

CONNECTICUT CLIPPINGS

Volume 35, No. 1

March, 2001

2000 Superintendent of the Year

John Motycka

By Skip Deubel

The 2000 Superintendent of the Year is John Motycka of Skungamaug River Golf Club. John did not take a typical path into the golf business. In 1961, John received an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from Cornell University. From there, he moved on to Rutgers University and earned a MBA. With education completed, John worked as an engineer in New York.

Meanwhile, back home in Connecticut, his father, a member at Ellington Ridge Country Club, had been working on a small golf facility in Coventry. In 1965, nine holes were opened to the public.

When John's father realized he needed help running the course, he convinced John to leave New York and come home to work on this "country nine-holer" in 1970. During the 1970s, John was responsible for expanding the layout to 18 holes.

Working with a modest \$10,000 labor budget and some "very used" equipment, the second nine opened in 1979.

To this day, the "hands on" approach is still taken. A new green complex was just completed last year.

The club is a little gem just off the beaten path on a quiet country lane.

This year's winner has been a member of CAGCS for 27 years, serving on the board for the past 12 years filling the role of treasurer and most recently golf chairperson. I just can't imagine anyone else making the golf announcements. Even as a golf course owner, he has shown great dedication to CAGCS.



John and his wife, Susan, spend the winter months at their home in Mississippi just before the Louisiana border. Also along the way, John found time to raise two children and presently four grandchildren. Congratulations, John, for a well-deserved award!

Rackliffe joins Turfgrass Science Program at UCONN

By Karl Guillard, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Agronomy
University of Connecticut

A turfgrass science program leading to a baccalaureate of science degree (B.S.) is now available at the University of Connecticut. The program is offered through the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department of Plant Science and is a concentration in the Agronomy major.

The curriculum for the turfgrass science program meets all departmental, college, and university general education requirements. Although the program is new, there are approximately 20 students currently enrolled in the program.

To assist in the turfgrass teaching and extension activities, Steven Rackliffe, CGCS, former golf course superintendent at the Willimantic Country Club, joined the program with 80% teaching and 20% extension responsibilities.

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President's message

Brian Skelly, President



Brian Skelly
CAGCS President

Winter in New England — Mother Nature is starting this year off by trying to balance off her books. This year is starting off with cold, snowy, blustery weather. This, following a pretty wet cool fall, and it looks like we will be getting payback for those mild winters past.

Snow on the ground definitely slows down the outside work, but everything inside gets painted and cleaned. Keep an eye out for Snow Mold this spring and

check that ice covering everything.

It seems like we were just thinking of 2000 and the millennium bug, and here it is —2001. I cannot believe how fast this last year went by. The annual meeting was held at the Highfield CC and even with the rain, those of us who played, got in nine holes without drowning. Chris had the course in great shape. Thanks to Chris Mauro and Highfield CC for hosting the meeting, maybe we can go back to play on a nicer day.

The December GCSAA seminars and our CAGCS January Seminar were all very well attended, informative and interesting. Thanks to Dan Rackliffe, CGCS, for all his hard work in setting up and selecting a diversified set of speakers — great job!

As I start my second term as President, I realize how fortunate I am to have the same board again. There have been some chair changes. Wayne Urban has switched to S & R, Kim Heyl is

now Education, and Dan Rackliffe has moved to Membership. I am certain that everyone will continue to do an excellent job.

The rest of the board members have retained their positions and will carry out their assignments with their usual dedication, enthusiasm and professionalism. But this board will not serve forever, so get involved and volunteer your time and energy. Offer to serve on a committee and run for the board when the time comes.

I would like to congratulate John Motycka on his receiving the Superintendent of the Year Award. It is a well-deserved honor, as John has served this association in many capacities, as treasurer, golf chairperson, and on many committees.

Also, I would like to congratulate Steve Rackliffe, CGCS, on taking a teaching position at UCONN. Just imagine, no weekends, sleeping late, not worrying about disease unless he wants to do a trial study. Good luck, Steve, and I know everyone will give you a helping hand whenever you need one.

Finally, the monthly meeting schedule is just about set for this year, and will be sent out when all the details are ironed out. Once again, it is time for my plea, "donate your clubs for our meetings, help out the association" fill that schedule for next year and the year after.

It is never too early to book a date for your club. It has been our experience over the past few years, that clubs fill their available dates one or more years in advance.

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and Jud W. Smith

The *Clippings* is open to all commentary. Please send your comments to Bob Chalifour, Newsletter Editor, 39 First Street, Groton, CT, 06340.



Steve Rackliffe, CGCS

After a national search, Steve was selected as the new Extension Instructor of Turfgrass Science at UConn. He assumed teaching and extension responsibilities in the Department of Plant Science on December 31, 2000. Steve will teach Golf Course Management, which he has for the past two years at UConn as an adjunct lecturer, and is in the process of developing several additional new courses for the departmental initiative in Turfgrass Science.

In addition to formal course offerings, Steve will assist in student advising, student recruitment, and the development of a Turfgrass Management major in the Ratcliffe-Hicks School of Agriculture leading to an Associates of Applied Science degree.

He will work with the commercial turf-grass industries in the state and provide technical and educational support.

Steve earned his M.S. degree in Plant and Soil Sciences with an emphasis on Turfgrass Science from UMass, and comes to UConn with over 20 years of professional industry experience. He was the golf course superintendent at the Willimantic Country Club for 18 years, was past president and served on the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents for eight years, represented the golf industry on the Board of Directors for the Environmental Industry Council, and was recognized as the Connecticut Superintendent of the Year in 1994.

During his professional career, Steve has made and maintained many contacts within the turf industry that will be beneficial for the new Turfgrass Science program.

In addition to the courses listed below, internships and independent studies involving turfgrass problems are instituted for students in their junior and senior years. The program is flexible, allowing students the opportunity to pursue related areas of interest such as horticulture, landscape design, wildlife management, water resources, economics, business, finance, or other subjects depending on interest.

The Department of Plant Science

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Courses that constitute the Turfgrass Science program core at UConn

Turfgrass Management	Athletic Field Construction and Drainage
Turfgrass Physiology and Ecology	Ecology and Control of Weeds
Golf Course Management	Plant Diseases
Golf Course Design	Management of Insect Pests
Soils	Integrated Pest Management
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Soils, Land Use, and Environmental Quality	Landscape Plant Maintenance
Soil Genesis and Taxonomy	Principles of Agribusiness

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Available Golf Course Water in Connecticut

by Peter Pierson
Director of Government Relations

Does the golf course that you manage have a registered water diversion or a permit for the water you consume?

Let us start with two definitions regarding diversion registration and permitting. These definitions are taken from CT Public Act 82-402, An Act Concerning Water Diversions.

1. Diversion — any activity which causes, allows or results in the withdrawal from the alteration, modification or diminution of the instantaneous flow of the waters of the state.

2. Registration — Any person or municipality maintaining a diversion prior to or on the effective date of this act (July 1, 1982) shall register on or before July 1, 1983, with the commissioner on a form prescribed by him the location, capacity, frequency and rate of withdrawals or discharges of said diversion and a description of the water use and water system. Any such diversion, which is not so registered, may be the subject to the permit requirements of this act.

If the golf course you manage was in operation prior to July 1, 1982 and

your diversion was not registered by July 1, 1983, your golf course may be operating their irrigation system in violation of Public Act 82-402.

In a recent survey, about two-thirds of Connecticut golf courses do not have registered diversions or permits for the water they are consuming.

What can we do about this problem concerning water diversions?

Golf course superintendents, on behalf of the clubs they represent, have:

√ complied with the registration and maintenance of the storage of hazardous materials—gasoline;

√ complied with the CT DEP Pesticide Management Unit with supervisory and operator licensing;

√ complied with continuing educa-

tion credits for recertification of the licenses, and submission of the annual Commercial Use Summary of pesticides applied to our golf courses; and

√ golf clubs in Connecticut have been required to pay an annual golf course registration fee of \$100 to the CT DEP since 1986.

And yet today, we in the golf course industry in Connecticut face an uncertain future and an uphill battle at the highest state level concerning water rights.

Plan on attending our general membership meeting on March 20th where there will be a presentation by the CT DEP Inland Water Resources regarding diversion registrations and permitting of diversions. This meeting will be held at the Hawthorne Inn in Berlin, CT, with registration at 9:00 a.m.

There will be a meeting notice sent to all CAGCS members and Met GCSA members who are at golf courses in Connecticut.

Please plan on attending this meeting of CAGCS and find out where your golf course stands on this critical issue.



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CAGCS 21st Winter Seminar

By Bob Chalifour, CGCS, Ret.
Newsletter Editor

• Another successful winter seminar was held on Tuesday, January 9th.

In spite of some inclement weather, Dan Rackliffe, CGCS, outgoing Education Chairperson, put together a diversified program of speakers that covered a wide range of related topics.

Cooperation between golf course superintendents and outside agencies was a theme often heard.

Dr. Gail Schumann, Associate Professor from UMass, asked that superin-

tendents contact her for sites and information to aid researchers. She can be contacted at 413/545-3413, fax 413/545-1578.

Ron Dodson, President & Chairman of the Board of Audubon International, noted that a high percent of golf courses are involved with their local communities implementing environmental programs.

Dave Oatis, USGA agronomist, stressed the importance of a tree invent-

ory and seeking the help of the USGA and arborists for proper tree selection and location. An interesting aid to help do this is with computer graphics.

Herb Waterous of ArborCom Technologies, Inc. has a program for showing the past, present and future of tree locations.

The high cost and tribulations of bringing a pesticide product to market was presented by Lee Kozsey, Syngenta Co., and Dr. Karl Guillard gave a synopsis of improvements and expansion to be made in the turf program at UConn. See related article on page 1 of this issue.





Welcome new members

Brian M. Johnson - Class B
Blue Fox Run Golf Club

Joseph D. Meadows - Class C
The Connecticut Golf Club

Glenn M. Perry - Class A
Rolling Hills Country Club

* * * * *

**Congratulations
new superintendents!**

Kevin Balocca, formerly assistant at the Black Hall Club, is now the superintendent at Willimantic CC;

Paul Bonini, formerly assistant at the CC of Farmington, is now the superintendent at the Watertown GC;

Peter Grace, formerly assistant at Brooklawn CC, is now the superintendent at H. Smith Richardson GC;

Eric Morrison, formerly assistant at Burning Tree CC and Pilgrim's Harbor (Harbor Ridge), is now the superintendent at Shennecossett GC.

Good luck and best wishes to **Tom Fletcher** on his retirement. He was the superintendent at H. Smith Richardson GC. Tom has been a member of CAGCS for over 30 years.

Frank Savakis is now with the EZ-Go Corporation.

* * * * *

**Congratulations
new parents!**

Mike and Monique Mooney on the birth of their son, Evan Michael.

Arik and Barbara Carlson on the birth of their daughter, Violet Reed.

**Congratulations
new grandparents!**

Peter and Sheri Pierson, on the birth of their first grandchild, Anders Ingham Pierson.

Tom and Bonnie Watroba on the birth of their first grandchild, Mya Fay Watroba.

In the last issue of the *Clippings*, **Brian Pope's** name was inadvertently omitted from the list of members receiving 20-year membership pins.

* * * * *

Generous S & R donation

CAGCS would like to thank Mrs. Sarah Lynch for a \$1,500 donation to our S & R Fund in the name of her late husband, John Lynch.

John was a member of CAGCS for 33 years, superintendent at Woodbridge Country Club for 20+ years; and then on to Beaverdale Memorial Park prior to retiring.

* * * * *

The CT State Golf Association has announced Bruce Wilson as their new Executive Director.

* * * * *

**Have you paid
your CAGCS dues?**

Any member who has not paid his/her dues on or before April 1st will be deleted from the membership roster in accordance with Article III of the CAGCS Bylaws.

* * * * *

Deadline for the May issue of the *Clippings* is April 6th.

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Dogs of Summer

John Garcia, Golf Course Superintendent
Crumpin-Fox Club



Bjorn is a six-year old border collie. He graduated from the Geese Police Academy in North Carolina before he joined John at Fairview Country Club in 1997. He is a rare brown and white purebred.

Bjorn now spends his time guarding the fairways and making new friends at Crumpin-Fox where he is known as "The Wonder Dog". Sometimes I worry that all this attention will go to his head, so occasionally, I remind him that he's nothing until he has a restaurant named after him. (Crumpin-Fox restaurant, Zeke's Bar and Grille, is named after the owner's dog.)

Twenty years ago

Steve Cadenelli, CGCS, president of CAGCS, warned that 1981 could be a year of shortages, most notably a shortage of water. This subject is on everyone's mind and undoubtedly will affect us all.

Is the present drought a short or long term situation? Many feel that the present dry spell is but the beginning of a long term water shortage brought on by increased demands from industry, an ever enlarging population, increasingly polluted water supplies, less rainfall, and the lack of long-range plan-

ning in developing our country's water holding capabilities. Is it possible that the recent history of oil is repeating itself?

It is my opinion that those of us in golf course management should not wait until we are forced into curtailing our use of water.

It is time to re-educate ourselves to just how much water our turfgrass needs to exist and survive.

Our goal should be to provide a healthy, playable turf and not a turf that looks picture perfect. The golfing

Upcoming Events

March 20
CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Hawthorne Inn
Berlin, CT

April 10
CAGCS Monthly Meeting
New Haven Country Club
James L. MacDonald, Host Supt.

May 15
CAGCS Monthly Meeting
Black Hall Club
Philip Neaton, Host Supt.

June 18
CAGCS Monthly Meeting
The Connecticut Golf Club
Mark G. Fuller, CGCS

July 10
CAGCS Annual Invitational
Hop Meadow Country Club
Michael Wallace, CGCS

public must be made aware that changes are going to happen regarding the look of golf course turf in the future.

Steve went on to express a very hearty thank you to Dr. Joseph Troll as the Mass. Turf Conference was celebrating its Golden Anniversary. Joe began the spark behind the ever-improving conference and deserved the many accolades.

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Facilities available for the Turfgrass Science program include state-of-the-art, multimediated classrooms, which utilize computer, video, CD, and digital technologies in addition to traditional teaching approaches. A 150-acre teaching and research farm is located one mile from campus and includes field and greenhouse space for turf classes and projects. Turf plots of vari-

UConn Turfgrass Program

(continued from page 3)

ous grass species and two small putting greens are located at the farm and available for student use.

The UConn 2000 Project, in which the university receives \$100 million a year for 10 years from the state, has transformed the Storrs campus with new buildings and renovations to existing ones. When completed, the university's campus will be one of the most modern of any in the country.

All these activities benefit the Turfgrass Science program, not only because of the changes within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, but also because students take courses in other disciplines to fulfill general educational requirements or pursue related areas of interest.

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resource has many endowments which provides about \$150,000 in scholarships annually to students. Many of these scholarships are directly applicable to students pursuing the Turfgrass Science program.

The UConn Turf Club was formed last semester and received official club status by the University.

For spring activities, the Club is planning to attend the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference. The Club is also developing a display board for the Turfgrass Science program and a web site that will be linked through the departmental web site.

Other proposed activities include participation in the College's annual Horticulture Show and Cornucopia, and trips to golf courses and athletic facilities.

Short and long-term goals of the Turfgrass Science program include the development of a 2-year, Associate

of Applied Science degree for the Turfgrass Management major in the Ratcliffe-Hicks School of Agriculture. The school offers a Horticulture major, which currently accommodates students interested in turf-related careers.

As the BS and AAS programs grow in student numbers at UConn, the emphasis will be on adding more faculty to meet the growing demands of the students. Student chapters of various professional societies are planned as part of the UConn Turf Club activities.

The Department of Plant Science is planning on developing the former 28-acre Spring Hill Orchard into a site where students will be able to obtain hands-on experience in designing, installing, and maintaining turf and landscape plants.

Because the Turfgrass Science program at UConn is relatively new, equipment needs for teaching are a high priority. Several pieces have been purchased through endowments or reallocation of departmental funds, but the program is still under-equipped in many items needed for turf establishment and maintenance.

The College provides a mechanism through the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, by which donated equipment in good working condition can receive tax writeoffs to the donor.

The UConn turfgrass Science program would be appreciative if efforts by CAGCS members result in the donation of the following items: Mowers, topdressers, aerators, seeders, spreaders, sprayers, power rakes, or other items that are necessary for turf management.

Contacts for the UConn Turfgrass Science Program are: Dr. Karl Guillard, 860/486-6309, karlguillard@uconn.edu and Steven Rackliffe 860/486-1944, stevenrackliffe@uconn.edu.



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Walter E. 'Bud' Smith awarded Hall of Fame Distinguished Service Award by CSGA

Bud Smith, owner of Orange Hills CC, was honored on December 13, 2000 at the Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame dinner and was given a distinguished service award by the Connecticut State Golf Association.

Smith has been a member of CAGCS for 52 years being accepted into membership in 1949. He took over management of the club which his father owned that same year. He was 24 at the time and had just graduated from the University of Connecticut.

Before that, he had fought as an infantryman in World War II and spent five months as a prisoner of war. He attended Stockbridge at the University of Massachusetts in 1950.

"It was frustrating with just nine holes," Bud said. "I had people finish nine holes who wanted to go out again but I couldn't fit them in. I didn't know what the future of golf was going to be, but I knew that in my little world, I couldn't accommodate the people."

So in the early fifties, he began buying land to make room for expansion. He engaged course architect Geoffrey Cornish

to design nine new holes, and in 1955 set out with a single chainsaw and lots of determination to clear the woods. "Geoff told me he had built only one course that had worse land than ours. It was all swamp and stone. We got it done, but it took six long years. If I knew what I was getting into, I might never have started."

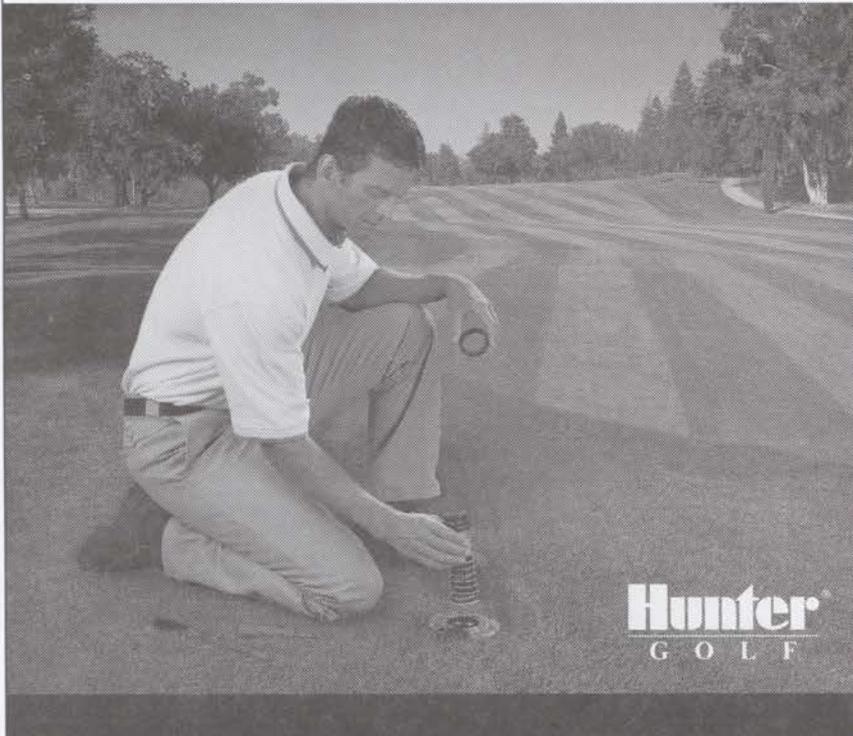
This determination to succeed characterizes Bud Smith's half century of running the Orange Hills CC and is, in part, the reason the CSGA has chosen him to receive a Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame Distinguished Service Award.

Bud has continued to improve the facilities to the point where the club is regarded as one of the most successful and attractive privately owned public courses in the state.

Bob Esposito, president of the Orange Hills CC Men's Association, which Bud helped establish in 1955, says, "Bud's goal has always been to give the people a great product".

*Excerpts from the "Connecticut Golfer",
newsletter of the CSGA, December, 2000.*

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Shhh! Don't tell anyone, but the control for earthworms has been found — and it's legal!

By Larry Gilhuly, Director
USGA Northwest Region

A conversation recently and repeatedly heard at golf courses across America:

"So, what can we do to eliminate our earthworms?"

"There are no products available that are registered for earthworm control."

"But XYZ Golf Course has really had good results with XYZ insecticide/fungicide!"

"Yes, but there are no legal methods of control for earthworms."

Well, guess what? For the past 15 years, golf course superintendents in the Pacific Northwest have been reporting significantly reduced earthworm populations when they conducted regu-

lar sand topdressing programs on their fairways. Complete removal? No, but populations are reduced enough to eliminate this topic as an issue.

The problem has been that there was no data to back up these visual observations, but work conducted by Paul Backman and Eric Miltner at WSU, along with Tom Cook at OSU, is beginning to show what happens when sand is applied to earthworm infested soils.

Observations reveal the differences in earthworm populations where no sand has been applied on a typical western Washington silty loam soil and a plot that has received 1 1/2" of sand during the past two years.

Similar results have been reviewed this summer at numerous golf courses where topdressing has reached a total of 2" to 3" over several years. In some cases, it has taken several years to visually observe the reduction since the sand applications were not extensive. However, those golf courses where

1/2" to 1" of sand has been applied annually show noticeable reductions in earthworm populations.

There will still be debate regarding the positives of earthworms (thatch reduction and aeration) and the negatives of their castings. Based on conditions in the Pacific Northwest, the negatives of playing in mud sway the debate. Personally, I'll take dry and firm with thatch over "lift, clean and place" any time!

Editor's note: Crumpin-Fox Club superintendent John Garcia has reported no earthworm problem on his fairways that were built with sand over 30 years ago. To view pictures that would not reproduce well in our publication, go to the USGA.org/green/tas/regionalnews/archive/northwest/september.

Thanks to Michael Cornicelli, A-OK Turf Equipment, for sharing this article.

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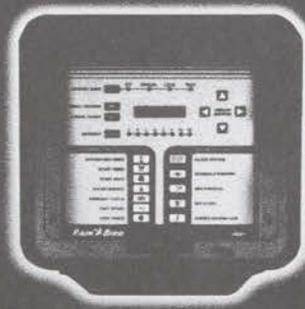
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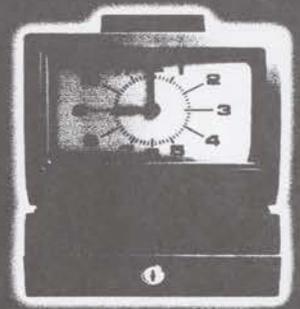
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