



THE NEWSLETTER

May 2009

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.

Passion, Guidance and Hard Work Lead Albert to the Top of His Profession at Hopedale Country Club

By: Gary Trask

If you take into consideration the manner in which a young Tom Albert was introduced to the art of lawn care, it's quite remarkable that he's in the profession that he is today.

Growing up in Tiverton, R.I., Albert would perform a number of different odd jobs for neighbors and friends in order to make a few extra dollars. One of those jobs was cutting lawns, except one of his clients was a family friend who did not own a lawn mower. Instead the 12-year-old Albert would cut the entire lawn with a weed wacker.

"Making matters worse is that it wasn't even a gas one, it was electric," laughs Albert as he recalls the story. "It wasn't a big lawn, but it still took me a while to cut it with that thing. Not the most fun I had as a kid, that's for sure."

Albert can laugh about this childhood memory now because he not only survived it, but he learned from it. The experience allowed him to find out at a very young age that working on a project and seeing the end result was something that was very satisfying to him. And, when you really think about it, is there any better job to have than a golf superintendent if you enjoy seeing the fruits of your labor at the end of the day?

"I think that's definitely why I love what I do," says the now 35-year-old Albert, who is in the midst of his eighth year as the head super at Hopedale Country Club, a nine-hole, Geoffrey

Cornish-designed semi-private course in Hopedale, Mass. "Ever since I was a kid I've had great attention to detail and I've always enjoyed making things look good. To me there's no better feeling than to drive away from the course each day and actually see the



Hopedale Country Club
Photo Courtesy of Hopedale C.C.

room wasn't for him."

hard work that my crew and I just put in. I love that feeling."

Albert got his start in the business like many of his fellow superintendents. He was simply looking to make some money during the summer after his senior year in high school so he got a job working on the crew at Sakonnet Golf Club in nearby Little Compton, R.I. In the fall he began taking classes at Bristol Community College, but quickly found that sitting in the class-

room wasn't for him. The head super at Sakonnet GC -- Kirk Whiting -- recommended that he go out to the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at UMass. and get his degree. After thinking about it for a while, Albert decided it just might be the perfect fit for him. He graduated from Stockbridge in 1995 and -- once again upon Whiting's recommendation -- went on to earn his degree in Integrated Pest Management at UMass. When he finished in 1996, Whiting had a job waiting for him at Sakonnet GC as the assistant super.

"Obviously I owe a lot to Kirk," Albert says fondly. "He had a huge hand in helping me get to where I am today with my career. He helped me earn a couple of scholarships and he hired me for my first job. He was a huge influence."

Albert quickly learned that the friendly and helpful nature of golf superintendents was not limited to his mentor Whiting. During his six-year stint at Sakonnet GC, Albert witnessed first-hand the camaraderie between all of the area superintendents. He saw how they not only went out of their way to help each other, but he perceived it as something that they enjoyed doing. So when Hopedale CC offered him his first head super job at the ripe age of 27 years old, Albert had no hesitation in accepting the position.

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Tom Albert - continued from page 1

"Not only did I know that I was ready for the job, but I also knew that I wasn't going into it alone," he says. "In addition to Kirk, there were so many other superintendents out there that I knew who told me to go ahead and take the job. They all told me if I ever had a question or needed advice, they were only a phone call away. That was reassuring.

"In so many other professions people are in such competition with each other. But this is different. All you have to do is pick up the phone if you need help and 99 times out of 100 the person on the other end of the phone will help you. It's really one of the great things about our industry."

Albert says the transition from assistant to the head man was fairly seamless for him because of the people at Hopedale CC as well as the members. He says that as a head super he tries to lead by example and he does everything he can to "get an honest days pay for an honest days work."

"I'm not a big 'in the office' type of guy," says Albert, who oversees a crew of seven people during the season. "I was brought up in a way that if you see a guy next to you working his butt off, you better be working as hard or even harder. That's my attitude. I do everything that I can not to give anyone a reason to complain about my work. That's how I've always been."

He also says that communication is the key to not only getting along with the members, but earning their respect.

"I make myself available and I'm always visible," says Albert, who has never been much of a golfer himself, but has grown to enjoy the game more as the years have gone by. "I'll walk through the clubhouse and say hello. Most of the members know me by name. A lot of them have my cell phone number. We have a regular back-and-forth and I think that is very important."

One aspect of manning a nine-hole course that amazes Albert is how many people just assume it's a much easier job. He argues that is some ways it is even more challenging than maintaining an 18-hole course.

"I'm not going to sit here and say I have a more difficult job than someone at an 18-hole course," he explains. "But we have a very, very busy golf course. And that means our greens see twice as much traffic as most courses because not many members come out and play just nine. In fact, a lot of them will play 27 on a regular basis because you're always so close to the clubhouse and the parking lot. It's a challenge keeping the course in the way we keep it."

But Albert and staff always seem to pull it off. And to someone with his burning desire to "make things look good," Albert wouldn't want it any other way.

"I always have people tell me when they come off the course that they are impressed at how good of shape it's in and that goes for the early spring right until the late fall when we shut things down," says Albert, who married his wife Janet in December and lives in Douglas, Mass. "That's a great feeling. That's what keeps me going every day and it's what motivates me to keep coming back. It's a great feeling to know the work you are doing is making the people that matter most happy. That means you're doing your job the right way. And that's all anybody can ask." ❖



Hopedale Country Club
Photo Courtesy of Hopedale C.C.

President's Message

Assistants. Most of us are blessed with these hard working individuals and we've all been one at one time or another in our career. We all know how tough it is for them to move up the ladder and for what they do they are grossly underpaid. I like to tell my guys my ability to pay my mortgage depends on them and I couldn't do what I do without Brian, Scott, or Kevin. Simply put Assistants are the future of our profession.

The GCSANE Board has decided to have an Assistant Superintendent membership drive to bring more Assistants into the fold. For 2009 (those who were voted in prior to June 1 will receive a \$100 credit on next year's dues) GCSANE is waiving the \$100 initiation fee to make it more financially attractive for clubs to have their Assistants as members. It is a great opportunity for them to get education and build friendships and camaraderie with their peers. If you haven't done so yet sign up your Assistant today.

Another good opportunity to build camaraderie amongst Assistants is at the 3rd Annual Assistant Appreciation Day and Tournament. This year's event is being held on October 19th at

Oak Hill Country Club where Sean Keating and Nicholas Welch assist Scott Lagana, CGCS with managing the golf club. I am sure it will be a great day.

The 2009 Member Directory is out and you should have received your copy in the mail. After taking a hiatus for a couple of years, compiling all the information was quite a task and I think Sharon and Scott Lagana deserve a great deal of thanks for getting it done.

Speaking of the Membership Directory, you will note that the cover shot is of Brae Burn Country Club. Brae Burn is the site of this year's Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament on September 28th. Bob DiRico will host us on a real Donald Ross gem, showing us some fabulous short par fours and offering us what is widely considered the best six opening holes in golf. Personally I can't wait tee it up and I hope you all save the date as well.

Some things you should know about this month:

- Congratulations to Bob Matthews, CGCS on attaining Life Status from GCSANE.

- Condolences to Scott Nickerson and Don D'Errico for their recent losses.
- Congratulations go out to Alexandra and Brian Linehan on the birth of their son Drew.
- Congratulations go out to Tami and Ed Olsen on the birth of their daughter Savannah.

Our next monthly meeting is the GCSANE Member-Guest on June 24th at Segregansett Country Club. Formerly known as the Superintendent-Club official, this event is open to all whether you bring a guest or just play with another Superintendent. I hope to see you all there enjoying Rich Gagnon and his staff's hard work.

Until next month, may the simple pleasures of life including good friends, family, health, happiness, and peace be with you and your families. ❖

Pat Daly, CGCS
GCSANE President

Annual Bluegrass Weevil Larvae are Everywhere!!

By: Pat Vittum, UMass

Reported May 29, 2009

Annual bluegrass weevil larvae are showing up all over the place now! For a while it seemed like they were off to a slow start, but the warm weather in mid May nudged all the populations into action. We have been collecting samples from several sites in New England and can report that larvae are growing rapidly now in all locations that we have been monitoring. The results from samples pulled this week are as follows:

- **Danbury, CT** - evenly distributed between second, third, and fourth instars
- **Bloomfield, CT** - still some first instars but mostly second, third, and fourth instars
- **Albany, NY** - mostly third and

fourth instars, but some seconds and some fifths

Fitchburg, MA - mostly second and third instars

The interesting thing is that in many locations, the larval populations have increased quickly in the last week. Ordinarily we would expect areas that were mostly first and second instars last week to be mostly second and third instars this week, but the weevils seem to be getting bigger faster than expected right now. In several sites we saw mostly small larvae last week and are seeing mostly third and fourth instars this week. So buckle your seat belts. It promises to be a wild ride this June.

We are at a point where any insecticide applications should be made to target larvae. According to the folks at

DuPont, indoxacarb (Provaunt™) is most effective if it is applied just when the third instars become active in a given area. Ordinarily that would occur over a five to ten day period in most locations. Unfortunately, this year that window seems to have been about four or five days long in any given spot, and many areas in the metropolitan New York area and points further south have moved past that "window of opportunity". People in the Hartford area may also already be past that point now. We are still learning how best to use Provaunt™, and we really don't know how well it will work when it is applied when larvae are already third and fourth instars. We have some test plots out that will have the answer

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USGA Update, Northeast Region

Spring Diseases and *Poa annua* Populations

By Adam Moeller, Agronomist
May 20, 2009

Disease activity is highly dependent on moisture, which is why it comes as no surprise that diseases were observed across the region in the first half of May. Yellow patch and brown ring patch outbreaks were spotted at several locations in spite of preventative fungicide applications. A simple method to distinguish between these two foliar diseases can be done by incubating a turf sample. Place a turf plug and a moist paper towel in a closed plastic bag or Tupperware container for 24 hours. If mycelium develops, it is brown ring patch; if not, it is yellow patch.

Microdochium patch also has been problematic the last few weeks. If cool and wet weather persists, Microdochium patch can warrant a fungicide application. The turf will likely recover over time without fungicides since it has not been reported to affect crowns and roots, however, playability can be influenced if the disease symptoms are severe. Red thread/pink patch also

were recently observed at several courses in New Jersey and New York. Symptoms were minor and are sure to clear up with warmer weather and light fertilization. Take all patch symptoms on a creeping bentgrass tee round out the diseases observed in the last two weeks. Pathogen activity is typically April, May, September, and October, which is when preventative fungicide applications need to be applied despite symptoms in the summer months.

In the spring, *Poa annua* populations often look like they have dramatically increased from the previous year. This certainly could be the case if core cultivation was performed during the primary germination window of September 15-October 15. However, if *Poa annua* populations look higher this spring, it also could be an illusion. Spring is the easiest time to identify the percentage of *Poa annua* because of the visual differences in color and texture compared to creeping bentgrass. As a result, it might look like *Poa annua* populations have increased since last fall. It is essential for all turf managers to understand the species in

which they are managing, and spring is a good time to do a thorough population audit. Examining the population dynamics of greens, tees, and fairways in the spring can dictate the desired management practices such as plant growth regulator programs for the future.

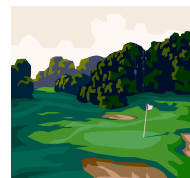
USGA agronomists can provide insightful and invaluable information involving all areas of golf course maintenance that will help maximize turf health, playability, and efficiency. Contact Dave Oatis, director, doatis@usga.org; Adam Moeller, agronomist, amoeller@usga.org; or Jim Skorulski, senior agronomist, jskorulski@usga.org for a Turf Advisory Service visit this season. ❖



Poa annua can be very easily identified in the spring of the year (notice the lighter-colored patches with the visible seed heads). A good understanding of the species populations is necessary for proper management strategies.



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Reminder to employers: Revised I-9 forms must be used for new hires

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires that all U.S. employers use the revised Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, as of April 3, 2009.

Under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, employers are required to verify the identity and employment authorization of each person they hire for employment within three business days of the employee's first day of work. Specifically, a Form I-9 must be executed with Section 1 of the form completed on day one and Section 2 within three days of hire. The Form I-9 is also used to reverify any expiring work authorization on or before the date of expiration.

The revised I-9 Form modifies the list of documents that are acceptable

to show identity and work authorization, and employers cannot now accept any documents that are expired.

On the new form, the revision date of Feb. 2, 2009 is printed on the lower right-hand corner. All previous editions of Form I-9 are now no longer valid.

[Read more and access the form](#) on the USCIS Web site. ❖

UMass Update - continued from page 3

to that question in about a month.

My suspicion is that trichlorfon (Dylox™) might be a better bet if larvae are already fourth and fifth instars - but recognize that nothing will control 100% of the larvae once they approach full size. You will be doing well to achieve 75 to 80% control when targeting large larvae.

Some of you reported that you applied Provaunt™ a little earlier this spring and were concerned that you were seeing some small larvae in areas where you treated. We have noticed the same phenomenon. I **think** what is happening is that the tiny larvae spend their first week or two inside the stem and are not exposed to the Provaunt™ at that point, and then emerge to start feeding outside. They are perfectly healthy when they move outside (and I think that is when turf managers are seeing them). But they are still very small and vulnerable, and the chemical seems to kick in pretty quickly. So in several treated areas, we have noticed tiny larvae and a very few small third instars, but we don't see the larger larvae showing up. In other words, don't panic yet!!! Stay tuned! ❖



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Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England Annual Member/Guest Tournament

Wednesday, June 24, 2009

Segregansett Country Club

85 Gulliver St. Taunton, MA

Host Superintendent: Rich Gagnon

Schedule:

7:00 am: Registration/Continental Breakfast

8:30 am: Shotgun Start

1:30 pm: Steak and Chicken Barbeque Lunch, Awards and Prizes

Cost: \$170 per twosome

To make a reservation, please see invitation and response card for entry that was mailed to membership

Club Phone: (508) 824-9110

Club Website: www.segregansett.com

Directions: The Segregansett CC is located on Route 44 on the Taunton/Dighton line.

From Route 95: Take Route 95 to Route 495 South to Route 24 South then take the Route 44 West exit. Follow through the center of Taunton for 20 minutes. Club will be located on your right.

From Route 495: From 495 Take the Route 24 South exit until the Route 44 West exit. Follow through the center of Taunton for 20 minutes. Club will be located on your right.

From Mass Pike: From the Pike Take the Route 495 South exit to the Route 24 South exit to the Route 44 West exit. Follow through the center of Taunton for 20 minutes. Club will be located on your right.



Meeting Results and Photos

Franklin Country Club - May 11, 2009

(Photo Credit: Rich Gagnon)

The Bear Cup Tournament Results

GCSANE was able to capture the cup with a final score of 9 to 6!

1st Gross 71

Andy Drohen, Chris Tufts

2nd Gross 73

Steve Gregg, Todd Hugill

1st Net 61

Carl Miner, Patrick VanVleck

2nd Net 61

Kevin Young, Melissa Gugliotti

3rd Net 63

Brian Smoot, Gregg Mackintosh

Closest to the pins:

Hole 4: Patrick VanVleck 2'11"

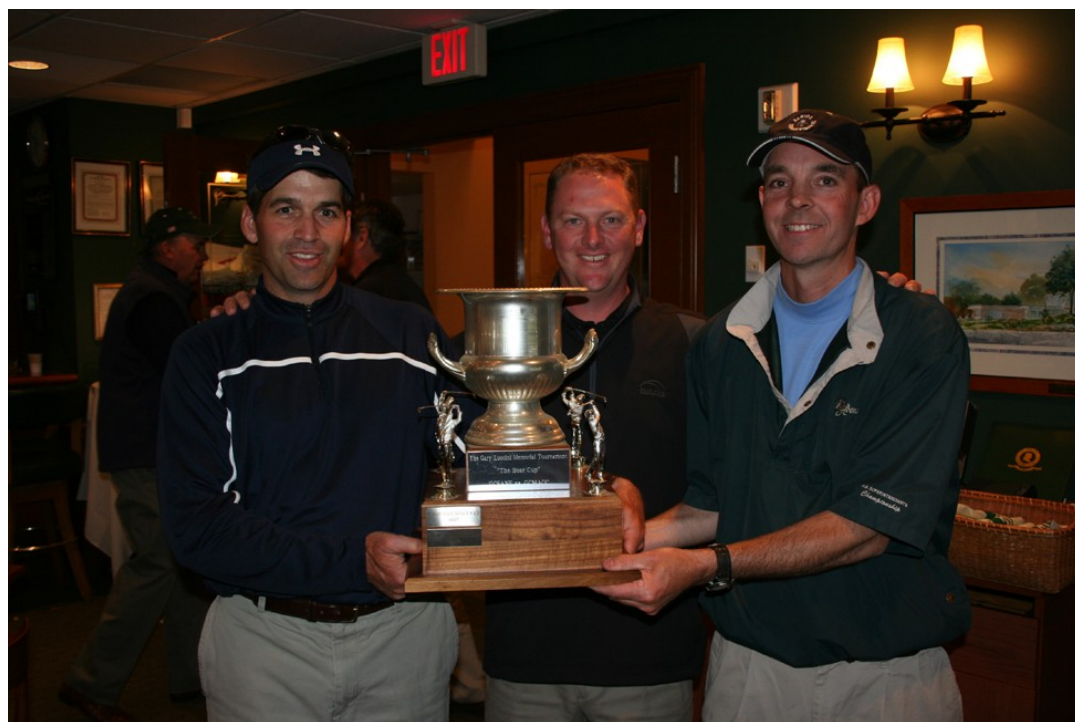
Hole 8: Robin Hayes 6'10"

Hole 14: Ken Mooradian 7'4"

Hole 16: Kurt Calderwood 1'8"

Long Drive:

Jason Adams estimated at 295 yards



More Photos from Franklin Country Club - May 11, 2009

(Photo Credit: Rich Gagnon)



UMASS TURF RESEARCH FIELD DAY 2009

Wednesday, June 17, 2009
at the UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Center
South Deerfield, Massachusetts

From the North: From I-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 I-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 17, 2009. As in the past, this year's event will be held at the Joseph Troll Turf Research Center on River Road in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. Please join us for an update on ongoing improvements to the Center, including new research plots and a state-of-the-art rain-out shelter under construction.



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, covering selection and uses of turfgrass, integrated pest management, best management practices, pesticide fate and environmental issues. The half-day agenda will include a barbecue lunch and trade show, with Green Industry vendors and exhibitors on hand.

QUESTIONS ABOUT FIELD DAY 2009? E-Mail fieldday@umassturf.org

Support the UMass Turf Program with your presence at Turf Field Day 2009! 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. Continental breakfast and barbecue lunch are included in the price of registration. For additional information, including how to register online or by mail, visit our web site at <http://www.umassturf.org>

Visit our web site for more 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 are available from UMass including disease diagnosis, nematode assay, turf insect identification, and weed identification.
- Upcoming Events, including future educational programs offered by UMass Extension.

Register online: <http://www.umassturf.org>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Welcome New Members:
Matthew R. Danner, Assistant, Indian Ridge CC; **Ray Bauters**, Assistant, Foxborough CC; **Miller Golf Solutions**, Friend, Marblehead, MA; **Irrigation Consulting, Inc.**, Aaron Gagne, Pepperell, MA; **Richard Greco**, Superintendent, The International
- Congratulations are extended to Alexandra and Brian Linehan on the birth of their son Drew.
- Congratulations are extended to Tami and Ed Olsen on the birth of their daughter Savannah.
- Congratulations are extended to Brad and Erin MacDonald on the birth of their son Andrew.
- Our condolences are extended to Scott Nickerson and family on the passing of Scott's father Nate Nickerson.
- Our condolences are extended to Don D'Errico and family on the passing of Don's father John D'Errico.

- As in the past, *The Newsletter* continues to invite Affiliate members to submit a press release about new personnel, new products or a company bio. We will print each and every release free of charge. This is a great way to advertise for free.

CALENDAR

June 17:
UMass Turf Field Day
Joseph Troll Turf Research Center
South Deerfield, MA

June 24:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Member/Guest Tournament
Segregansett Country Club
Host: Rich Gagnon

July - TBA

August 18:
GCSANE Individual Championship
Marlborough Country Club
Host: Ken Crimmings, CGCS

September 28:
GCSANE S&B Tournament
Brae Burn Country Club
Host: Robert DiRico

October 15:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Hatherly Country Club
Host: Richard Caughey

November TBA:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Milton Hoosic Club
Host: Jeff Urquhart

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Non-Member Rates: *All payments must be received in full before the ad appears in The Newsletter.

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□ 1/3 page (horizontal; 5.06" wide x 4.5" deep)	□ \$240.00	□ \$912.00	□ \$1296.00	□ \$1728.00	□ \$2400.00
□ 1/2 page (horizontal; 7.75" wide x 4.5" deep)	□ \$300.00	□ \$1140.00	□ \$1620.00	□ \$2160.00	□ \$3000.00
□ Full Page (vertical; 7.75" wide x 9.25" deep)	□ \$600.00	□ \$2280.00	□ \$3240.00	□ \$4320.00	□ \$6000.00

****DEADLINE for ads: The first of the month for that month's issue.***

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