

# NEWSLETTER

JULY, 1971



## Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

Sponsors and administrators of the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund — Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

### WHEN YOU'RE HOT, YOU'RE HOT

That's the way that dice-rolling cat explains it in his hit record, and it just about sums up the report on the fourth annual Super-Press Tournament last month at the Woodland Golf Club.

However, the phrase could be interpreted in many ways.

For instance, the weather was unusually choking. Temperatures raced past the 100-mark during the heavy hours of play. Then, to top it off, a thunderstorm broke up many a foursome with snaky lightning cracks which sent players scurrying for the safety of the clubhouse.

Hot (super-hot, if you please), too, was the play of Manny Francis and Joe Looney of the *Boston Herald*. They bested a field of 30 teams with some eye-popping golf as they struck for a 71 and solid hold on the Arthur Anderson Trophy, presented them by the man of the same name at the windup banquet that evening.

Again hot might describe the feeling under the collar which some of the participants experienced because we (the tournament committee, the Newsletter, the Association) goofed. Yes, friends, we blew the big one when many foursomes showed up in the morning only to learn that tourney action wouldn't begin until 1 p. m.

Most members were embarrassed. Most guests were annoyed. Although they didn't desert the event by ambling off to another course for a little friendly game among themselves, there were moments when it was possible the tournament could lose half of its field.

The explanation is simple or sounds simple. There was a complete lack of communication. The host club thought it was understood that no outside play would begin until afternoon. The tournament committee never bothered to inform members

of a definite change in the format (previous super-press events started sometimes in the wee hours of the morning). And the Newsletter didn't splash the "time of game" in its advance billing.

There were some bright spots gathered out of the gloom which put a damper on participants in more ways than one . . . i.e. you should have seen that rain come down!

Several out-of-towners discovered the alcoholic beverage laws of Newton and Wellesley whose city lines cut in the general direction of the front nine at Woodland. They learned, for example, that you can buy a sandwich in Wellesley, bring it across the border to Newton, order a glass of beer and still eat the sandwich while it's hot.

Then, too, host superintendent Norman Mucciarone presented the field a magnificently conditioned golf course. Woodland was ideal for this type of event, a comfortable membership layout which didn't catch players in a bear trap with demands for length or uncanny accuracy.

The banquet also took some of the sting out of the starting-time foul-up. Woodland apparently had its best chef in action and all the preparation was of the highest order.

The fourth annual Super-Press, then, was eventful, to be sure. The Association hereby apologizes to anyone who may have been inconvenienced beyond the point of repair. We promise to do better next time. No goofs, no red faces because of the communication gap.

In the meantime, congratulations to Manny, Joe and the rest of the prize winners. They seemed to have been lost in the shuffle during this low-key self slap on the wrist.

— Gerry Finn

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the G.C.S.A. of N.E. will be July 12, 1971 at the Orchards Golf Club, South Hadley, Massachusetts. The Host Super is Dave Vibber. Golf will be anytime after 12:30 p. m. and a catered steak dinner will be served in the evening. Make sure that you return your postcard to Dave. There are plenty of restaurants on Route 33 to have lunch before arriving at the club. The Orchards Course is owned by Mt. Holyoke College and it is a Donald Ross layout built in 1922 and the back nine were added in 1928. Dave Vibber has been the super there for 5 years. Prior to that he was in the United States Navy. He graduated from Stockbridge in 1963, took his placement at Mt. Pleasant, Boylston and worked at Saddle Hill for one year.



Directions: Massachusetts Turnpike west to Exit 5 Chicopee. Follow exit signs to South Hadley and Route 33. Remain on

Route 33 until you reach Route 116 (about 4 miles). Follow 116 about 2 miles and turn right just before the "Mt. Holyoke College" golf course sign. Take your next left and this will bring you into the club area.

### NATIONAL NOTES

On April 12, 1971, Mr. Richard Blake, President of the G.C.S.A.A. announced the availability of a new salary continuation program for members of the G.C.S.A.A. By now all members of the National should have received the info. Are you protected?

### IN MEMORIAM

It is with deepest regret that we inform you of the death of the President Emeritus of the National, Norman Kramer. Norm passed away on June 3, 1971. He was Superintendent of the Point O' Woods Golf and Country Club, Benton Harbor, Michigan since 1959.

# Golf Course Superintendents Association

## THE SPIRIT OF 76

Orville Clapper is the elder statesman of the turf and golf course equipment industry. He is 76 years old, going on 39. In the case of his birthdate of March 14, 1895, the figures lie. Orville Clapper can't be 76! If he is, the rest of us are over 100!

So, it was fitting as one of the highlights of the fourth annual Super-Press Tournament that Orville was commended for his distinguished career as industrialist, humanitarian, pioneer in his chosen field and valued friend of the golf course superintendent.

National and New England president, Richard Blake, did the honors of knighting Orville during the most moving moment of the event at the Woodland Golf Club. Orville just took it in stride. The gathering didn't. They gave him a standing ovation. The Woodland dining room looked like Fenway Park just after Yaz has hit a bases-loaded homer in the last of the ninth.

People, who have not had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Clapper or hearing of his contributions to golf, might ask: "Who is this man?" It takes a lot of fancy rhetoric to answer that question.

Orville was born in 1895 . . . down on the farm in Paris, Missouri from where he migrated to a wheat ranch in Montana to spend his youth.

In 1916 John Clapper founded the Toro Manufacturing Corp. in Minneapolis. Shortly after Orville joined his father in the company as purchasing agent and office manager.

From there Orville grew wings. He and T. L. Gustin left the plant to form the first distributorship in Philadelphia. By 1922 the operation there was running smoothly, so Orville set out for Newton and another branch of Toro. He's been there ever since.

The beginning of New England Toro was meager. The first headquarters for the company was the basement of Orville's home. In 1931 Orville moved the business to its present address, 1121 Washington Street and in 1946 it became "The Clapper Co."

Once this was established, Orville turned to the betterment of the turf industry and the recognition of the golf course superintendent as an integral spoke in the wheel of golf.

Orville was very active with Jess DeFrance in setting up many of the programs at the University of Rhode Island turf plots. Among his accomplishments were the creation of the John Samuel Clapper Memorial Scholarship at URI in 1947 to promote young men in the turf industry and the fine-honing of an operation which we now know as the Massachusetts Turf and Lawn Grass Council.

He wasn't through, not by a longshot. In 1958 he met with friends to formulate plans for the establishment of the O. J. Noer Research Foundation as recognition of this highly respected turf grass agronomist. The purpose here was to promote scientific research in turf grasses and related fields, to train graduate students for conducting said research by offering financial assistance and to disseminate the results of said investigations. That same year he was awarded the John Shanahan Memorial Plaque of Merit.

Who is Orville Clapper? He is a giant among his contemporaries. He is the last word in the golf equipment industry. He is a pillar on which many a golf course superintendent has leaned. He is one of us!

— Gerry Finn

## SOUND OFF!!!

*(Here we go again. This is that time and space of the Newsletter when the reader gets a chance to speak his mind . . . tell it like it is, if you will. The Newsletter is most happy to relinquish this space to you for the sole purpose of airing problems and expressing views. Everyone interested in golf is invited to contribute his or her opinion . . . and on any subject concerning golf. Letters and cards should be sent to Newsletter Mail Box, 24 Riverview Drive, Newbury, Mass. 01950. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on each letter published.)*

\* \* \* \*

"I was most interested in your 'Running Out of Ideas' in one of the recent N. E. Newsletters.

"You have a point, and it is well taken; but I would like to offer my arguments for continuing to offer a Seminar each year.

"The basic reasons for offering our first Seminar still hold. We wanted a Seminar small enough to encourage give-and-take talk between speakers and the audience. Meeting of several hundred people simply does not lend itself to informal questions and answers. As I am sure you realize as a university we must serve all turf interests in our state. Many of these (i.e. parks, cemeteries, etc.) people work for town governments who could not afford to send their people out of state. We have many golf courses in the same situation.

"I am not worried about finding speakers and interesting subjects. There are many people here at UNH that can do a good job.

"I suggest that in order to avoid the 'repeated speech syndrome' attend only one conference or seminar each year. We are going to do our best to offer a variety of subjects each year. It would help if we knew what the other guy is planning."

WILLIAM E. KNOOP

Univ. of New Hampshire

You may have hit it on the button, Bill. Let's get a little teamwork going here. That way we'll have more bright eyes and less sleepy heads at our conferences.

\* \* \* \*

"Recently in a conversation with your Gerry Finn, the talk turned to the use of synthetic tees at heavy traffic courses frequented by golfers who are not aware of the delicacy of fine turf.

"Since I am a superintendent on a municipal course where play on a weekend day often surpasses 300, the experiment with synthetic tees was a natural for me. So, we tried them on three holes and sat back to see what happened.

"Of course, I am only one superintendent and represent only one golf club. But my experience with synthetic tees leads me to believe that they are not the answer to this problem. Let me tell you some of the things which have happened.

"First of all, the tees do cut. There also is a fallacy that they require little or no maintenance. This, in my case, is far out of line with what has happened. I find the tees 'drifting' and getting extremely hard by the touch. Golfers tell me that they have an awful time putting tees into the stuff.

"Maybe I am being too harsh, but I have to be truthful. I am sure the synthetic people are experimenting all the time with new materials to minimize problems. But, at this point, I am

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leaning toward the return to natural turf. For my money, it is not as expensive in the long run compared to synthetic turf."

PHIL BARTON  
(Club Withheld)

The Newsletter is not about to begin the practice of endorsing or condemning products. Mr. Barton's words speak for themselves.

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#### WHAT IS A BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

Being a member of a Board of Directors is a demanding, thankless, and sometimes time-consuming task. Individuals know that when they accept such a position. I know because I am a member of several Boards. There is absolutely no difference whether one is a Director of a Bank, a University, or the New England Golf Superintendents Association. Certainly, during the most significant meeting of the year, it was discouraging and disheartening to the many individuals who participated in our recent gathering to find a total disregard of our interest by our Directors. They just couldn't find the time or show the interest in being a part of our Meeting. An organization is only as good as the members who constitute its body. One must always ask, "Am I doing my part?" The first who must answer the question by a positive demonstration of support are the leaders of our august Association. Where were you? Your absence was duly recognized and was not in good taste.

Turf Wise  
Eliot, Maine

Thanks for good words — we appreciate them. However, please sign your name next time. We don't like to print ANONYMOUS letters.

\* \* \* \*

#### TROLLING WITH JOE

1. Our fairway turfgrass appears to be mainly bluegrass; however, I can see many brown patches on all fairways. What is the cause of these seemingly dead areas?

*Answer.* The brown spots probably are patches of Kentucky bluegrass that are infected by the fungus, *Helminthosporium*. It causes a disease known as leaf spot. Continued favorable weather, cool and moist, for the inciting organism can further the infection whereby it attacks the crowns of the plant and causes death. The proper use of fungicides, though expensive, can check the disease but many applications might be necessary if favorable weather persists.

2. A number of golf courses have reported that their golf greens are slow in coloring.

*Answer.* Poor color is not apropos to New England alone this year. I have talked to superintendents from Maryland on up and they are all having the same problem — cool weather. *Poa annua* is the first to start growing and it is yellow green. Creeping bentgrass needs warm weather and is not growing. A combination of the above grasses gives the green a mottled appearance. CAUTION: Do not apply too much fertilizer, especially nitrogen, to green if the weather remains cool. An excess of nitrogen that is not being taken up by the plant could explode in warm weather causing severe injury to turf.

Dr. Joseph Troll  
University of Massachusetts

"I can't say enough about the wonderful work your Newsletter and the profession it represents are doing for golf.

"Because you are interested in virtually every facet of golf, I thought it reasonable to air this thing about vandalism on golf courses through your fine publication.

"Being a member of a recently ravaged club, I was wondering just what steps can be taken in order to discourage and if that doesn't work, to punish these people who shamefully destroy other people's property.

"The damage to our greens during the vandals' raid is unbelievable. Whoever the culprits were, they did a thorough job. They literally attacked 14 of our greens with axes, rakes and other sharp-edged instruments. The result was an overwhelming amount of torn turf.

"As I said, I am only a member at the club. But this act directly affected me. It took several days before our overworked superintendent was able to repair the greens so that they were playable again. I am still perplexed by this whole idea of vandalism.

"Isn't there something we can do about this?"

LAURA PRENTICE  
Fiskdale, Pa.

Get a gun, fill it with buckshot and don't shoot until you see their ratty rear ends!

*(So, on this violent note another session of Sound Off comes to a close. We're sure the offerings this month were most interesting and timely. You, too, can make this column the blockbuster it was meant to be. Don't be bashful. Pick up your pen and let us have it.)*

Application to be voted on at the next regular business meeting, July 12, 1971: John Cronin, Jr., 27 Sanders Street, North Andover, Massachusetts. Jack is applying for an Associate Membership and he is the super at the Far Corners Golf Course, Boxford, Massachusetts.

June 9, 1971

Dear Members of the Golf Course Superintendents  
Association of New England, Inc.

For those of you who were unable to attend the recent meeting of the Association, I would like to repeat my message of appreciation.

May I express my thanks to all of you for your many kindnesses to my husband, Jerry Spahr?

I wish it were possible to personally extend my thanks to each one of you, individually, for your many considerations of him over the past years. My heart is filled with special gratitude to you, who have given him your respect and friendship.

With deep appreciation,

Most sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Spahr  
(Mrs. Ervin L.)

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\* Contributors to the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund

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**FIRST CLASS**

