

NEWSLETTER

October 1975



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.

An Understanding Voice

There is an understanding voice emerging from the crowd of golfers who have experienced the joys and horrors of an uncompromising weather pattern this past summer.

And according to Dick Crosby — he of the Massachusetts Golf Association hierarchy — his voice is echoed by most golfers, whether they be out of the country club or public course mold.

First, of all, the pattern and consequences thereof should be laid out. The summer was one of versatility in the comings and goings of the weather. If the day weren't hot and humid, it was hot and rainy. If the nights weren't stuffy and sizzling, they were stuffy and drizzling. In the northeast, it simply was not a good golf conditioning summer.

Crosby notes the inconsistencies of its effects.

"In and around Boston the humid weather was the biggest drawback to the golf course superintendent," he tells. "I know of four courses within five miles of one and another and their conditions varied. Of course, the amount of play and the weather pattern during the heavy-play days had much to do with it."

Crosby remembers the adverse conditions encountered at the Winchester Country Club. "It was remarkable how that course survived the summer," he recalls. "We (MGA) had the state amateur there for one week, part of which was played in the rain. Then, the father-son tournament took up another week and it, too, was hit by rain. It's a wonder anything continued to grow after an assault like that."

But what about the member, the golfer? Crosby, on the inside of the sport — so to speak, does have an understanding voice and a knowledgeable one. But what of the man who doesn't pay much attention to the intricacies involved in conditioning a golf course?

"As a whole, I'd say the golfer has much compassion for the super and he is aware of what weather can do to the best laid

plans of a hard-working superintendent," Crosby offers. "There has been a change in this situation of late. And it tells me the country club member really cares."

While the superintendent has been trying to get the message across that he often is at the mercy of the elements, it had been the general attitude of golfers to either close their eyes on the plea or insist that someone other than Mother Nature must take the blame for the course's scars.

"There's no such attitude among the people I've talked to about the situation," Crosby advises. "The member has come to realize that the golf course superintendent is a well-trained professional who has the skills to perform capably under normal conditions. He also realizes that weather and other contingencies play a major role in allowing the superintendent to apply those skills. I find that the super is a well respected part of the golfing family."

Naturally, there are occasions when members might stray from this compassionate approach to the troubles a super might encounter.

"Oh, we have some people who might look with envy at another club with more favorable playing conditions," Crosby continues. "But they, too, know that factors beyond the control of their own superintendent often are the reasons behind the difference. The real problem comes when the next door-course's grass looks greener than yours. But, overall, the membership of the clubs is very understanding."

Crosby also points out that membership interest in the technical aspects of course conditioning is on the upswing which even further cements his opinion the superintendent is not looked upon as a scape goat for every little thing that goes wrong. "More and more people are learning the types of grasses used on greens and fairways and what weather conditions can do to them," he informs. "It just makes for a better understanding of the problem. I'm impressed."

And so, too, should the super. Would you believe it? He is not the course monster, after all!

Gerry Finn

NOTICE

The Annual

CHRISTMAS PARTY

will be held at the
CHESTNUT HILL COUNTRY CLUB

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1975

COCKTAILS 7-8

DINNER AT 8

DANCING 'TIL MIDNIGHT

NEXT MEETING

Pro-Supt Tournament

BRAE BURN C/C
OCT. 10, 1975

FOLLOWING MEETING

HOPEDALE C/C
NOV. 4, 1975

Golf Course Superintendents Association

Clubs Are For Joining!

In travels around the golf and other sports circuits, I heard of one man who finally landed membership in a certain country club after five different trips to the screening board (four unsuccessful and the fifth a direct hit as a matter of acceptance).

Why should anyone want to subject himself to a fishbowl existence in the way of baring his life just to label himself "a member"; not to mention the obvious mental strain involved when told that he didn't qualify for membership on four different occasions?

In this case, the basic reason was accomplishment. "I never really cared that much about joining the club until I was turned down the first time," he confided. "I had expected to be accepted without any trouble. So, when I was rejected, it made me all the more determined to become a member of that darn club."

Country clubs, alas, are a necessity for some ... a luxury for others and still a way of life for the privileged few who have found their entrance exams for membership eased as a matter of tradition. Certain clubs have blood lines. Nothing wrong with that. You do and join what your father did and joined and his father before him, etc.

The makeup of the country club roster is, indeed, intriguing.

At the top of the list is the prestige club. It was this type that the chap eventually conquered, that intrepid joiner in paragraph one. The very label, "prestige" tells it all. If you are numbered among its members, you certainly have more than ordinary station in the community. You are something special. Otherwise, there is little sense in attempting to join the club in the first place.

There is the club, too, where the joining is motivated by the reputation of its golf course as "a stiff challenge" or "a championship layout". This club usually is high in out-of-town members. It also tends to lure much business-golf. Being able to invite a customer or client to the area's "best course" certainly has its business advantages.

A third form comprises the course that is beautifully manicured. It is the layout that places conditioning at the top of the priority list. This type also has more than average appeal for the businessman who uses the club as a "second office". Sometimes, condition of the course even overshadows its architectural attributes.

The ideal arrangement, then, would be a combination of the three clubs. And, by all standards, there just happen to be such well-endowed country clubs in our association area. Somehow, one does not have to name them. They are known and recognized without too much studying of the field.

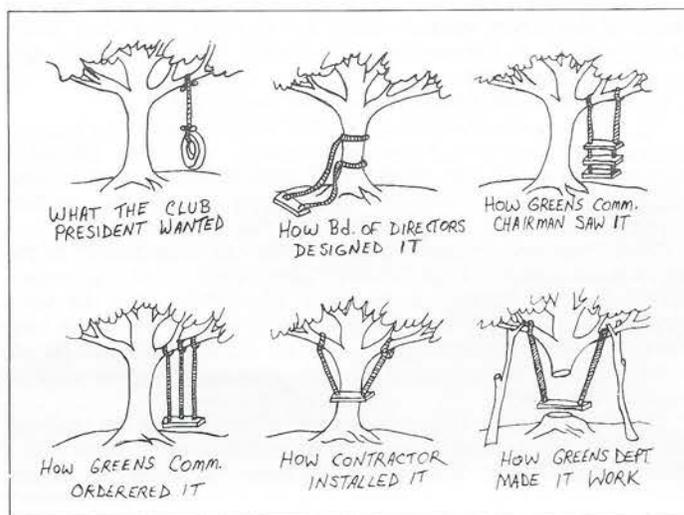
The whole idea of country club living certainly has spread.

It is not uncommon in these days to encounter public and municipal courses that give their customers a chance at "country club status" with a special form of membership. At some of them a player may "join" the club for \$25 or whatever the price fee. For his money he receives a membership card, opportunity to insure weekend starting times and eligibility to participate in "club" tournaments which also include a dash of the old country club social life.

The club urge has dipped over to tennis courts and spilled into a relatively new sport -- paddle or platform tennis. In fact, many tennis courts have "borrowed" the country club name from golf in promoting their membership. And some are just as selective as certain country clubs in the matter of establishing an acceptable membership.

Oh, yes, clubs are for joining. And they have become almost an essential part of man's existence, whether it be the flossy country club with prestige-plus or the little nine-hole course with the \$10 membership fee that offers everyone a sense of belonging. Each serves a purpose and satisfies a need.

Gerry Finn



CREDIT TO — "GREEN IS BEAUTIFUL" ONTARIO GOLF SUPT. ASSOC.



Last Months Tournament Results

Winner -
Ken Mooridian
Hank Commilli

Second
Pete Coste
Dick Haskell

Third
Brian Cowan
Bobby Schmutz

Gary Luceini
Bob St. John

Ron Kirkman
Roger Barry

Mike Hermanson
Bill Comier

Herb Morton
Joe Gordon

Mel Okelly
R. Hobson

Guy Tedesco
Harry Sinden

Mark Taylor
Mr. Fournier

Individual -
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Sound Off

(Time once again to turn up your receptive cells and listen to the readership unloading its words of wisdom. This is Sound Off, that feature which gives everyone the opportunity to share a complaint, compliment or opinion with Newsletter followers. Contributions to Sound Off should be short, concise and to the point. The ground rules are simple. All letters, accompanied by name and address of writer, will be published. And names, addresses will be withheld upon request. All flak will be welcomed at Newsletter Mail Bag, 290 North Street, Sudbury, Mass. 01776. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all letters.)

"It's gripe time for me again but only because the gripe may be in common with other superintendents.

"While I write this, some kind of prolonged tournament is crowding the course making my work all that much more difficult. After all, it is almost the middle of September and these multi-day tournaments should have been over and done with by now.

"I am not against tournament play, mind you. However, I think it is somewhat of an imposition on the superintendent when we have to work around a Fall tournament at that time of year when we're the busiest.

"This is the time for re-seeding and doing all those other jobs which weren't practical because of the heavy summer play. On top of this, my crew has been depleted because of the reduction from the summer work force. So, my Fall has been just one hassle after another.

"I don't think it's asking the members too much to confine multi-day tournaments to the summer season. After a dozen or more weeks of that type of action, I would think the middle of September would be that time when it slows down."

NAME WITHHELD
Course Withheld

Golfers, too, are caught in that familiar trap of thinking their sport has an endless season. Tain't right.

"I hate to bore you with such trivial matters, but I just thought I would bring you up to date on the results of our experiences with that injured white duck I wrote of last month.

"When last I wrote of it, there seemed to be a good chance that it would fully recover and return to a normal life here at the golf course.

"However, I bring you sad news. Ever since the feathered thing returned from the veterinarian, it has failed miserably. The whole situation came to a tragic end last week when it was decided to put the duck out of its misery. So, it's sayonara, Donald."

JOSEPH MADDEN
Stockbridge, Mass.

Hmmmm? That vet must have been a "quack", after all, Joe. Our condolences.

"There seems to be much debate around the club these days and all of it is not concerned with whether Jack Nicklaus is better than Johnny Miller or that Ben Hogan could whip them all.

"We've been arguing the old replace the divot issue.

"Some of us maintain that replacing divots is just a matter of an old tradition and old baseless theory that if you can get the divot back into its original place, it will grow again.

"The other side of the argument keeps with the idea that divots can be 'caught' in time by the rest of the turf and grow back into its original spot leaving not a trace of damage.

"We all agree that the ball mark fixing definitely helps to keep the greens from becoming severely damaged and pock-marked to make for awful putting conditions. But we can't reach agreement on whether or not it is really worth it to go to the bother of replacing divots. What is the real and authentic answer to this, please?"

CLARENCE BARLOW
Amherst, Mass.

Replacing of divots is important, Clarence. Although the occasion of their "catching" is not what the superintendent would like it to be, the process does occur. For that reason, it is advisable to replace your divots. In addition, it does make for a nicer appearance of the fairway which isn't supposed to look like a practice area.

"I would like to know where I can get a meaningful opinion on a vital question.

"We are in the midst of the so-called in-between season as far as our recreational likes are concerned. Outdoor golf still is being played but not by anyone who recognizes the fact there's a time and place for everything with each having specific season.

"We still are playing some tennis at our club but won't be for long. I'm told that frost has something to do with ruining the tape markers and also the surface, just as it has some effect on the putting conditions of greens.

"Our vital question is determining the date when we switch from regular tennis to paddle tennis. Of course, I realize there is nothing in writing that says you can't play paddle tennis the year-round since it doesn't have the conditioning problems of other sport facilities.

"However, I think the club should set some target date so that we all know when to do what where. Because the superintendents now have the authority to put up nets, I was wondering if you people have been advised of an official paddle ball opening date?"

KAREN SCOTT
Providence, R.I.

The first of November usually is a get-off date for paddle, Karen. But like everything else, it depends on the weather.

(That ends it for this time. Drop your paddle or club and drop us a line. This space is reserved for you ... and you ... and you ...

Information contained in this publication may be used freely, in whole or in part, without special permission as long as the true context is maintained. We would appreciate a credit line.

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