



THE NEWSLETTER

September 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.

Thomson Country Club and Ted Perry Working in Perfect Harmony

By: Gary Trask

It took 14 years for Ted Perry to climb the ranks from grounds crew member to head superintendent. And the 46-year-old Massachusetts native isn't ashamed to admit that he's thoroughly enjoying the view from the top.

"It feels good; it's exciting," says Perry, who is finishing up his second season as the head man at Thomson Country Club in North Reading, Mass. "I worked hard to get where I am today so it's very rewarding. I'll always remember what it was like being at the bottom of the totem pole and I think that's helping now that I'm the guy in charge."

Perry grew up on Old Newbury Golf Course in Newbury, Mass. where his father Russell was the long-time greens chairman. Perry enjoyed playing the game as a youngster, but never intended on ending up working in the industry. After graduating from Triton Regional High School in 1981 he enrolled at a computer technician school, but quickly realized he wasn't cut out to sit inside an office all day. He moved on to work on a construction crew and then got into landscaping before getting a job on the grounds crew at Ipswich Country Club in 1994.

After about a year of working at a golf course on a daily basis, Perry started to think a superintendent career would be a good fit for him.

"I was married with two kids and I knew I had to finally find a career that I

would like and would support the family," he remembers. "My father urged me to pursue a career as a superintendent and my wife (Lisa) was also very supportive. So I decided to go for it."

For the next six years he took evening classes at nearby Essex Agricultural and Technical School and North



Thomson Country Club

Photo Source: Thomson Country Club

Shore Community College. He attended every golf course superintendent seminar in the area and dedicated himself to learning as much about the trade as possible. During his five years at Ipswich CC he was promoted to a foreman position before moving on to North Andover Country Club for an assistant super job. In 2000, he took the job as Karl Heintzelman's assistant

at Thomson CC, a move that turned out to be beneficial in more ways than one.

"This place is kind of a diamond in the rough," he says of the Geoffrey S. Cornish-designed, 18-hole private course that opened its fairways in the early 1960s. "The people are great. And I learned so much from Karl while he was here. I'm very lucky."

When Heintzelman left the club before the 2008 season, Perry was the natural choice to replace him.

"I'm very grateful to the board for giving me the chance here," the 46-year-old says fondly. "They could have very easily went outside the club and brought in someone with more experience as a head super, but they showed a lot of trust in me and I appreciate it every day that I show up to work."

In addition to being outside every day and working in an industry that involves a sport he loves, Perry, who tries to play the course at least a couple times per month, is also very happy working as a superintendent because it gives him a chance to put his "personal thumbprint on something."

"The reason I don't think I could work in an office every day is that I get

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Perry - continued from page 1

the feeling that in a job like that you really don't have control of what you're working on," he says. "With this job, I have complete control. I love having a vision for something, putting the hard work into completing it and then seeing the end result. My crew and I get to do that every day. It's a great feeling."


Perry, who lives in Byfield with his wife and kids – Rachael, 25, and Timothy, 21 – says that the biggest factor in succeeding as a superintendent is keep the course playable for all levels.

"You want the course to be just as enjoyable for a high-handicapper as it would be for a professional," says Perry, who over the last two seasons has overseen the addition of new bunkers, the reconstruction of some tee boxes and an upgrade of the irrigation system at Thomson CC. "It's a tough balancing act, but it can be done. And I think we've accomplished it here."

Perry is also very grateful for the work his crew of between 15 to 20 people puts in on a daily basis during the season.

"I think they respect me because they know where I came from," he says. "They know that I've probably done every job that there is to do on a golf course. And they know that when I ask them to do a job that isn't the most glamorous thing in the world, I'm asking them to do it because it needs to be done."

"I always try to stress to these guys that if everyone does their role and everyone does their job correctly every day, we're going to accomplish everything we set out to do each day. That's how I learned to do it as I was coming up the ranks and that's how it needs to be done." ❖



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The Calendar Let Us Down; But Again

By Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist Northeast Region Green Section

September 1, 2009

The mid- August respite, when cooler days and longer nights bring relief to the grass and those that manage it, never materialized. Weather systems from the south kept temperatures and humidity uncharacteristically high. The heavy rains that washed out the past two weekends only made things worse by saturating the soils and ramping up disease pressure. It has been a difficult turfgrass management period and a nightmare for many of those who core cultivated greens.



The stress from core aeration during a hot weather period, followed by heavy rains that saturated poorly-drained, soil-based greens was a recipe for rapid decline of annual bluegrass on a number of golf courses in the past week .

Reports of greens declining in the weeks following core aeration have been coming into our offices from around the Region. Most of the damage seems to be a result of the aeration and clean-up practices, and from the heavy rains that followed, but summer patch also was involved at some locations. The heavy rains infiltrated the recently cored surfaces and saturated the soil profiles. The heat, high humidity, and low soil oxygen was just too much for the weak grass to take. Mowing in the days following aeration, again on saturated soils, also caused mechanical damage.

Mid-August, on paper, always has been considered a good time to core aerate greens, tees, and fairways in the Northeast. The surfaces usually are in need of the cultivation by that time of summer. The warmer soil temperatures favor the creeping bentgrass and provide better over-seeding results, and the turf recovers more quickly. The late summer date also assures a full staff will still be around to complete the operation. Unfortunately, nature seldom pays as much attention to the calendar.

In hindsight, the decision to core aerate greens during the high temperatures and heat was not a good one for some courses. However, it is difficult to find fault with a manager who cannot anticipate the weather that followed the operation and is forced to work with a rigid maintenance schedule developed well in advance around a busy golf calendar. The turf managers' dilemma is a lousy one: go ahead and aerate and risk turf damage, or, put it off, knowing that with the golf schedule, it may be October or later before the greens can be aerated. Oh, and don't forget that healing will be so slow in October that you may see holes in the spring and hear about it again.

This is why it is so important to have some flexibility planned into a maintenance schedule to account for unexpected weather or equipment failure. Those managing large populations of annual bluegrass may choose to move the core cultivation practices to a slightly later date to avoid the high temperatures. Regardless of when you decide to aerate, it is essential to have a back-up date available to reschedule the operation if uncooperative weather strikes.

Losing grass always is painful. Use the opportunity to evaluate the maintenance programs and conditions that contributed to the turf loss. Try to make something positive out of the negative situation. That may be as simple as garnering enough support to address the agronomic issues that plague the greens or allows greater scheduling flexibility.

Contact us at the Easton, Pennsylvania or Palmer, Massachusetts Green Section offices if you are dealing with the effects of the late summer weather, or need assistance formulating maintenance programs and schedules to make the golf course the best it can be. ❖

*Northeast Region Green Section-
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USGA Green Section Northeast Regional Update

Patience is Essential During Recovery from Turf Loss

By Adam C. Moeller, Agronomist

Many golf courses in the Northeast Region experienced substantial turf loss on putting greens as a result of a tough stretch of weather in mid to late August, which was exacerbated in many cases when core cultivation was performed during that stressful period. As a result, many courses are in the middle of a recovery period on one or more of their putting greens. Unfortunately, most courses I've visited recently have reported a slower than expected recovery given the weather over the last two weeks.

During the recovery process, course officials and golfers need to be patient and accepting of the conditions on the golf course. Green speeds are sure to be slower and perhaps not quite as smooth as a result of higher heights of cut adopted to hasten recovery and reduce stress to immature seedlings. Pushing for similar green speeds during a recovery process is most assuredly going to delay the recovery process.

Many golfers have expectations of green, lush turf throughout the golf course. Surface playability should always dominate over aesthetics, especially when turf loss has occurred. Simply put, damaged areas just are not going to look good during the recovery process. In many instances, however, ball roll can be acceptable in these areas. For example, consider a 20 foot putt with the first 5 feet over a damaged area. Ball roll over the damaged area probably isn't going to impact the end result of the putt very much. Bottom line, do not pay attention to the visual quality of these healing areas, instead focus on their playability. If the damage is severe enough, adequate ball roll should not be expected and temporary greens are probably needed. Using temporary greens will not be popular, but doing so will speed the recovery process, and it will likely yield a more sound recovery.

Course officials and golfers are certainly not the only ones who need to be patient. Impatient superintendents that are overly aggressive during recovery can extend the process substantially. There is not a magic number of times the greens should be opened up via cultivation and seeded but two times is probably enough assuming good seed to soil contact is established. Repeated cultivation and overseeding is usually pursued when slow germination is being observed. Spiking and seeding every few days will increase the seed in the damaged areas but consider the damage to the seedlings that have already germinated. Surface smoothness, and more importantly, seedling health, is likely to be compromised if these practices are used too much. Sound cultural practices (water, fertilizer, etc.), good weather, and patience are the keys to a successful recovery. If any of these are not in place, the frustration with losing turf on greens is likely to increase because the recovery time is probably going to be longer.

USGA agronomists can provide insightful and invaluable information involving all areas of golf course maintenance, which 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.

Call for Nominations 2010 GCSANE Distinguished Service Award

Application Deadline: December 1, 2009

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England (GCSANE) annually selects a superintendent who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the golf course superintendent's profession. The nominee must not have been a recipient of this award in the preceding ten years. The Membership Committee welcomes recommendations for nomination.

To propose a candidate for this program, please submit a letter of recommendation to the Membership Committee Chair. The letter should summarize the candidate's contributions and leadership to the superintendent community both locally and nationally.

The GCSANE membership committee will recommend a recipient to the GCSANE Board of Directors to be awarded at the Annual meeting in January 2010.

Nominations must be received by December 1, 2009.

Submit nominations to:

Scott Lagana, CGCS,
Membership Chair, GCSANE
840 Oak Hill Rd.
Fitchburg, MA, 01420
slagana@oakhillcc.org

Past Award Winners

1997 – *Anthony Caranci*

1998 – *Richard D. Haskell*

1999 – *Robert Grant*

2000 – *Dr. Joseph Troll*

2001 – *Geoffrey Cornish*

2002 – *Richard C. Blake and
Phillip I. Cassidy*

2003 – *Leon St. Pierre*

2004 – *Donald C. Hearn*

2005 – *Donald Marrone*

2006 – *Gerry Finn*

2007 – *Ronald Kirkman*

2008 – *Robert Ruzsala*

2009 – *Robert and Norman
Mucciarone*

*The 2009 Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament will now be held on Thursday, October 15, 2009 at Hatherly Country Club in North Scituate, MA hosted by Superintendent Richard Caughey.
Due to unforeseen scheduling conflicts by previous registrants, we are re-opening the registration.*

**The Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England
17th Annual Scholarship and Benevolence Golf Tournament**

In Memory of Glenn Ackley and Richard Blake

Date: Thursday, October 15, 2009

Venue: Hatherly Country Club, North Scituate, MA

Cost: \$400 per twosome / \$800 per foursome

Format: Better Ball of Two / 80% Handicap

Schedule for the day:

11:00 am: Registration / Luncheon

12:30 pm: Shotgun Start

Dinner to follow - Golf Attire for dinner

You are invited to attend what will surely be a great day of golf and camaraderie, the proceeds of which go directly to the benefit of all GCSANE members.

**To receive a player entry form, please contact Sharon Brownell
at 1-800-833-4451 or sbrownell@verizon.net**

UMass Update: Webworms

September 10, 2009

Date: September 10, 2009

Category: Insects

Subject: Webworms

A golf course superintendent from Vermont recently sent me photos of damage occurring around bunker faces. The photos included a couple of insects which looked like webworms to me. I could not tell what species - but some turf- attacking webworms are about a half inch in length, appear pearly white or almost translucent, and have distinct brown heads.

The reason I am posting this update is that a superintendent on Cape Cod had a similar situation last fall. So if you are seeing turfgrass declining

(damage was non-descript, relatively large patches of straw-colored turf), take the time to take a look. The caterpillars should be in the thatch in most areas, and relatively easy to pick out. You can try using a soapy flush (1 or 2 tablespoons of lemon-scented liquid dish detergent in 1 or 2 gallons of water poured over an area 1 or 2 feet on a side), but some species of webworms are much **less** likely to respond to soapy flushes than others. So if you don't see caterpillars wriggling on the surface shortly after flushing the area, it does not necessarily mean that you don't have a problem.

As for management - if the damage is severe enough to warrant treat-

ment, you should get relief from carbaryl (Sevin™), indoxacarb (Provaunt™), or any of the pyrethroids. Keep in mind that the combination products also contain pyrethroids. Water lightly (maybe one or two passes of the heads) in the case of carbaryl because it is highly soluble and will move through the thatch very readily. You might water a pyrethroid in slightly more (two or three passes of the heads), simply because pyrethroids are less soluble and you want to be sure to get the product into the thatch. ❖

Submitted by: [Dr. Pat Vittum](#)

2010 UMASS Winter School for Turf Managers - Accepting Applications

The 2010 session of the UMass International Winter School for Turf Managers is just around the corner! This highly acclaimed program runs for seven weeks, beginning Monday, January 4 and concluding on Thursday, February 18. Winter School, which is administered by UMass Continuing and Professional Education, provides 32 hours of instruction each week, covering general turf management, pest management (insects, diseases, and weeds), turf physiology, personnel management, irrigation, and much more.

Some of our Winter School students are people who have several years of experience in the turf industry and just want to sharpen their skills. Others are making career changes, while others are just getting started. Discussions in the classroom tend to be lively and stimulating, as students usually are very willing to share their experiences with classmates and instructors. There are several "hands on" laboratory sessions, including identification of grasses, diseases, weeds, and insects.

The perennial goal of the UMass Winter School for Turf Managers is to

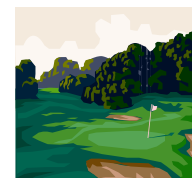
furnish turf managers with the concepts essential to the maintenance of high quality turf, while instilling a sense of environmental stewardship and fiscal responsibility. Enrollment is limited, and close-knit classes offer the opportunity to form lasting relationships with peers and memories that will last a lifetime.

Please note: The application deadline for international students is September 15, 2009. Domestic students must apply by November 15, 2009 to qualify for the lowest program fee.

For complete information on the program and application materials, check out these two links:

http://www.umassturf.org/education/certificate_programs/winter_school.html

<http://www.umasslearn.net/programs/certificate/international-winter-school-turf-managers> ❖



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Massachusetts Alumni to Honor Leon St. Pierre at the Sixth Annual Joseph Troll Turf Classic

The Ranch Golf Club, in Southwick, Massachusetts is to host the 7th annual Joseph Troll Turf Classic, sponsored by the Alumni Turf Group and the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of New England. The event will take place on October 8, 2009. Jedd Newsome, Golf Course Superintendent, will host the event.

This year's tournament honoree is Leon St. Pierre, retired Superintendent of Longmeadow Country Club. He served as Longmeadow's golf course superintendent from 1956 – 1993. Prior to his 37 years of exemplary course management, he served as superintendent for six years at Oxford Country Club; the oldest golf course in the United States. He was baptized in the business at another classic course, Tatnuck Country Club in Worcester, MA; He received his education from Dr. Lawrence Dickenson while attending the University of Massachusetts.

Like many of us, Leon wanted to give back to an industry that gave him so much. He served on several committees for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England and became its strident president from 1965 – 1967. His platform during his tenure and years after until his retirement was simple; show the golf course superintendent as a professional, not

just a hired ditch digger or greens keeper. Like any true leader he stayed true to his ideal with the support of many but not all. Detractors did not deter him. He was always dressed in a suit for GCSANE meetings, spoke eloquently and acted professionally. He along with the help of many GCSANE members initiated the newsletter as a means of increasing education and communication for all. To further elevate the role golf course superintendents had in the golf community, Leon met with the Massachusetts Golf Association board of directors. That meeting carved a seat on the Executive Committee of the MGA for Leon and future GCSANE Presidents. That relationship has educated elite golfing members throughout Massachusetts for over 40 years. (The Alumni Turf Group is very proud to carry on our tradition of honoring those such as Mr. St. Pierre to whom we are indebted for the advanced place our profession has reached.

Thankfully Leon sought a higher place in society for all golf course superintendents. His dedication, determination and professionalism lead to the mutually beneficial relationship that exists today. It is with great pleasure that the Alumni Turf Group honor a man that gave back to an industry and

lead an industry that he loved dearly.

The Troll Classic fundraiser was initiated in 2004 as a means to raise money for the new Dr. Joseph Troll Turf Research Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. With the building completed, the Alumni Turf Group has continued the fundraising efforts to support the turf program at the University.

The Alumni Turf Group (ATG), formed in 2005, is a 501c3 organization made up of turf professionals who are graduates of the Stockbridge School of Agriculture and the University of Massachusetts. Through fundraising, ATG hopes to further research and education, promote UMass alumni in the turf management profession, and instill pride and commitment in the turf programs at the University of Massachusetts.

Entry forms, additional information for this event, membership applications, and ATG information are available online at www.alumniturfgroup.com. ❖

Source: Alumni Turf Group Press Release

Third Annual Assistant's Appreciation Day

Monday, October 19, 2009

Oak Hill Country Club, Fitchburg, MA

Assistant Superintendent Hosts: Sean Keating, Nick Welch, John Micklus

Schedule for day:

- 8:30 am: Registration and Breakfast; Range Open
9:30 am: Education with Dave Fearis, CGCS
GCSAA Director of Membership "Charting Your Future"
11:00 am: Shotgun Start

Dinner Buffet and prizes following golf

Cost is \$75 per Assistant

Deadline for entries is Monday, October 12, 2009.

Field is limited to 100 players. Reservations at 1-800-833-4451 or email sbrownell@verizon.net

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our condolences are extended to Mike Kroian and family on the recent passing of Mike's father Michael Kroian, Sr. on September 18th.

Congratulations to Jim Santoro who was named by BankFive and WSAR as Fall River's most recent Hometown Hero in August. Jim was recognized for his years of dedicated service to the area youths.

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

October 8, 2009
Joseph Troll Turf Classic
 The Ranch Golf Club
 Host: Jedd Newsome

October 15:
GCSANE S&B Tournament
 Hatherly Country Club
 Host: Richard Caughey

October 19:
GCSANE Assistant's Appreciation Day
 Oak Hill Country Club
 Hosts: Sean Keating, Nick Welch, John Micklus

November 16:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
 Milton Hoosic Club
 Host: Jeff Urquhart

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☐ 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.***

Send all Newsletter ads to: Julie Heston, 36 Elisha Mathewson Road, N. Scituate, RI 02857
 Phone: 401-934-3677 Email: jheston@verizon.net

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