

NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

JANUARY 1976



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



RING IN THE NEW

Whole Shoe Store To Fill

Very often in the succession of responsibilities, the man following the man going out the door for the last time is said to have a big pair of shoes to fill. In the case of the turning of the gavel and other major posts of officialdom to younger hands, the incoming controlling body of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association just might have a whole shoe store to fill.

For the most part, the new slate of association officers is a new breed group. And God bless 'em for having the sense of responsibility to aspire to their task. Old guards hold on, most of the time for one bona fide reason. . . sometimes there is no one to replace them. In the NEGCSA, the time for turnover of ruling faces is here.

Before it comes down to that finalizing vote, though, perhaps a little seance with the ghost of administrations past — or more specifically, more recent-administrations past — could spur the new governing group onto maybe even greater heights than its predecessors. At least, it will toss out a formidable challenge to their projected goals.

The last 15 years of administrative effort in the NEGCSA have been the most constructive in the history of the organization. That span has bridged an important gap between the old, almost unknown and unrecognized form of the profession and the new, hopeful aspect of it which should be striving to keep all superintendents on an upward course.

The New England Association owes much, indeed, to the likes of the Dick Blakes, Leon St. Pierres, Bob Grants, Lucien Duvals and their hard-working contemporaries. Most of all is the general upswing in respect for and recognition of the very profession they represented during the years when the golf course superintendent had to rise from a hose and rake painted picture to an accepted member of the executive suite.

Oh, administrations past don't pretend they have brought the superintendent to a skyscraper-existence with buttons to push and secretaries to pet. However, the superintendent is something more than a grower of grass and mower of same. His duties and responsibilities take him right to the vortex of administrative responsibility. When you're setting up and operating \$100,000-plus budgets, you're not a watering can.

Administrations past have set out on a crusade, if you will, to make the country club member aware of the superintendent's station. And they have done a pretty good job of it.

Through the use of a promotional weapon — a professionally-produced Newsletter — administrations past have reached the green chairmen and the country club member with their message. In the last 10 years the typical member has shown a growing interest in the job responsibilities of the super. And, hand in hand with that interest, has come an overall increase of interest expressed by the media. So, now, you are recognized.

Administrations past popped many more constructive corks during their tenure. The Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship program was initiated and put on a thriving path; ties with the British Isles were originated; the national conference was brought to Boston and the group even put some frosting on its cake by contributing a national president to the profession.

What more comforting and worthwhile undertaking was their attempt and successful one at that to promote better understanding among the three country club posts of club manager, club professional and course superintendent? The efforts were such that the relationship among the three has developed into a family-type life for all.

So, the ghost of administrations past has much to be proud of as it comes to the end of a long and lucrative governing line. The challenge is out there for the taking. A new generation is faced with that challenge and the inspiration of the preceding generation hopefully will aid it in coming through as expected. It is both a sad and glorious time for the NEGCSA. Its future hangs in the balance.

Gerry Finn

NEXT MEETING

DATE-	JAN. 5, 1976
PLACE-	HOLIDAY INN, NEWTON, MASS.
EVENT-	ELECTION OF OFFICERS
TIMES-	11:00 DIRECTORS MEETING 12:00 LUNCH ON YOUR OWN 1:00 REGULAR MEETING FOLLOWED BY ELECTIONS

Golf Course Superintendents Association

Built Not To Bust... Easily

The design of tomorrow's golf course?

The golf course superintendent is very much a part of it. And, in keeping with our attempts to keep the profession astride the vital developments forming in the game of golf, we direct your attention to the recent meeting of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

From most views expressed by the 40 members in attendance, it would appear that future golf courses will be designed with two prime factors in mind — playability and maintenance.

Cost of land and labor certainly dictate a trend to having the golf course superintendent's tasks up front on the drawing board when a new course is being staked out. It certainly reflects the general condition of the golf course today. Members are discovering that their playgrounds cannot be conditioned at yesterday's going prices. And, from their experience, perhaps tomorrow's course builders will learn a lesson or two in planned maintenance.

The architects offer several maintenance cost savers, including the disciplined use of the old grass bunkers. Other proposals would set the roll of fairways and roughs to the convenience of the mechanized maintenance tool. Branches of trees would be cut to allow free use of heavy mowing equipment. Trees would be spaced so to allow large mowers to swing in and out of areas with ease. Number of sand traps would be reduced and heavy concentration would be placed on overall good drainage systems.

With all these aesthetic-draining and economic-inspired ideas filling the future, it is only natural that some architects take a contrasting view of the drastic offerings.

Robert Muir Graves — immediate past president of the architectural group — warns against going too far in staking out the course in the best interests of maintenance. In *Golf Journal*, Graves says: "Maintenance should not dictate 'good golf'. Within the restraints of good golf, however, we can design courses so maintenance machinery can be used and thereby reduce manual labor."

Jack Kidwell, a member, goes stronger: "The emasculation of the physical features of a golf course for the purpose of maintenance or speedy play can only result in a sterile, barren, uninviting course. If the money crunch continues, we may see a return to less sophistication in bunkering and landscaping."

A few designers think the course of their drawing boards should be set in tune by the type of golfer the layout will service. They believe length, testiness and other aspects change should the course going up be private, resort or public.



The latter group doesn't take into consideration that all the so-called "classes" of golfers are becoming aware of the spiraling costs in golf course maintenance. It matters little whether a golfer tees it up at a private, resort or public course. In the long run, he will be paying for its upkeep. And the more he knows about the problems encountered in keeping today's courses ship-shape, the stronger will be his feelings toward considering maintenance in the proposal of tomorrow's courses.

Some architects go all the way with the maintenance factor at the top of their idea schedule. As one put it, any changes in design more than likely will be noticed only by the superintendent, not the golfer.

There also seems to be a sign among designers, a sign of the return to the shorter golf course with emphasis on shotmaking rather than length. And in this, too, is a turn toward interest in maintenance... with the suggestion of average-sized greens and water hazards as receptacles for water overflow and storage.

Thus, the course of tomorrow has the superintendent in mind. They'll be built to bust, perhaps, but not as easily as today.

Gerry Finn

NOTE

Due to newsletters not arriving on time, election of officers will be held this month.

TO BE VOTED ON AT NEXT MEETING

Bill Turner
Douglas Johnson
Associate Members

SLATE OF OFFICERS

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Sound Off

(Time once again to take the readers out of their reading position and put pens in their hands. This is Sound Off, the place where everyone gets a chance to get rid of a gripe or offer a comment in the best interests of golf. There are no ground rules as to content of letters published. Only the name and address of sender are necessary and when requested, those two tag-ons will be withheld. Readers should put their messages into orbit and direct them to Newsletter Mail Bag, 290 North Road, Sudbury, Mass. 01776. The Newsletter reserves the right to comment on all letters.)

"Having nothing to do, I am sitting here reading a number from The Golf Superintendent — not the content inside. I don't mean it that way.

"What intrigues me is the address on the magazine. It has been sent to my 'greens' chairman. Like I said, I have nothing to do, so I'm writing you with the hope the national magazine heaves to and makes a correction. The proper terminology is 'green' chairman.

"At least that's what the USGA has been preaching for low these many years. How about the national taking a hint. And I don't want my name published, either, just in case they try to lift my membership which I treasure in spite of their boo-boo."

NAME WITHHELD
Course Withheld

Everything's not up to date in Kansas City, after all, ey?

"I have been reading about a nine-hole course in our area which is contemplating extending play to 18 holes and expanding the clubhouse to accommodate an expected rush of new members.

"Personally, I am surprised at the confidence these people appear to display in trying to convince the present membership that the staggering costs can be absorbed mostly by a new membership drive.

"I can only look around me and see that more than one golf course in the immediate vicinity is having financial troubles. In fact, I have read of juicy (free golf for the rest of the season) offers to bring new members into the fold. And, with this in mind, I just can't help but predict disaster for that club pushing expansion.

"Is this the right time to spread your wings in golf?"

CARROLL BLAKE
Somers, Conn.

It's time to tuck them in, Carroll!

"Maybe it's the beauty I think that resides in my soul . . . or maybe I should say that I think resides there.

"However, I am amused on the golf course by the new-look golfer who seems to want to race around his 18 holes without taking time to drink in the nature and the wonders of it to which he is exposed.

"I'm a walking golfer, myself. And I suppose because of it I take the time to look around at the beauty of the golf course rather

than keep my eyes riveted on the straight and narrow as if I were scanning a bloody battlefield.

"Most golfers out our way jump in a golf cart and speed away to their appointed rounds. I'm wondering if any of them really care about the layout in reference to aesthetic value rather than how they're going to conquer it with a birdie or a par.

"I think it's disgusting!"

SHIRLEY MAPES
Brookline, Mass.

In your description of those culprits, Shirley, golf is strictly for the birdies.

"I read your Newsletter every chance I get. Although I'm not on the golf course committee, I find it interesting to learn about the finer details and expense that go into maintenance of the course.

"Do you fellows have any guidelines for cost of putting a course into spic and span condition?"

CHARLES GOLDEN
Holyoke, Mass.

According to a recent Harris, Kerr, Forster survey of the maintenance costs at 100 clubs throughout the U.S., the annual maintenance fee for one golf hole is \$7,244. Thus, the cost for a full 18 holes rounds out at \$130,392.

"I have to be classified as another of your 'name withheld' entries. But you'll appreciate my request for it when you read this.

"As a close viewer of the country club scene, I think I'm in a good position to spot a four-flusher, loud mouth or phony when I see one on the golf course.

"Obviously, I have come across them at my present job. And it took me to thinking about some of the problems membership committees could avoid if they only used their heads when screening a prospective member.

"I would suggest to them that they seek out the aid and assistance of the employees who work at their club. Most of the time a prospective member has played the course and eaten in the dining room. In both instances he comes under heavy study. So, even before he becomes a bona fide member, he's been tagged by the workers.

"So, how about putting an employee or two on your next membership screening board? It's not that insane. Really!

NAME WITHHELD
Club Withheld

Not a bad idea. But are there enough black balls manufactured to handle such a prospective situation?

(That puts the wind-downer right here which means this is the end. Don't forget to write . . . whether you're right, wrong or otherwise. Keep those cards and letters flowing.)

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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