

NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER
~~SEPTEMBER~~ 1974



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.

THE WEEK WHEN THE RAIN CAME

It was the second round of the PGA Championship...time early August, place Tanglewood Golf Club in Clemmons, North Carolina. Eventual winner Lee Trevino and playing partner John Schlee had just beat another torrential downpour to the 18th hole. "Looks like the scores will be wiped out, won't they?", Trevino asked with a pained expression. He had just whipped the course for a par-busting count and vaulted into contention. "The way it's been raining here all week there's no way the course can take any more of this stuff."

One hour later the rains had slowed down to steady but not overpowering falling speed. And the course was declared playable. Trevino's round stood, the tournament continued through the third and fourth days...even after a couple of additional nightly cloudbursts...and play was completed in the prescribed playing period of time.

Much of the credit for the Tanglewood recovery goes to Vance Price, a dedicated golf course superintendent who faced one of the toughest jobs ever during the week when the rains came to the picturesque public layout located on the outskirts of Winston Salem.

The circumstances of the sudden turn of the weather caught Price by surprise but not with his guard down. The Winston Salem area had been hit by near drought conditions for the better part of a month before the start of the PGA Championship. During that period Vance was fighting to keep the course from being gulped down by the clutching heat and humidity. In that time an

irrigation program had to be set up in hopes it could prevent pending disaster. And then the dry spell broke.

Beginning with the Saturday before the first round of the PGA event, it rained in and around Tanglewood for seven straight days. And the form of precipitation was born in the tropics. At one stage of the wetting down span Tanglewood was hit with nine inches of rain in four days.

Price admits that the terrain was one of his weapons against the excessive rain. Good drainage had to be available or else all the mop-up work around the greens and teeing areas wouldn't have mattered a bit. But the architect rates a hand for the drainage setup, too.

Very often Price had declared that the design of Tanglewood was the work of genius, both in matter of retaining the natural beauty of the 1,300 acres of land which once had been the farm of William and Kate Reynolds, one of the principals in the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

"Robert Trent Jones didn't abuse the privilege of being able to alter the original topography of the land," Price tells. "He fit the course to the terrain. In the process, he made my job of avoiding wet spots that much easier. The combination of drains and the design probably kept the PGA Championship from becoming a six-day tournament here."

It should be noted that Price had his 35-man crew (that number needed since the superintendent was responsible for all phases of clean-up on a daily basis during the tournament) ready for all emergencies. This meant they had to cut fairways at odd hours during the week because of the rains making a mockery of the regular cutting schedule. They were, indeed, on a 24-hour alert basis and Price handled the deployment of them in a masterly manner.

Price has been the superintendent at Tanglewood since the first 18 holes were cut out of the beautiful blend of trees and turf in 1962. Tanglewood since has added another 18 holes for which Vance is responsible. And, then, there's a lighted nine-hole par three layout. Thus, the super has his hands full. The results of his hand work during the PGA Championship prove that Tanglewood has a superintendent with talent.

Certainly, this Price is right.

Gerry Finn



Arthur Anderson trophy winners Brian Cowan and Gino Cappaletti ready to tee off at Spring Valley Superintendent Celebrity Tournament.

Supt. - Celebrity Tournament Results

1st Net — Brian Cowan & Joe Bellino

2nd Net — Ken Mooradian & Bob Phillips

3rd Net — Guy Tedesco & Gino Cappaletti

Low Gross — Gary Luccini & Bob St. John

Golf Course Superintendents Association

(RE)SEARCHING PARTY

It was a lovely day for a picnic...or so Dr. Joseph Troll described July 31 of this year. It also was an ideal day for an experiment...Joe's first annual Turf Field Day.

Surely, the day was ideal. "There were about 150 aboard," Joe tells. "It was an experiment because we didn't know how the superintendents and landscape people would react. Now we know. With such a response and all kinds of impressive comments on the day, we think we're on the threshold of something big."

The field day is held in conjunction with the research program of the University of Massachusetts. Rather, the program is conducted there. The state (in the form of educational grants) does not contribute to the project. All financial aid comes from two sources. Individual golf courses supply the lion's share. Commercial companies add to that.

Dr. Troll did make a day of it, too. "We chose Sugarloaf Mountain as the site of a mid-day picnic," he reveals. "We worked this around morning sessions on the research program and an afternoon question and answer period. We worked at the bottom of the mountain and played on top."

The research program is in full swing and those on hand saw the benefits of such an undertaking. "We have nine or 10 experiments going," Dr. Troll continued. "All together, we have six acres of land to work with. And three of those are devoted exclusively to turf."

One of the projects confines itself to fairway grasses. "We have quite a study going on new rye grasses," Joe disclosed. "There are some new rye grasses on the market that are interesting. They are the usual quick-growth type but something different has been added. That difference is what we've been testing--the wear resistance. What we're trying to find out is the endurance quality of a quick-germinating grass like the rye species."

Another interesting part of the research program deals with the projected worth of dormant fertilization. "We've been giving this study a lot of time and work," Joe said. "The results of dormant fertilization are apparent. We're talking about fertilizing turf between November and April. Other aspects have come to light here, too."

Pesticide trials are another integral part of the Troll agenda. "We have made an extended attempt to test chemicals for the control of certain turf diseases," Joe went on. "We have had some vital findings in dollar spot and the crab grass problem. All the chemicals we work with are new on the market."

Other facets of the field day presentation dealt with low management blue grass, hard and tall fescues, granulation of soil by chemicals, standard variety trials of grasses, fertilizer costs and the supply of chemicals and a special question and answer period on the implementation of irrigation systems.

"I think the people who attended the session came away with a new and stronger appreciation of a turf research program," Dr. Troll offered. "There is only one way for a person to see the benefits of such a program. This is the way we're selling it."

Dr. Troll also takes the opportunity to re-emphasize his concern in the occasional apathy displayed by golf courses in failing to support a research program. "This is a non-profit undertaking," he stresses. "All the contributions are put to use. They are solicited for the betterment of turf. And certainly, the results are encouraging and worth the effort. I only hope every superintendent can take time out to see what we are doing. That's why I want to make the field day an annual affair."

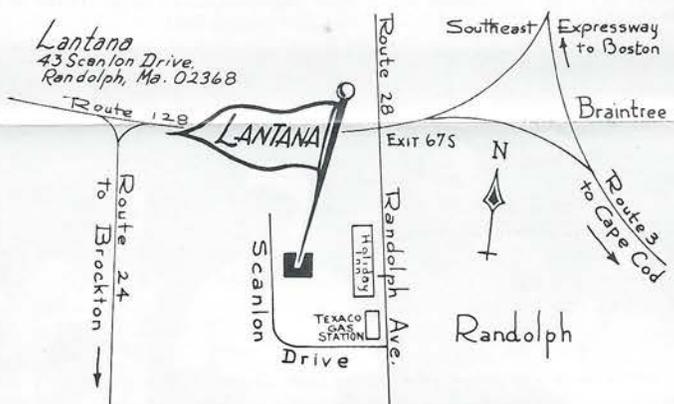
Obviously, July 31 was a fruitful day, rewarding all the way around.

Gerry Finn

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On Nov. 1, 1974 the NEGCSA will celebrate its 50th anniversary. It is the hope of the directors and myself, that you will be there to help make this 50th anniversary a success. It will be an opportunity for superintendents past and present, friends and associates to get together to renew acquaintances and for all to enjoy themselves. The anniversary celebration will be held at LANTANA INN in Randolph, Mass. on Friday, Nov. 1, 1974 at 7:00 P.M. Tickets have been sent out to all members and more are available if needed. Let's make our 50th a success.

Sincerely,
Tom Curran
President



Don't forget — Our 50th Anniversary Party at the Lantana Inn, Randolph, Mass., Nov. 1, 1974!

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SOUND OFF

(The moment has arrived when the reader takes pen in hand and makes his views known to the world. Sound Off is our monthly feature dedicated to the expression form of our members, friends...and, alas, even our enemies. It is provided for the freedom of that expression and tosses out the challenge to one and all. If you have a beef or a compliment on any golf subject, this is where you can get it into print. Letters are always welcome to Newsletter Mail Bag, 290 North Road, Sudbury, Mass. 01776. In return, the Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all letters published.)

"We always enjoy your Newsletters...including the articles in the issue on the U.S. Open Championship at Winged Foot.

"In answer to Mr. Simpson's comment on the Open, you stated the USGA decided 'the Open was too holy to be shot full of holes.' This simply is not so. The Open has always been set up so that the player who is most accurate and can hit every club in the bag should be the eventual winner.

"Winged Foot happens to be that sort of a super test of golf, as is every course which entertains the Open. So when you place the criteria stated--on a super golf course--nobody's going to tear it apart if everything develops as planned.

"Sometimes, however, the rough doesn't develop well for reasons of weather (dryness), sometimes because of heavy rains greens become too wet etc; and some sensational scores are posted...i.e. Miller's 63 at Oakmont, Jacobs' 64 at Congressional and I'm sure you could recall others. But no one consistently shoots in the low 60's.

"You must remember that these are the world's best golfers playing for one of the most prestigious golf titles in the world and the course must be a fitting test for such a championship. I'm sure you'll agree that holding the USGA Open Championship on a 'drive and a wedge' course would not consistently produce a champion of the calibre of a course that demands accuracy and skill with every club in the bag. The latter is what the USGA believes makes a champion, and I'm sure you'll agree that the list of Open champions speaks for itself.

"I trust this will serve to correct some of the 'way out impressions' that some have about preparations for the USGA Open Championship."

ALEXANDER M. RADKO
USGA Green Section

Al, you'll recall the playing conditions for all four days of this year's USGA Championship were ideal. Yet, no one broke par. There had to be some trickery involved in setting up the course. And we don't consider same "a way out impression".

"The late summer and early fall weather often brings with them some violent rainstorms. It also is that time of year when country club members want to get in as much golf as they can because they know that a long winter is on the horizon and this means, for most, no golf at all.

"I am a public links player and have seen some abuses of the course you often write about in your Newsletter. Some of this abuse is the result of greedy thinking on the part of the town

fathers. There have been days when the weather conditions were so severe the course should have been closed. But no one was willing to make that decision because the feeling was only park commission members could close the course.

"It is alarming to me that such a situation could result in a public course contracting damage to the extent that it might change the whole condition reputation of that course. Is it really true that heavy turf conditions and hairy green types can be ruined if golfers are allowed to use the course at these times?"

"If so, I'm planning to make a pitch to our town to see if the superintendent can be given the authority to close the course when weather conditions pose a threat to future grooming properties. I'm proud of our course and many people have come to look upon it as a product of sincere foresight and dedication."

JAMES MCCARTHY
Berlin, Conn.

The question of course closings always has been a testy one, Jim. At the risk of stepping on a few toes, you should suggest giving the super the authority to close the course when he feels its future condition is in danger. Maybe the sparks will fly...but so what!

"This is not a complaint but an observation.

"Recently, I bought a season ticket to the Greater Hartford Open in Wethersfield, Conn. I took in all four days of play, in addition to the celebrity tournament (pro-am) on the day before the start of the professional competition. So, I really was able to get a good and long look at the Wethersfield Country Club.

"Actually, I was impressed so much with the condition of the course that I wanted to see the superintendent so that I could tell him what a good job he had done. This started on Friday. The tournament ended on Sunday. So, for three days I was on the hunt for the superintendent.

"Everytime I inquired at his office or in the pro shop I got a stock answer. 'He's out on the course somewhere and we can't get in touch with him except for emergencies.'

"That's the way it went. Here a guy does a great job and he doesn't get the opportunity to be praised for it. It's a funny world, isn't it?"

WILLIAM CALKIN
Westfield, Mass.

You'll find that the hardest person to find on a golf course during a tournament is the superintendent, Bill. That's because he's working all the time. The GHO is no different from any other event. It happens all the time. Send him a letter instead.

That puts the wrapper on another Sound Off session. An interesting one it was, too. So, keep those cards and letters coming. We're here to help you get your message to the people.)

Next Meeting...

PRO-SUPT. TOURNAMENT

OCTOBER 11, 1974

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NEWSLETTER

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