



Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

JUNE, 1971



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

SUPER-PRESS TIME

The superintendent's pride and joy of the summer competitive scene — the super-press golf tournament — moves to another exciting and exacting course Tuesday, June 8 when Woodland and Norman Mucciarone play host for the annual affair.

Super-press time is always a happy affair. Although there are a few overzealous culprits in the field (they're the guys who always win, grrr!), the laughs seem to outnumber the birdies and pars. And the event carries professional value. It gives the superintendent a chance to enjoy the company of the newspaper, radio or TV personality while making him aware of the part the super plays in the overall golfing picture.

This year's course is keeping in line with those of past tournaments. Woodland is regarded as one of the finest layouts on the New England wheel of golfing real estates and Norman Mucciarone is the man who has been most instrumental in keeping it in that lofty position.

The field will be fighting for the Arthur Anderson Trophy, named for that great pioneer of the superintendents' profession who has been one of the leaders in boosting his brothers to a level of high recognition. Arthur is expected to tour the Woodland grounds during action and be on hand at the awards banquet to present the winners their spoils.

Defending champions are Ron Kirkman of the Needham Country Club and Roger Barry of the Quincy Patriot Ledger. A year ago they toured mighty Pleasant Valley in 71 blows for a one-stroke victory over several tandems locked at 72.

New England Association President Dick Blake urges all members to line up a partner and participate in this blue ribbon presentation of Julius Aksten and the tournament committee. "This is a great tourney and a wonderful opportunity for superintendents to form an amiable relationship with the press", Blake observed. "Certainly, it is virtually next to being mandatory that all take part."

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, June 8, 1971 is the date of the next meeting at the Woodland Golf Club, Newton, Massachusetts. The club is located on Route 16 from Route 128. This is the annual Superintendent-Press tournament and there will be a dinner served in the evening. Make your reservations early with Norman Mucciarone, telephone 332-3056.

Correction for May Newsletter: The news from "Western Mass." should have read that Dave Clement is the superintendent at the Crestview Country Club, Agawam, Massachusetts.

SURVEYING THE SURVEY

The Massachusetts Golf Association, in a show of good faith and intention, has recently turned out for observation a club operations survey. The MGA admits this is the first survey of its kind and perhaps open to criticism, but it hopes it will provide officers, directors and committee chairmen of its member clubs with a representative picture of the organizational and working structure of the country club and golf course.

The survey cover says the information was collected in the summer of 1970, for the 1969 figures. And, in case you haven't looked lately, there has been a big change in the last two years.

Anyway, it was both an ambitious and commendable undertaking and despite the two-year drag in time it draws some interesting conclusions.

For instance, according to the MGA . . . if you are an average superintendent on an 18-hole course, you are making a salary of \$12,295 which places you below the average chef who pulls in \$12,933. As far as course maintenance is concerned, you are a middle of the roader if you spend \$69,400 a year on an 18-hole layout. The high and low here might raise a few eyebrows. The top outlay is \$103,100 and the bottom of the barrel, \$25,500.

You will be unhappy to know that superintendents still lag behind the club manager in salary, the average difference being more than \$2000 per. There is a wide edge in the highest category. Top salary among the managers is tagged at \$26,000, while the best of the supers is \$18,000.

There are all kinds of other figures with which to intrigue the survey reader and, for the most part, it does give that representative picture the MGA sought when they started it all. However, there is one criticism which should be aired, not as a matter of boiling the MGA but to offer a suggestion in the operation of future surveys.

The gripe has a superintendent flavor. It centers on the fact that in many cases the superintendent at MGA member clubs never were made aware of the survey being made. In some interviews clerks and bookkeepers provided the information concerning maintenance costs and other categories where the superintendent might have given a more accurate account.

It was, as a matter of fact, a very impersonal survey which might be the cause for concern. It would take much searching, for example, to learn what "other" on the list of items was. One club reported spendings of \$46,893 under "other." It happened to be No. 4 as a matter of identification. Then, down aside No. 27 the outlay under "other" just happened to total \$46,893. That would qualify as an amazing coincidence, right?

The MGA survey, then, tells all but could be tainted somewhat because of the sources of information from which it was drawn. In the future it might be wise to ask the superintendent about the workings of the golf course. He just might know more about it than the club filing clerk!

— Gerry Finn

Golf Course Superintendents Association

GENERAL UPROAR ? ? ?

The reaction to a steamroller attempt to create the new and all-conquering position of country club general manager is mixed at the moment, but it could reach the level of uproar should the move catch fire in favor of one of the three managerial groups now operating the club.

There is immediate casting of suspicious eyes on the club manager. This is only natural, since in isolated cases the club manager already has been given the command post which means the golf professional and course superintendent are directly responsible to him.

The question arises, however, as to the necessity of establishing the title and position of general manager. From a practical standpoint (practical in this case meaning financial), the thing could die before it even gets off the ground. In effect, the general manager's job would place a fourth party on the managerial totem pole. And in all likelihood it would call for an additional salary above that of the club manager, pro and superintendent.

For this reason alone, such people as Charles Baskin — president of the Connecticut Golf Course Superintendents Association — claim all the fuss might constitute a much to do about nothing situation. "Certainly, there will be some clubs who fall for this new line of an overall manager being necessary to produce a smooth operation", Baskin says. "But those who are interested in it, will think twice when they consider the cost. This, plus the general economic condition of the country, make me think it will never come off."

Baskin strays just a bit from his position, though, in agreeing with a proposal that superintendents prepare for such a move through methods of education. "I think a superintendent should constantly be thinking of improving himself", Baskin disclosed. "I for one have gone out on my own and taken courses in management and business. After all, we are in a sense businessmen, and anything we can do to help us be better businessmen will act in our favor. In other words, I think the superintendent should prepare himself for the position of general

manager even though it sounds like a far-off proposition to me at the moment."

Theoretically, the general manager would be a sort of chairman of the board in the operation of the country club. In order to be effective, he would have to be well versed in the duties of the club manager, the pro and the superintendent.

According to most people queried on the subject, this is next to being an impossibility. The three jobs are so diversified that it would take a lifetime of study and experience for one man to master each task. "This brings us to final decisions on the part of the general manager", Baskin continues. "If the general manager is to have the last word, then he must be able to know the inner workings of the three positions. It would be very difficult for me, for example, to tell the head chef he's overcooking the roast beef. Of course, that's an exaggerated for instance, but it points up how complicated things would get with one man calling the shots."

In the few clubs where the club manager has been given the final word in situations dealing with the pro shop and golf course, the feeling seems to be that he gives the pro and super a free hand. One superintendent, who works under such an arrangement, says that he does his job just as though there weren't a general manager. "I've been at my club for several years", he told. "And I can't remember one instance when the manager insisted that I change the way I was grooming the course. However, it just might be that he is a practical individual. If he weren't, maybe we'd have trouble."

Whatever the potential personality of the would-be general manager, the attempt to create the position faces many hazards. As Baskin says, the big roadblock is the expense involved. In these days of shaky economies, it just doesn't seem feasible to pay someone a five-figured salary to perform a task which is overexhausting in the first place. In the meantime, though, it wouldn't be a bad idea for the superintendent to prepare himself for that day when the call goes out for applications.

— Gerry Finn

Renovations at Blue Hill

The Blue Hill Country Club officially opened its completely renovated holes No. 2 to No. 7 on May 14, 1971. Superintendent in charge, Wayne Ripley has done something that I think most course superintendents would like to do, but cannot because of hole limitations. He renovated six holes on his 27-hole layout from tee to green. Wayne says that due to the wetness of the area and the poor playing conditions caused by wetness and the poa he convinced the Board to undertake this project.

Using a farm plow to turn the area over and then pushing up all the loam, they then hauled in 50,000 tons of gravel to reshape and crown the fairways. This allows the water to run off to new drains and a couple of newly designed ponds. The fairways and rough were seeded to straight Merion in July, 1970 and the tees were sodded to Merion. Manuel Francis, Sr. was the architect and they used Vesper Bent on the greens. During construction they added traps to the holes, making the course play tougher. Congratulations to Wayne and his chairman, Dr. Kushner, for a job well done. They have done a job to be proud of.



Left to right — Roger Barry, Quincy Patriot Ledger, Sidney Snider, President Blue Hill Country Club, Dr. Edward Kushner, Green Chairman, Blue Hill Country Club and Wayne Ripley, Superintendent, Blue Hill Country Club.

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SOUND OFF!!!!

(It's time to wind up the reader and let him spin some of the steam or sweetness off the top of his head in another edition of Sound Off. The New England Newsletter is proud of this chance to give everyone the chance to spill his views on any phase of golf. Everyone is welcome to take part and the Newsletter is happy to make this space available for that purpose. Letters and cards may be sent to Newsletter Mail Box, 24 Riverview Drive, Newbury, Mass. 01950. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on each letter published. Incidentally, today's opening salvo is printed with the permission of The Hartford Times, the publication to which it was originally sent.)

* * * * *

"A critical question deserves space on your pages. What is the sportsman's responsibility to his environment? Perhaps some of your verbose correspondents would react to the following particulars:

"How does the hunter affect the balance in nature as he drapes a deer carcass over his six-cylinder polluter? What does he give back to the altered environment? A few scraps of litter? A hot match?

"How does the prowess of the professional athlete affect our habitat? After exchanging great masses of steel and concrete for grass and trees to form his arena of activity, what does he return to the environment? Tons of throw aways? Thousands of programs of recent exploits?

"How does fun-seeking everyman alter his world with advancing technology? How will his all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles leave the earth?

"Where will we stop? Is fun and entertainment more important than existence? Are there not ways to enjoy healthful recreation without destroying the world around us?"

GEORGE S. BROWN
West Hartford, Conn.

You sort of make all of us feel like heels, George.

* * * * *

"Every darn time I see the Newsletter I know it improves golf course maintenance by improving the status of the superintendent as manager of a valuable, complex property subject to many and mysterious elements and basically the foundation of every business factor in golf.

It's a slow job but just as sure as shootin' you are creating a reality (not that P.R. rubbish word 'image') of the golf course manager as an important business executive.

"I didn't realize the Newsletter is as good as it is. It really has to take a high place in the recognition ladder of the superintendent.

"Right now I'm not sure whether I will make it to the U. S. Open at Merion, but if I do, I will look up your Gerry Finn and buy a drink in thanksgiving.

"Best to your national and New England president, Dick Blake, and the rest of the mob."

HERB GRAFFIS
Golfdom Magazine

For once we are speechless. But thanks for the plug, Herb.

* * * * *

"This letter is written as a matter of advising all superintendents that we should start now to prepare ourselves for what I think is the coming thing in golf operations — the general manager.

"It has been apparent to me for some time that the country

club chain of command is in the midst of a great overhaul. The need for a general manager should not be of any concern to us at this time. There are pros and cons as to the establishment of such a position. Nevertheless, there are others in that same chain of command who look upon themselves as the natural choice for the job if it ever becomes a reality.

"I am most concerned with this possibility, that of the superintendent being left behind again when he should be thinking of the future and his role in the country club operation. I believe it would be worthwhile for the Superintendents Association — both at the national and local level — to explore the possibilities of setting up an educational program for the express purpose of training general managers.

"Maybe I am making a lot of noise over nothing, but I believe it is in the best interests of our profession to at least think about a situation which could change the whole picture of the country club's administrative organization. It is not too much to ask of our local and national people to become aware of this need for an educational program.

"Even if the general manager push never materializes, anything we can do to upgrade our position will return us benefits in the future. I urge that everyone in our New England group attempt to better themselves through some form of additional education. Let's be ready to apply for the big job . . . if it ever comes time to do so."

LEON ST. PIERRE
Longmeadow, Mass.

The general manager proposal may be stronger than we think. Don't say you haven't been warned!

* * * * *

(Thus, a rather short but interesting session with our readers comes to an end. But there'll be more next month and we're hoping to hear from you . . . and you . . . and you . . . and . . .)

GOLF WINNERS

Golf winners at the First Outdoor meeting at the Milton Hoosic Golf Club were as follows:

Low Gross — tie	Ken Mooradian
	Ron Kirkman
1st Low Net	John Barry
2nd Low Net — tie	A. Roy MacIntosh
	Ray King
	Nary Sperandio
	Tom Schofield

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the family of Mr. Charles Parker who passed away on May 17, 1971. Mr. Parker was superintendent at the Wyano Club and retired super at Agawam Hunt. He was also GCSA of NE secretary during the 30's.

We also extend our sympathy to the family of Mr. Jerry Spahr of the Old Fox Chemical Company. Jerry passed away on May 16, 1971.

Art Anderson informs us that Dan Collins of Winchester C. C. was injured while on the job and would enjoy hearing from his friends.

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NEWSLETTER

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FIRST CLASS

