

# NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 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.

### PROFESSIONAL ALL THE WAY

GCSAA Certification. Sounds very official, doesn't it?

At first, the suggestion that golf course superintendents apply themselves to an educational program brought a lot of giggles and eyes coated with suspicion from the fraternity. This, it was said, was just another way for the national organization to gouge its membership for additional income. This, alas, is not true. Certification is not a flouting of the profession's original purpose. It is an avenue to an end . . . the realization that the superintendent is more than a hired hand, that he is the product of a planned program to reassure club owners and members he can perform his chores in a professional manner.

Right now it's appropriate that we take hats off, bow down gently and give three cheers to the architects of the certification program. It must be said that they brought a scholarly approach to the testing grounds and their examination setup is just short of deciding a Rhodes Scholar. They were thorough, to be sure. That's the way it should be.

Certification is an offshoot of the old governmental objective of checks and balances. It has twofold returns. First, it gives the superintendent a sense of security in his profession and a certain amount of ammunition in his incessant effort to make his employer realize that his job is one requiring more than a hand to sow the seed.

And it also gives the club owner or corporation the benefit of knowing the certified superintendent is a man who is versed in every phase of the profession. A certified super doesn't have to rush to the textbook when a problem arises. He is fortified beforehand. Otherwise, he doesn't become certified.

The arrangement for establishing the title of certified golf course superintendent has to be lauded even before it is put into operation. The national organization has really outdone

itself in the preparation of a manual that serves as an examination guide for those who wish to gain this new and obviously well-planned status.

The certification program must reap dividends once the first of its graduates hit the open fields to announce to the golfing world that the golf course superintendent is not a member of the working force of a club by mistake . . . but by design.

The entire setup leading to certification is a genuine relative to a college degree. Applicants will not be babied or coddled as they seek to become certified. They will be required to take an examination on the sweeping topics of the golf course and finish said exam under the allotted six hours. And believe this typewriter, the test is not one of those true or false chance things.

One of the pleasant, if not sensible aspects of the program, is the idea of having a candidate prepare for his certification test as long as he pleases. After the man's application has been processed he will receive study material to aid him in the examination. But he also will be allowed to take as much time as he wishes to bone up for the test.

The certification program of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is not a fly-by-night venture. And it is not one where automatic passing is the order of the day. Thanks to a well-meaning and hard-working number of program planners, the certification attempt looks to come across as a big winner. It is the product of men dedicated to perfection and men willing to stake their reputations on the idea of lifting the golf course superintendent to legitimate professional status. It is the call to prestige, the urge to make superintendents realize they must have some sort of guideline to retain their dignity and establish their knowhow as an integral part of the golfing community. It is for real and for sure. And its groundwork is solid a la mode.

— Gerry Finn

### Nominating Committee Reports

Chairman Norman Mucciarone reports the following is the proposed slate to be voted at the annual meeting December 6, 1971:

President ..... Robert Grant  
1st Vice President ..... Tom Curran  
2nd Vice President ..... Wayne Zoppo  
Secretary ..... Ron Kirkman  
Treasurer ..... Lucien Duval  
Trustee 3 years ..... Burt Fredrick  
Finance Chairman ..... Nary Sperandio  
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Norfolk Country Club — 9 Holes  
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Phone 326-1542



Phil Cassidy,  
1971 Seniors Champion  
GCSA of NE

#### Applications To Be Voted On At Next Meeting

William J. Rogers — Associate, 231 Parkland Ave., Lynn, Mass. 01905. Bellevue Golf Club.

John A. Nugnes, Associate, 75 Highland Drive, Centerville, Mass. Fiddler's Green Golf Course.

William Belden, Associate, 41 Depot Rd., No. Hatfield, Mass. Amherst Golf Club.

Christopher Voutas — Associate, 117 Hosmer St., Marlboro, Mass. Marlboro Country Club.

# Golf Course Superintendents Association

## SOUND OFF!!!!

(Time once again for the Newsletter reader to take us, the game of golf and anyone within poking distance apart. The fan is the chief cook and bottle washer in this space and he or she is welcome to give their views whenever they see fit. So, don't be bashful. Our entrants this month weren't. Just sit down and dash off a few lines to Newsletter Mail Bag, 24 Riverside Drive, Newbury, Mass. 01950. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all published letters or cards.)

\* \* \* \* \*

"Recently our golf course superintendent started a new venture for our club members, but unfortunately only women decided to take him up on the advantages of a 'nature walk.'

"I'm writing you people to say that this was one of the most satisfying experiences in my life. I have been playing golf for more years than I wish to reveal, and all the time I was unaware of the beauties of nature all around me.

"For one thing, I learned that the golf course is a wildlife sanctuary, housing so many different animals and serving as a refuge for them against the ravages of other animals and humans who take delight in making sport of killing them.

"Along our walk I noticed the maple tree on the left of the first fairway and the oak sapling just to the right of the first green. I am writing this to suggest to other clubs that they make this wonderful experience available to their members. I am really grateful to our club and our superintendent. And I would be happy if you pass this information along to your readers."

MILDRED DEANE  
Jerrecho, Ind.

There's nothing like a walk in the sun, Mildred. Wish all our readers enjoyed it as much as you do.

\* \* \* \* \*

"It seems to me that country clubs are being a little too lax on the subject of golf car restriction.

"Maybe I'm prejudiced about the matter. I walk most of my rounds and am not one of those golfers chained to the use of the golf car. But I think I have a good idea in urging that country clubs make golf car users stick to the car paths and penalize them if they stray off them.

"A couple of months ago I played golf at the PGA National Course in Palm Beach Gardens and I tell you those people know how to keep golf cars under control. They had rangers stationed throughout the course and ready to issue warnings if golfers went anywhere near the greens and off the paths. And there was no second warning. It was off the course for those who insisted on being uncooperative.

"I just thought I'd let you know about this setup and get your reaction."

JIM SCOTT  
Varden, Ga.

We're with you, Jim. Golf car drivers should adhere to the rules just as if they were driving a highway in their automobiles. And the penalties for breaking the rules should be the same, too!

\* \* \* \* \*

"I am interested in the President's wage-price freeze in regard to my job. I was supposed to get a raise at the end of the current year but now find that the economic situation may stall that.

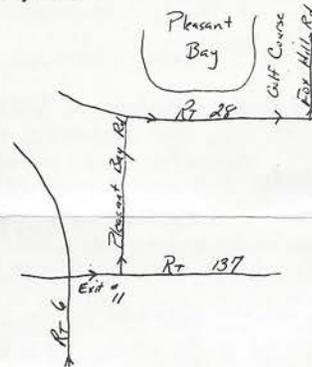
"Are there any other ways for a golf club to vault over this injustice. If so, I'd appreciate you telling me one."

TED TRUDOE  
Jamestown, Pa.

## NEXT MEETING

The next GCSA of NE meeting will be November 8, 1971 at the Eastward Ho! Golf Club. There will be a light luncheon at 11:15 a. m. and golf to follow at 12 noon. A business meeting is planned for 10:30 a. m.

Brian Cowan is the capable super in charge of this fine 18 hole layout. Brian has worked for John Callahan at Spring Valley C. C. and graduated from Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. He was assistant at Eastward Ho! under Louis Kent for two years and has now had full control for the past two years.



## DIRECTIONS TO EASTWARD HO!

Rt. 6, Exit 11 to Rt. 137. Left on 137 50 yards to Pleasant Bay Rd. Pleasant Bay Rd. to Rt. 28. Right on 28 to club. Golf course on left after Pleasant Bay.

The only suggestion here is to your country club. Maybe they can do something about your fringe benefits if your wages are frozen. There must be a way to keep you satisfied.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Just a few lines to let you know that I'm sick and tired of reading those medical report-articles in the Golf Course Superintendent, our national magazine.

"It seems to me that something more stimulating could be printed, other than the stuff going into it now. All I can see each month are dry, factual, drab articles. If I could, I'd cancel my subscription."

CEDRIC PALM  
(Club withheld)

We have a solution for you, Ced. Just keep on reading the New England Newsletter. We haven't printed a medical report in years.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I have been an assistant superintendent on a golf course for a year. Just about every journal and newsletter on golf and turf has recently published an article on certification for the superintendent. I read these with much enthusiasm until I found out that assistants are not eligible to be certified. My question is why? Many assistants are just as qualified as supers. How come we are left out?

GREGORY DAVAGIAN  
Sutton, Massachusetts

Gregory, I think that if you feel that you qualify as a super, why not pursue it and look for a job, not worry about being a certified assistant.

(That brings us to the close of another session with our favorite people — you, the reader. So keep those letters and cards coming. We're always happy to hear from you . . . and you . . . and you . . . and . . .)

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## A PIERCING SUBJECT

The USGA Green Section Record has gone and done it.

It has kicked around the idea (and there's no pun intended) that golf shoe spikes are for the birds and this is no reference to the relationship with par. Spikes are a definite wound in the side of golf course maintenance.

This could cause a revolution, not to mention many law suits. Since the beginning of the most recent era of golfmanship, golf shoes have been in vogue and in fact, necessary. Who ever heard of a U. S. Open champion playing in sneakers?

But the latter suggestion may not be that wacky if you look into the situation. The golf shoe, with its sharp-pronged turf grabber, is little more than a status symbol. There have been tourney winners who wore nothing but ordinary brogans. There have been champions decided when the cutting edge of his spikes were dulled to a hoe.

Golf course superintendents agree that the golf shoe spike is a definite cause of turf damage, especially on the putting green where spike marks seem to pock the surface like pigeons disposing their not-too-mentionable disposable material.

The problem, though, is to get this message across to the golfer or the club member, if you will. In a recent survey it was determined that golf course expense could be cut considerably if it weren't for the automatic damage spawned by the use of the golf shoe spike. In some cases the cost of such abuse of turf and soil runs into the thousands.

It could be remedied. Many golfers, some tired with the emphasis placed on the value of an expensive golf shoe, have decided to do away with this form of foot covering and gone to regular crepe-soled shoes. The results? From most reports, they are encouraging, not to mention amazing. Scores of golfers haven't suffered from the lack of being able to plant their feet into the ground via a spike.

This is not to say that the whole golfing industry should revamp its footwear style and go for the crepe sole bit. On the contrary, there are ways for the golf shoe people to tone down the length of their spikes and maybe survive the turn to less piercing coverings.

Golf professionals the world over have been quoted time and time again on the effects of the golf shoe spike to their putting results. And, of all the excuses laid before the public, the incidence of the spiked green crops up more than any other.

Not only is the spiked green a drag on the golfer, it also is a slap in the perspective of the superintendent. He must have himself tuned to the situation in those cases where spike marks threaten to turn the art of putting into a guessing game.

In addition, there always is presented the case of the lead-footed golfer or the one who drags his feet when he gets to the green. Streaks of scars have been the result of this careless attack on the condition of the precious putting surface. With crepe soles or smooth underpings, there would be no danger of such inexcusable damage.

Golf shoe spikes are surely a topic of discussion when superintendents get down to discussing the causes and effects of turf damage. It would be in line, too, for country club owners and members to ponder the same subject matter. No one wants to put the golf shoe industry out of business, but the facts remain clear. Spikes are putting a dent in the greens and soil. They can be replaced without too much inconvenience to the golfer.

— Gerry Finn

## JUMPING JUNIPER



Homer D. Darling is proud of his Juniper Hill Golf Course . . . and well should he be.

"We've really put some teeth into it", the affable pro-owner tells of the Northboro layout. "It's gone from a chip and putt to a genuine test. Dad would have liked to have seen it today."

Dad is the late Homer C. Darling, a pioneer in golf who had the original vision of Juniper Hill back in 1928 and the courage to carry it through the rough stages.

Homer C. was quite a guy. A World War I hero (he won the Distinguished Service Medal), a former president of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association and a one-time Newsletter editor, the elder Darling got the whole Juniper story jumping when he purchased the old Brigham Farm in Northboro and sweat nine holes out of the property in three years to set the stage for the grand opening in 1931.

"Dad also was a pioneer in daily fee golf", Homer D. reveals. "Just after he got out of the service in the early 1920's he experienced the daily fee fever in Chicago. At the time he vowed to bring such a joy to the average man wherever he settled down. And we're still in the daily fee business."

Juniper Hill once went for 50 cents all day. The fee nowadays is not that low but the Darlings do not gouge their customers. They get three dollars on a weekday and five on a weekend. That's very reasonable for a course that has become a conversation piece among golfers who like to touch all the courses in their travels.

"I guess my father invented the word 'ecology'", Homer D. laughs. "We have people come here from miles around just to watch a pheasant walk across a fairway or a fox dash through a piece of rough. We are a sanctuary for birds and animals. Dad wanted it that way and we've continued."

The Juniper Hill project is a family affair with third generation Darlings — Dudley and Thonton — attached to the course in addition to Mrs. Homer D. Brigitta who was one of the first World War II German war brides to come to the United States.

It was Homer D. who, in 1946, convinced his father that Juniper Hill was ripe for expansion. That's when the course grew into an 18-holer and it was a gamble, too. "We had to borrow money to do it", Homer D. reveals. "And there were times when I had to do some fancy talking to keep dad from selling the place. But it was all worth it."

Indeed it was. Today the showcase of the course are the improvements made on four holes — five, six, 13 and 17. Homer D. likes to talk about that 17th. "It's really a beauty", he pops. "There is water all around it and we can set the length to play from 100 to 215 yards. We've finally arrived."

So, Juniper Hill has arrived . . . but it's been a long journey. "Yes", Homer D. admits, "but it's been a pleasant trip. I'm glad I was part of it. My father really was some kind of man."

True. And his son is following in his footsteps.

— Gerry Finn

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