:

Tom, what prompted the renovation?

"The entire project went down very quickly" recalls Brodeur. "Last summer Steve Wenzloff (VP of Design Services for the PGA TOUR) and I took a road trip to Essex County, Myopia, Boston Golf Club and Olde Sandwich in June, to give him a sense of the look and feel of what our golf course could have. Pat

(K), Dave (Heroian), Rodney (Hine) and Sean (McCormick) were a great help during that part of the process."

Brad Faxon, and Wenzloff then helped to persuade the decision makers at PGA TOUR Golf Course Properties to hire Gil Hanse and Jim Wagner of Hanse Golf Course Design to develop a



Tom Brodeur

plan to give the golf course some "New England Charm"

"Gil and Jim walked the property in July and August, after which they came up with an 18 hole remodeling plan. In Jim Wagner's words, part of the objective was to 'give the place a personality'. I think that is the most concise explanation I've heard to describe the work that has been done. We ran it by the players during the tournament and 2 weeks later we broke ground."

"Gil and Jim have been great to work with. They each tackle different parts of the project which is cool and they do their own shaping. It is interesting to work with architects that actually do their own work. It really makes you feel like their plans are being implemented the way they intended."

"Everyone from the membership to management was proud of the property and golf course (originally laid out by Palmer Course Design Company) but the fear was that this place was represented as a 'bombers paradise'. Part of this was also to make it the best possible venue for the FedEx Cup and they wanted to make it so that anyone could win or minimize that reputation. The focus was on adding strategy, not vardage."

My guess is that Hanse's involvement was driven by you?

"You need to lead a horse to water in different ways. Do I think it was good that it happened? Sure. Is it outside of the box for the TPC organization and frankly for most clubs that have the responsibility of hosting a professional competition? Absolutely. But a lot of folks associated with the club needed to support the idea and recognize the value in order for this to become a reality."





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Where it seems like every other tournament course in the world is being lengthened to add challenge, Wagner and Hanse took a different approach. Tom, how has the length of the course changed?

"I think it's generally true that more courses are being lengthened in order to adjust to equipment changes. We actually have more than enough room to do just that, so if things work out this may send an interesting message to the golf community about what makes a golf course good for member and competitive play."

"We shortened the course by roughly 150 yards. Turned a 435 yard par 4 into a 300 yard par 4 and changed a 210 yard par 3 into a 160 yard hole. And there were a couple of other less significant yardage reductions along the way."

"A 300 yard hole is a lot shorter, but it might also be harder if you are hitting into a green that is only 3000 square feet and is fronted by a cavernous bunker and surrounded with a variety of awkward ground features."

"So there was some adjustment to length, but there was additional strategy built in and there were some aesthetic aspects too. It has more rustic charm now in terms of its appearance. I think this will probably be more likely to meet the member, guest, and professional golfer's expectations for being in this part of the country."

How has the strategic value of the golf course changed?

"The drive zones have been tightened up without trees. They have been tightened up with ground features. There is also more stuff in the middle now. It requires more thought now when deciding where to place the shot. It puts indecision in the mind of the players when they stand on the tee or in the fairway executing an approach shot."

Tom pulled out the hole by hole Shotlink results from all the Deutsche Bank tournament rounds. Shotlink, as seen on golf telecasts, is a computer generated chart depicting where each

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CALENDAR...

May 29	GCSANE Monthly Meeting TPC of Boston S & B Tournament Host: Tom Brodeur
June 6	GCSANE Monthly Meeting Pocasset G.C. Joint Meeting w/GCMACC Host: Stephen Carr
June 20	UMass Turf Research Field Day University of Massachusetts Joseph Troll Turf Research Center, S. Deerfieild, MA
July 16	GCSANE Monthly Meeting Belmont C.C. Host: Arthur Silva, CGCS
Aug. 21	GCSANE Monthly Meeting Marlborough C.C. Individual Championship Host: Kenneth Crimmings, CGCS
Aug. 22	URI Turfgrass Field Day C.R. Skogley Turfgrass Research Facility Kingston, RI
Aug. 25	GCSANE Family Night Brockton Rox Baseball Campanelli Stadium Brockton, MA
Sep. 10	GCSANE Monthly Meeting Ludlow C.C. Team of Two Tournament Host: Ronald Dobosz
Oct. 1	Dr. Joseph Troll Turf Classic The International Honoring Geoffrey Cornish Host: Brett Johnson, CGCS
Oct. 22	GCSANE Monthly Meeting Pleasant Valley C.C. Member/ Guest Tournament Host: Donald D'Errico
Nov. (TBA)	GCSANE Monthly Meeting Brockton C.C. 9-Hole Tournament Host: Justin Bousquet



The June Swoon

Jim Skorulski, Senior NE Green Section Agronomist and Dave Oatis, Director, NE Green Section

The June swoon was unfortunately an all too familiar term to many of us New England baseball fans. Regrettably, many golf course superintendents are familiar with another type of June swoon; one that involves annual bluegrass (AB) on golf courses, especially on putting greens. The decline of AB is anticipated in early-mid June when the plant has completed seeding and the first wave of hot weather arrives. Depending on the weather and seed head production, fertility, soil temperatures, etc. it can range from being fairly minor to quite severe. Usually, the weakest biotypes of annual bluegrass are most affected, and the swoon can signal the onslaught of various diseases such as anthracnose and summer patch.

Several factors are responsible for the decline of annual bluegrass in early summer. The true nature of the plant itself dictates that the potential for summer decline is likely. As a winter annual, annual bluegrass germinates and grows rapidly in the cooler temperatures of late summer, fall and spring, produces a heavy seed crop and then is expected to die once exposed to stress and heat. Much of the plant's energy is expended to produce seed, and between the rising temperatures and expended energy, there is a dramatic and corresponding die back in root systems. The weakened plants are more vulnerable to disease infection and heat and drought stresses that increase the likelihood of decline and/or failure later in the summer.

To make matter worse, June is usually the time when maintenance is intensified for the annual member-guest tournament or special outing that requires elevated green speeds and firm, dry conditions. Mowing heights often are lowered, mowing frequency increased, and topdressing and vertical mowing practices implemented to ready the surfaces for the special event. Sometimes the practices cause no long term plant damage. However, a spell of severe weather during this same period can quickly change things, leading to a painfully long and potentially humbling experience.

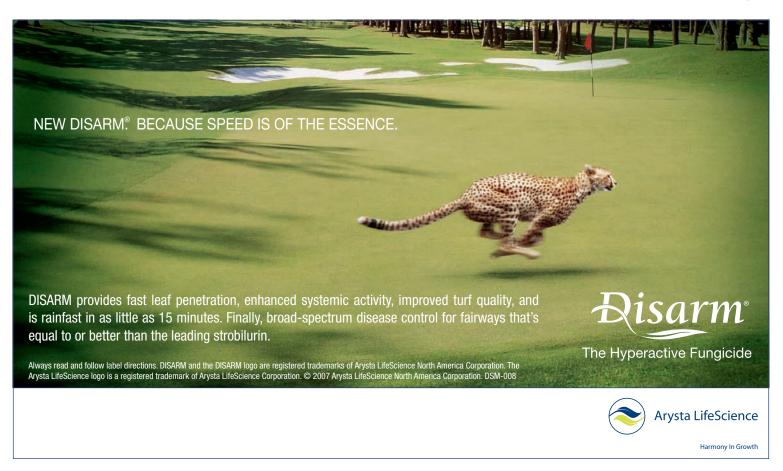
What can be done do avoid the June swoon and remain a winner through the long summer season? Here are a few things to think about:

1. Never take basic agronomics for

granted. Drainage, organic matter management, good growing environments, fertility practices, and sound irrigation must be in place if good quality, reliable playing surfaces are to be maintained consistently! Unfortunately, there are no short cuts here and weaknesses in any of the above categories eventually catch up with even the best managers, usually when they are pushing the playability envelope.

2. Develop an annual management plan for the putting greens that includes mowing, rolling, cultivation, topdressing, fertilization and disease management programs. You have to

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play the hand that is dealt you whether it involves limitations with available resources, staffing, or the greens' infrastructure. Implementing an unrealistic management plan may be successful in the short term but will not be sustainable in the long run. The plan must also be flexible to permit changes to be made based depending on the status of the turfgrass or unusual weather conditions. The program should be presented to and agreed upon by the green committee or owner prior to the season's start. Just about all golf course superintendents will have such a plan, but the key is following it as closely as possible. It is easy to slip into a "deferred" maintenance program whereby important but sometimes disruptive practices are put off. While this may please golfers in the short term, it invites disaster in the long run.

"You have to play the hand that is dealt you whether it involves limitations with available resources, staffing, or the greens' infrastructure."

3. With more and more emphasis being placed on surface conditioning, it is probably unrealistic to think that mowing heights will be appreciably raised. However, if greens do not meet the basic agronomic requirements then even slight upward adjustments or a switch to smooth rollers during times of stress can be critical in regards to success or failure. The height of cut probably has the greatest impact on ball roll, but it is not the only means to obtain faster ball roll! Results from Rutgers University anthracnose research have shown that double-cutting and rolling can be used with higher mowing heights to provide similar ball roll and less stress/disease pressure as compared to greens maintained at lower heights of cut. A frequent topdressing program through all but the toughest weather and careful water management will also help to keep the surfaces smoother, firmer and faster at a higher height of cut. A little management and communication creativity will be necessary to meet the conditioning goals in a sustainable fashion.

4. Consciously reevaluate your current management programs weekly beginning in June to determine whether to continue with current practices or if adjustments (i.e. raise cutting heights, switch to solid rollers, reduce mowing frequency. etc.) are necessary. Mark the dates on the calendar if that's what it takes to complete the exercise! Setting firm dates for regular re-evaluations is a



great way to keep on top of the most critical decisions.

5. Utilize growth regulators to suppress seed heads in spring. This will help the plants conserve their energy and will leave them better able to tolerate the stresses ahead. Primo applications should be commence following the seed head suppression applications, and Primo usage should continue throughout the summer at spray intervals of 1-2 weeks. The regular and continued use of the growth regulator has been shown to reduce the potential for anthracnose and to improve the stress tolerance of annual bluegrass.

6. Expose the turf, and yes that includes the annual bluegrass, to some drought stress to precondition

it for the summer season. This falls more or less into a philosophy of more conservative water management. The key is not to dry things down to permanent wilt point, but let the plants struggle a bit early in the season when the soil temperatures still remain favorable for growth. Some of the more shallow rooted biotypes may bow out early, but that is not such a bad thing as long as it is kept under control. A "controlled-burn" approach, so aptly named by a superintendent last year, is always preferred over a wildfire. This philosophy will slowly swing the scales in favor of the stronger and more dependable grasses on the greens.

7. Cultivate the greens in June after the annual bluegrass completes seeding and prior to the summer

stress. A less disruptive "venting" with microtines, water injection, or air injection will help alleviate surface compaction, encourage water infiltration, improve gas exchange, and stimulate the plants. Consider the less aggressive forms of cultivation similar to giving the team a day off before a grueling road trip.

8. The grass has to have proper nourishment to survive as well.

However, early summer is not the time to apply large quantities of nitrogen or potassium. Initiating a spoon-feeding program with nitrogen is most effective for putting green turf at this time of year and through the warmer summer months to maintain vigor without stimulating excessive shoot growth and

shot came to rest and what the player scored on that hole.

Pointing to the Shotlink maps, Tom showed how "This bunker has been moved here and that mound has been moved", considering where the cluster of most shots land. "Is it the same hole now? Probably not. They (the TOUR pros) miss by more than you think. However, they are really good at nearly every type of shot. They don't have trouble with bunkers. Anything you can do to mix it up, the more you give different things for them to think about the better. A good example is where we might take a bunker out next to the green and replaced it with a weird ground feature to deal with, making it a very tough chip. Is that hole harder now? I think it is, but at the very least it's more interesting."

How has the bunkering changed?

"Jim (Wagner) and Gil (Hanse) are very good, very natural with how they place things. I have so much respect for how they do that. I think they'll tell you that using landforms to create deception is one of their primary objectives."

"Bunkers properly positioned in relationship to current equipment and shaped properly immediately add difficulty without adding length. You want to see a bunker?" Tom pulls out photos of a massive cross bunker that stretches the width of the hole on the 600 yard par 5, 7th in the 2nd shot lay-up zone. This area was formerly gently sloping fairway with 5 fairway bunkers on the right side. "The players will have to make a decision on their second shots now. They can lay-up in front of this bunker to within 135 yards from the green, but the best view is to lay-up about 160 yards from the green. And if the players want to go for the green in two, they want to avoid hitting it too far left because that area now feeds down into some deep bunkers. Ending up in this bunker may be an uncommon occurrence, but the golden distance of 100 yards has been taken away as a lay up option."

Tom shared photos of what the finished bunkers look like. Most take on the appearance of irregularly shaped gnarly edges with unmowed fescue and bluestem on the perimeters and small islands within the bunkers. Some have been deepened with revetted (stacked sod) walls on three sides.

"Overall, the number of bunkers has decreased, but the square footage of sand has essentially remained the same. I haven't figured out how we will maintain them – I may let just let the fescue hang over the edges. In the end, they might make actually be easier to maintain than the old bunkers."

Do you think the TOUR pros, given their expectations for perfection especially when it comes to bunkers, will struggle with the new design?

"I don't know, but I'm sure they'll recognize they are more interesting and not much like any they normally see week to week."

You know the first TOUR pro that has to peer into a clump of fescue to identify his ball or has his ball roll up against a revetted wall....

"Oh yeah, and it gets worse (laughing deviously). There is a large blob in middle of this bunker, with foot high fescue (pointing to a photo). It will be interesting to see how everyone reacts. I'm going to be the defender of this natural look – just don't touch it and let it go. Let's face it, Phil Wogan (Golf Course Architect) told me the game is 5% luck at least and why shouldn't it be? You put a couple of nuances in there and maybe get really lucky and land on the top of a clump or maybe you don't and you are going to have to create a shot."

Tell me about some of the changes to particular holes?

"On #1, the fairway bunkers have been repositioned a little bit and we have added some mounds in the left side of the drive zone."

"The 2nd hole bunkers have been repositioned in the drive zone and there are just 2 bunkers now. This will play now as a 3 shot hole. It doesn't take much to get in the way. It doesn't have to be mean-spirited, just enough to make a difference." "There are some aesthetic aspects to the renovation, strictly aesthetic. We have added a new stone wall behind the Par 3 3rd green. Does it do anything? Probably not, but visually its pretty intimidating. When you stand on the tee the wall provides an interesting backdrop."

"The 4th hole has been completely redesigned tee to green. A 435 yard par 4 dogleg right has been converted into a straightaway 298 yard par 4. The new green is 3000 square feet and tilts two ways with a valley in the middle and is fronted by a cavernous bunker. The hole now requires the player to decide to go for the green or lay-up. At 298 yards, most of the pros can reach the green with a 3 wood. It's a pretty clever hole now, it will be different. It's kind of reminiscent of the short 10th at Riviera. I read somewhere that half shot holes create drama and interest. #4 is a par 3 1/2."

"Both #7 and #18 have had features and fairway contouring added that make the second shot more interesting."

"The 9th green was made into a punch bowl green, perhaps more of a "dust pan' not a true punchbowl, but very different from what was there."

"On the 17th, large ridges have been added on either side of the drive zone and the green is now an island at only 3300 square feet."

"Every bunker is new and every hole is somehow different, in general it's not as easy to get comfortable over too many shots throughout the golf course. And the 16th is completely different."

Tom, that was a pretty neat hole before.

"Yes, this will be a good one too."

Why would you make a change on a hole like that?

"I think to get some balance on the par threes. We had par threes of 184, 213, 231 and 205 yards. All pretty long. Now we have 161, 184, 200, and 231 yards. We have more of a balance now and in all honesty, this is one of the changes the membership was most excited about. If you think about it, if you were a member, a lot of these par 3's

Photos of the TPC of Boston



The Par 3 16th Hole Before Renovation



Pictured above: The new 6th Green Complex





Photo credit: Christopher Split

16th Hole After Renovation

Pictured Below: The new par 4 4th hole from the tee



Pictured to the left: New cross bunker in the 7th fairway

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burning the plants carbohydrate reserves. Nitrogen is by far the most important nutrient for the turf at this point, but potassium deficiencies may also occur if the greens are composed or heavily modified with sand. A complete soluble fertilizer, containing phosphorous, potassium and micronutrients can be used for the early summer applications when the annual bluegrass is at its weakest. Keep in mind that research continues to show that nitrogen deficiencies and anthracnose are strongly correlated.

It is inevitable that annual bluegrass will experience *The June Swoon* to some degree. However, a well thought out management plan based on the greens' agronomic condition, their growing environments, and the available resources is the best means of maintaining annual bluegrass through a potentially difficult period. Avoid the June swoon and chances are a good summer season will follow.

Golf Courses, TaylorMade-adidas Join Audubon Green Golfer Challenge

The first thirty golf courses have announced their commitment to support the nature of the game by participating in Audubon International's Green Golfer Challenge.

"We're excited about the early commitment and look forward to more golf courses—including their owners, managers, staff, and the golfers themselves—getting involved through this simple golfer pledge for the environment," says Kevin A. Fletcher, Ph.D., Executive Director of Audubon International. "At the same time, we're happy to see organizations such as the Florida State Golf Association, Iowa State Golf Association, Oregon State Golf Association, and sponsors like TaylorMadeaddidas stepping up to support this effort as well."

Throughout 2007, Audubon International is inviting golfers and golf courses in the United States, Canada, and around the world to take part in the *Audubon Green Golfer Challenge*. The challenge is simple—have golfers pledge to become an *Audubon Green* *Golfer* by taking steps to support environmental stewardship while playing the game. Throughout the year, the pledges from participating golf courses will be collected and counted by Audubon International with ongoing totals posted online. Prizes will be awarded to golf courses with the most golfers signed up by November 15, 2007, and winners will be announced at the end of 2007. Finally, golfers who take the pledge will also become eligible for a random drawing of prizes at the end of the year—including golf gear from TaylorMade-addidas among others.

Becoming an Audubon Green Golfer and getting golfers involved is a simple way for golf course owners, managers, superintendents, PGA Professionals, and golfers to help carry on golf's tradition of preserving the *nature* of the game. Golf courses interested in participating and organizations interested in supporting the Audubon Green Golfer Challenge should visit www.GolfandEnvironment.org.

Source: Audubon International

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are hard and the 16th is a hard hole even at 161 and the wind becomes a much bigger issue if you have a 8 or 9 or wedge in your hand. It's really not easier for the professionals, it's just different. There is a bunker on the right that is higher than the green so the bailout is there but if you were in that bunker you would see it is a treacherous recovery. The 16th green is my favorite new green in terms of contouring. It is a fairly narrow green with tough pin placements. I don't think anyone ever said the objective was to be harder; it's just more interesting. The TOUR players are just so good that I don't think you are going to beat them. It's more important to create turning points at different times within a round of golf. I think #16 accomplishes that"

Tom, are you concerned about the decreased size of some of the new greens?

"Definitely, we are a busy club, and to this point we have been fortunate to have avoided too much annual bluegrass encroachment in the greens – we'll see how they hold up going forward, my intuition says they'll be fine. For the new 4th green we brought in Scott (Robinson) of Arborcom. I told everyone that we would be clearing the trees needed to grow quality turf. I'm a big fan of sunlight on greens, so this was non-negotiable, particularly with a 3,000 square feet green."

How about other changes to the course?

"This course drains wonderfully, but another driver for the improvements was that there were an awful lot of catch basins in the fairways, especially in landing zones."

"I'll never forget this. They (the architects) asked me after I had been on the job here for a month, 'How comfortable are you with carrying water?' On this soil? I told them maybe 150 to 200 feet. It didn't seem to matter because for a variety of reasons we ended up with a lot of catch basins anyway and sometimes they were really in bad places. I think everyone's intentions were good regarding drainage but playability took a hit. One common thread with this renovation is that when fairway bunkers were reshaped, they were tied out into the landing zone appropriately and the basins eliminated as part of that process whenever possible."

"The collection areas and basins was a player criticism and it was justified. We have eliminated or changed grade around a lot of them, but there are still some more to go."

"We also had a 9,000 sq. ft chipping green that tilted away from a small chipping area. I was able to convince everyone while we were at it, to kind of reverse the area and turn it into a 3,500 square chipping green with 25,000 square feet of chipping area with varying angles and elevations, along with a couple of bunkers. We also added a small practice putting green which I think will help players that prefer to putt immediately after hitting balls. In all, a big improvement."

It seems as though you have done some renovation to the course each year since it became a tour venue?

"Yes, we've done a little bit each year except last year which was pretty quiet. I have read in more than one place that this is the third major remodeling or renovation since the club has opened which actually is not true."

"Factually, prior to the first tournament in 2003 we did a fair amount of infrastructure work (bridges, built food prep, and corporate accommodations, cart paths, etc. and added a couple of tees.) After the first event we did recontour and partially rebuild 13 greens, reposition a few bunkers, and reshape some of the landing zones with extreme catch basin problems. Between then and now we have done additional infrastructure, basin raising and filling, and very minor tweaks, the same as you would do at any club."

I'm amazed at how you have recontoured and expanded greens in the past and always had them in perfect condition each year for the tournament.

"I'm not promising anything this year."

Yes, but you have been very successful in the past.

"Yes we have, but you never get too cocky. We built seven new greens between late October and December. You need some luck to have those ready for a professional golf tournament 4 growing months later."

What has the membership reaction been so far?

"The other side of this whole renovation is our membership. It is fair to say there were somewhat uncomfortable members as the property has had its share of work done to it. One of the good things about having a tournament is you have a tournament and attention is paid to the course and things get improved. One of the bad things about having a tournament that attention is paid to the course and things get improved – it all depends on your perspective."

"If you are a member here you have put up with a fair amount of disruption between the normal activity to set up an event, and regular improvements to the facility, but when the work is done, we have provided a wonderful product and I think they will mostly tell you that."

"I think a lot of people were uncomfortable that we delved in so quickly in the middle of play in September and October, but they got it after awhile. A lot of people were very uncomfortable with #4 because that was a big change and they are beginning to understand that it's a hole you can make 2 or 7 on any given day. I think that some golfers have forgotten that the game is supposed to be fun. A hole like number 4 can be an interesting during match or medal play. There hasn't been a member I've taken round to show the work that hasn't been pumped. It stunk we had a little disruption but I don't think anything good comes from complacency."

Does the membership have any say when it comes to renovation work?

"One of the realities of this situation is that we make decisions in the best

interests of the membership for them. While I think that could frustrate people now and then, and there were definitely some frustrations expressed in the fall, you'll get a sentiment from these folks to the effect of: I am so mad about this, I can't believe you are doing this again but I have to admit that everything you have ever done has been really good to this point, so I am going to give it a chance. That correctly characterizes their position and at the end of the day, I think that will prove itself again."

"Yes, we make decisions for the members and the tournament gets in the way of their enjoyment of the property for 10 days, but for a lot of them, it adds value. Let's be realistic, this renovation won't be inexpensive— I'm not sure yet how much, but aside from the inconvenience, there are no assessments or extra fees for these types of improvements."

And that's hard to argue.

"It is. The tournament can be a pain to the members, but we really don't get a lot of complaints about it. I think the membership is beginning to recognize the value of having the PGA TOUR invest aggressively in the property. Few will argue that the product is continually improving. We do our best to help them enjoy the tournament experience, and provide them with respectable playing conditions throughout the year. While it's not something everyone readily admits, who wouldn't get a kick out of the best players in the world playing on their golf course once a year."

What were the biggest challenges of the project?

"Obviously the sense of urgency, to get as many interesting things done to the course as possible in a short time frame and make sure that all 18 holes had related characteristics. Also, it was critical in everyone's mind that we allow the membership and guests to continue to play golf as much as possible."

"Weather was a challenge. I reviewed records for the period from September through the end of April when we were working and while the weather was unusually warm, we did have 43" of rainfall to work around. That much rain was pretty destructive to the type of work we were doing. Nonetheless almost everything Gil and Jim had planned was completed. The work crews and particularly Matt Staffieri, who is Hanse Golf's key guy and Jeff Joedicke our first Assistant came up huge when it came to keeping everyone in good spirits and focused on the job at hand. A lot of bunkers collapsed and were put back together 3 and 4 times before things rooted in adequately. I have a great picture of our staff laving sod in February during a snow storm. A first in my book."

Do you find that the tournament is held at a time of year that can be a challenge agronomically?

"The date we have is weirdly not a great date. I'm learning to love it because I have to. Otherwise I'd drive myself insane. Every bit of your busiest time and most stressful weather conditions is recently behind you and I suppose everyone's ideal objective when preparing a golf course for a professional tournament is to present the place like it hasn't been played on for the season, which is obviously unrealistic."

"One of the more enlightened TOUR rules officials I've had the pleasure of getting to know, commented to me last year when I was wishing the golf course looked a little less played on. He pointed out that he thinks a golf course that has been played a lot is an indication that people like the place which is a positive reflection on the health of the game and course, and that dealing with divots is a challenge that all golfers face. He correctly reminded me that everyone has the opportunity to practice from divots on the practice tee. It doesn't make you want to do anything less than your best, but it is a healthy perspective."

With regard to preparing the golf course for the tournament, what do you do differently than for regular play?

"It depends on the year. For greens preparation this past year we used a heavy (Salsco) roller because of wet conditions to try and get some firmness, but normally we use walk rollers (mowers with weights) for the tournament. We play the weather. We don't really do that much different – for day to day play we mow fairways twice a week and greens once a day at .140" or .135". We roll once a week, mow tees 2 to 3 times per week and it seems we are mowing some part of the rough all the time. I'm proud of the fact that we don't over maintain the place. I think its good that we mow the fairways twice a week. We use a fair amount of TGR. We like to control - manage our end - not in like a starve it to death kind of way. I like to be on the safe side when it comes to wet weather. We have really bizarre soil, it reminds me of cement - we get 'Take All Patch' and all these weird diseases that are tough enough to deal with without getting into things like pythium or brown patch, which would be in my opinion a waste of time and money. With as much play and cart traffic as we get, I just don't feel comfortable keeping the place juiced up. It seems to hold up to traffic better when it is firm, although it isn't always pretty. We are instituting a caddie program this year which will help take some of the pressure off."

"This past year we cut the greens at .130" for the tournament. Two mows and one rolling. It was wet, but the speeds were fine. We get around 11 ½ to 12 feet, even on the wet days. I usually just ask the rules and agronomy staff if they want them slower or faster without getting too picky and we'll adjust our practices accordingly."

"Towards the date of the tournament, and this is where you learn to love the date, towards the end of the summer you start to feel like you are out of the woods weather wise. Somewhere in the middle of August, when I feel it is right, we will turn on the afterburners for 10 days with soluble fert on the fairways just to give some color and maybe improve density if possible. We like them to be as hard as they can be. Depending on the year we might be using more urea that time of year and I'm talking the difference between .5 and .9 (lbs of N) depending on the year we have had and that will lead into additionally mowing. No matter what, we are going to mow every day for the week of the tournament."

"It doesn't really get to that point till we close the Saturday before the tournament that we ramp up the mowing. Sometimes we skip mowing on the weekend because we have other things to do. We've had the issue with divots in the collection areas in the past and we have used a method to plug divots and we'll ramp that up within reason. You never know, it depends on if it's a dry or wet year. In a dry year the divots aren't that bad. In a wet year, we could have a lot of big divots."

"We will sneak up on a little color with solubles and we'll do the same to the rough inside the ropes. We are usually done mowing rough by the Friday before the tournament."

Tiger seemed to be happy about the condition of the golf course last year. During a press conference he said it was in the best condition he had seen it - and that was before he won. "We have always gotten mostly positive feedback on golf course conditions before during and after the event. I think most golfers including professionals prefer greens with a 'full head of hair.' Dry green conditions tend to reveal the slight differences in the composition of a green and make it more difficult to judge putts. Last year we had a wet week before and during the event so the greens were easier to putt than they had been in the past."

What do you think about the USGA experimenting with varying heights of rough for the US Open?

"I like it. I have had more than one person use the term inconsistent rough during tournament preparations and I've gotten feedback to that effect after the event. But if you think about the words 'inconsistent rough' they are kind of an oxymoron. We've probably strayed from the original intent of the concept of rough by neatly clipping it at about any height. But aesthetics, pace of play, and general enjoyment of the game are realities of the business. I know in the back of my mind I'm thinking the more unpredictable you can make things, the more interesting they become. I mentioned some things we try with fertility, I've also been trying to imagine how we could incorporate stuff like 4 bladed blitzers close to the event to create a poorly cut taller rough. When I started in the business they used to drive me nuts because you missed all the stalks on fescues and other stringy growths. Maybe a tournament is the perfect time for that chopped look."

We hope this behind the scenes look at Tom's work adds to the anticipation for the GCSANE Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament, to be held on May 29th at the TPC Boston. Of course, the real test will occur this fall when the golfing world arrives for the Deutsche Bank Tournament – and Tom Brodeur can't wait to see the reaction.



New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation, Inc. **Research Update**

May 10, 2007

The New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation announces that Robert A. Ruszala, Golf Course Superintendent of Hickory Ridge Country Club in Amherst MA, has been elected president for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Bob has been serving on the NERTF Board of Directors since 2000 as a delegate of the Golf Courses Superintendents Association of New England (GCSANE) which he served as president of in 2000 & 2001. He replaces Ted Maddocks of Ekwanok Country Club, Manchester VT, who will continue to serve on the board as the immediate past president. William R. Morton, CGCS of The Misquamicut Club (Watch Hill, RI) will serve as Vice-

President, Bob A. Matthews, CGCS, CIA, of White Cliffs Country Club (Plymouth, MA) will serve as Secretary, and Michael A. Buras, of Longwood Cricket Club (Chestnut Hill, MA) will serve as Treasurer. The foundation has recently enjoyed its 10th Educational Conference and Trade Show at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence, RI. More than 3000 individuals attended the 4 days of education conference and trade show activities. The 11th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show will take place on March 3-6th, 2008. The NERTF has funded more than \$763,000 in Turfgrass Research in the New England area since being organized in 1996. More information may be ob-

tained concerning the foundation, the conference & show and turfgrass research funded by the foundation, by visiting our website @ www.nertf.org.

Attached with this release is a picture of: Incoming President Robert Ruszala, Outgoing President Ted Maddocks, Executive Director Gary Sykes presenting NERTF Show Manager David Rosenberg with a framed 10th Anniversary Show memento at this year's annual meeting on May 10th, 2007.

Sincerely, Gary Sykes **Executive Director, NERTF**

Meeting:

Pictured to the left **NERTF Board of Directors from the Annual**

Front Row (I-r): David Rosenberg (Show Manager), Michael Buras (NESTMA), Bob Matthews (GCMACC), Bob Ruszala (GCSANE), Ted Maddocks (VtGCSA), Mary Owen (UMass) Back Row (I-r): Gary Sykes (Executive Dir.), James Connelly (MALCP), Chris Cowan (VtGCSA), Phil Neaton (CAGCS), Mark Richard (RIGCSA), Gary Watschke (NHGCSA), Dr. Noel Jackson (URI), Anthony Grosso (CAGCS) Missing: Roderick Blake (NHGCSA), James Conant (GCSANE), Steve Cadenelli (GCMACC), Scott Cybulski (MGCSA), Jim Hodge (MGCSA), William Morton (RIGCSA)

Pictured to Right: Bob Ruszala, David Rosenberg, Ted Maddocks and Gary Sykes





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

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members:

- Gustavo Preston Service Co., Friend
- Edward Ceaser, Affiliate, Gustavo Preston Co
- Patrick McDonald, Assistant, Tedesco CC

Proposed for Membership:

- Chris Morris, Superintendent, Vesper CC
- Brad Morrissey, Assistant, Andover CC
- Adam J. Kushmerek, Assistant, Walpole CC
- Mary M. Moffett, Affiliate, SV Moffett Co. Inc
- Ernie Ketchum, Affiliate, New England Turf
- David Putnam, Affiliate, Putnam Pipe Co
- Eli Potty, Affiliate, Putnam Pipe Co.

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to the following GCSANE members who were assigned to the initial four-year Class A renewal cycle and have successful completed all the requirements for maintaining their Class A status. These individuals have obtained at least 4.0 points, a minimum of 1.6 coming from education points and have demonstrated environmental stewardship by possessing a pesticide license in the state of their employment or successfully passing GCSAA's IPM exam:

> Jason S Adams Thomas G Brodeur Daryn J Brown Stephen M Cronin David F D'Andrea David J Ferrantino Dana R Hancock Michael J Hermanson **Dennis J Houle** Lianne Larson **David Mucciarone** John D O'Donnell Jr. Kevin F Osgood Justin F Santos Jay W Snyder Michael W Stachowicz Timothy J Strano

AFFILIATE NEWS

A Letter From Bob Goglia

Dear Association Membership,

I have accepted an opportunity to become the National Marketing Manager for our Lawn and Landscape business effective May 1, 2007.

This is a great opportunity for me personally to be involved with leading a growing market for Syngenta with new products like Meridian[®] and Tenacity[®] and some other technology coming down the road.

I will always cherish the relationships and friendships that have been built over the years. I am not saying goodbye..... I am just saying see you around...

I will be based in our corporate office in Greensboro. Bob Goglia, Syngenta, 410 Swing Rd., Greensboro, NC 27409 800-334-9481

There will be a new Syngenta rep in place soon. In the meantime, continue to work closely with your Authorized Syngenta Channel (Distributor) Partner. They should be able to handle any questions. Also, you may call our Customer Center at (866) SYN-GENT(a). *Press 1, then 3*. Ask for Luke Dant. Sincerely,

Bob Goglia

Syngenta Mobile (860) 716-0315 robert.goglia@syngenta.com

TurfLinks Inc. has moved

New Address: 29 Gilmore Drive, Sutton, MA 01590 New Phone: 508-234-TURF (8873) New Toll Free: 888-398-TURF (8873) New Fax: 508-234-8355

TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Results from the April 30, 2007 meeting at Lexington Golf Club: <u>1st Place</u>: Denzil Rice, Russ Heller, Jim Cohen, Chris Donato <u>2nd Place</u>: Bob McNeil, Bob Dembek, Dennis Friel, Mike Nagle <u>3rd Place</u>: Jim Small, Don Hearn, Mike Cornicelli, Ken Crimmings

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New England Calendar Update:

There are a couple of changes to the New England Chapter Calendar that appeared in last month's issue. For CAGCS, please note the following changes: July meeting is July 16th; September meeting is now on September 4th. The August meeting at Great River GC is the Invitational.

UMASS GOLF COURSE IPM WALKABOUT - JUNE 5 -BOLTON, MA

Join the turf specialists of UMass Extension for a walk and discussion focused on golf course IPM. The International Golf Club in Bolton, MA will host this event on **June 5**, 2007 from 3:00-5:00 PM. The program will involve a site walk and discussion about implementing sound agronomics as well as managing biotic and abiotic stresses within the framework of an IPM system.

Dress for walking; the workshop will be held rain or shine. Bring a clipboard, pencil, and hand lens if possible (lenses will be available to borrow).

Additional UMass walkabouts emphasizing landscape turf will be held on May 30 in Waltham, MA and on June 7 in Amherst MA.

Two contact hours for category 37 or commercial applicator have been approved. Preregistration is required due to limited enrollment; the cost will be \$50.

For registration information, visit: http://www.umassturf.org/

upcoming_events.html

Questions? Contact the UMass Extension Turf Program at (508) 892-0382; <u>mowen@umext.umass.edu</u>

POSITION OPENINGS

Please visit our web site

www.gcsane.org for all the details on any current job openings.

UMASS TURF RESEARCH FIELD DAY 2007

Wednesday, June 20, 2007 Joseph Troll Turf Research Center South Deerfield, Massachusetts

From the North: From Route 91 take exit 25. Turn left onto Route 116. Follow 116 South to River Road (on the left just before the Connecticut River bridge). Turn left onto River Road. The Center is on the corner of Route 116 and River Road. *From the South:* From Route 91 take Exit 24. Turn right onto Route 5 North. Turn right onto Route 116. Follow Route 116 to River Road (on the left just before the Connecticut River Bridge). Turn left onto River Road. The Center is on the corner of Route 116 and River Road.

Turf managers and their associates from across the Northeast Region are invited to help us welcome summer at University of Massachusetts Turf Research Field Day on Wednesday, June 20, 2007. As in the past, this year's event will be held at the Joseph Troll Turfgrass Research Center on River Road in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Please join us for an update on ongoing improvements to the Center, and to see our fully-implemented teaching, research, and maintenance building.

As always, attendees will have the opportunity to meet and speak with the researchers and educators of the UMass Turf Team, and to hear about and see current turf research underway at UMass. Several ongoing studies will be highlighted at Field Day, including an array of National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) variety trials. The half-day agenda will include a trade show, and several Green Industry vendors and exhibitors will be on hand.

QUESTIONS ABOUT FIELD DAY 2007? E-Mail <u>fieldday@umassturf.org</u>

Support the UMass Turf Program with your presence at Turf Field Day 2007! Come to learn about cutting-edge turf research, network with colleagues, and meet with vendors. Enjoy a tour of the research facility named for Dr. Joe Troll. Pesticide recertification contact hours will be available for all New England states. Morning coffee and barbecue lunch are included in the price of registration. For additional information, including attendee/exhibitor registration information, please refer to the reverse side of this sheet. !

Visit our web site for further UMass Turf Research Field Day information, as well as information on:

- How to sign up for the **free TurfTalk e-mail list**, with timely turf **Management Updates**.
- Diagnostic Services A wide range of turf diagnostic services is available from UMass, including

disease diagnosis, nematode assay, turf insect identification, and weed identification.

Upcoming Events, including future educational programs offered by UMass Extension.

http://www.umassturf.org

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS TURF RESEARCH FIELD DAY WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2007

To be held rain or shine at the UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Center, South Deerfield, Massachusetts

8:00-9:00 Registration - Coffee - Trade Show - Equipment Demonstrations*

9:00 Welcoming Remarks

9:15-12:00 Featured Research Presentations:

NTEP Perennial Ryegrass Trial Results	Wear Tolerance in Creeping and Velvet Bentgrass
Development of Fungicide Resistance in Dollar Spot	Nitrogen & Potassium Effects on Perennial Ryegrass Wear Tolerance
Managing Pesticide Exposure from Treated Turf	Can We Manage Turf Insects Without Chemical Insecticides?
Seasonal Carbohydrate Partitioning of Creeping Bentgrass	New Directions in Low Temperature and Drought Stress Research at UMass
Breeding of Disease Resistance in Ryegrass and Bentgrass	Optimizing Vegetative Filter Strips to Reduce Pesticides in Turfgrass Runoff

12:00 Lunch - Trade Show - Equipment Demonstrations* Following Lunch: UMass Turf Program Advisory Board Meeting Massachusetts Association of Lawn Care Professionals Monthly Meeting

* VENDORS/EXHIBITORS – Equipment demonstrations must be arranged in advance with Thom Griffin, (413) 665-4360. 2 contact hours in commercial certification category 37 (turf), category 32 (sod), category 49 (demo & research), the dealer license, and the applicator's license have been approved for all New England states.

For more information contact: Jason Lanier at (413) 545-2965, Mary Owen at (508) 892-0382, or e-mail fieldday@umassturf.org

REGISTRATION FORM

Pre-registration deadline: June 15, 2007. Return this form (with your check payable to *University of Massachusetts*) to: **Turf Field Day, UMass Extension, 78 Center Street, Suite 206, Pittsfield, MA 01201.** * **Municipalities** may register using a PR# or PO# and faxing those registrations to (508) 892-4218.

FOR ATTENDEES:

_____ attendees @ \$45 each* = \$

FOR VENDORS/EXHIBITORS:

Vendor/Exhibitor registration** = \$ <u>150</u> additional lunches @ \$10 each = \$ TOTAL ENCLOSED = \$

TOTAL ENCLOSED = \$_____

*Attendees: \$5 additional charge for on-site registration June 20. Morning coffee & lunch is included in the registration fee. **VENDORS/EXHIBITORS: Fee includes 2 lunches, a table, and two chairs. Additional lunches are extra. PLEASE CONTACT THOM GRIFFIN AT (413) 665-4360; griff@psis.umass.edu PRIOR TO THE EVENT FOR DETAILED SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS.

Name(s)			
Business Name			
Street Address			
City	State		Zip Code
Daytime Phone			E-mail Address
*PO Number			
*Do you need an invoice sent to	o process this PO?	Yes	No

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Allen's Seed Store, Inc. 693 S. County Trail, Exeter, RI 02822 Specializing in quality seed and related golf course maintenance supplies. Gregg Allen - (800) 527-3898 Michelle Maltais - (401) 835-0287

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A-OK Turf Equipment Inc. 1357 Main St., Coventry, RI 02816-8435 Articulator, Terra Topper, Greens Groomer brush, & used equipment. Mike Cornicelli - (401) 826-2584

Barenbrug USA

Great in Grass 166 Juniper Drive, North Kingstown, RI 02852 Bruce Chapman, Territory Manager (401) 578-2300

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Cornish, Silva, & Mungeum, Inc. 207 N. Main St., Uxbridge, MA 01569 Golf course architects. (508) 278-3407

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71 Concord St., P. O. Box 127, N. Reading, MA 01864 Water supply specialists; wells & pumping equipment. (781) 933-3210

Michael Drake Construction, Inc.

240 Walnut St., Framingham, MA 01702 Golf course reconstruction; professional shaper. Michael Drake - (508) 875-8247

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Irrigation services to golf courses throughout New England. Gary Fialkosky - (617) 293-8632

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Bob Chalifour, CGCS (ret.) - (401) 766-5010

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Golf course construction. Antonios Paganis - (781) 648-2351; (508) 428-3022

Irrigation Management & Services 21 Lakeview Ave., Natick, MA 01760 Irrigation consultation, design, and system

Irrigation consultation, design, and system evaluation. Bob Healey, ASIC, CID - (508) 653-0625

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Larchmont Engineering & Irrigation

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Miller Golf Construction

P.O. Box 1008, Essex, MA 01929 Golf course construction & renovation. Jonathon Miller - (978) 768-6600

NMP Golf Construction Corp.

25 Bishop Ave., Ste. A-2, Williston, VT 05495 Golf course construction. Mario Poirier - (888) 707-0787

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16 Maple Street, Acton, MA 01720 We serve all your remodeling and renovation needs. You can trust your project with us! We make you look good! Sean Hanley (978) 337-6661

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Sports Club Management, Inc.

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TurfNet Associates, Inc.

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Syngenta Professional Products

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