



February 1979

Golf Course Superintendents Association
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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Headed For Four Seasons

What's your country club doing this winter?

If it is like a number of enterprising clubs - making tracks toward the utilization of facilities for the complete four seasons, you're probably caught up in the cross-country skiing craze. All of a sudden, the golf course has become a popular setting for those enthusiasts of the strapped boards who prefer to mosey over a trail rather than taking it by storm with a full schuss.

Just in Western Massachusetts alone - or rather that corner which packs Greater Springfield into it, there are at least five golf courses which have opened their grounds to cross-country skiers. The idea is to take advantage of the natural terrain of the course, topography which usually blends into the ideal track for lovers of the Nordic sport.

Obviously, the first question of the golfer concerns the effects of such a heavy thrust on his sacred grounds. Does cross-country skiing lend itself to laying the groundwork for severe damage to the turf and where does the country club draw the line in exposing its golf course to unscheduled threats of harming its grasses?

According to Roy Mackintosh, general manager of the Twin Hills Country Club in Longmeadow, the cross-country skiing push creates no more of a turf problem than a course can expect without such a program. "We set up a course, which keeps the skiers off greens and tees," he explained. "If they stay on course, they can do no harm to the turf. We don't anticipate any problems, either. The course at Twin Hills is well-marked and we'll have a ranger system just to make sure no one gets ideas of straying where he doesn't belong."

Cross-country skiing should serve as another form of motivation for country club members to use facilities on a year-round basis. Unfortunately, many members picture the country club as a boarded-up summer place once the golf season ends. Therefore, the traffic at the club hits a snag and it goes to sleep for the winter.

"I don't think we look at the ski program as one which will bring in a ton of revenue," Mackintosh emphasized. "We are one of the first private clubs to set up the sport for our members as a facility inclusive in their regular membership fee. We have skis, boots and poles available on a rental basis. But if our members have their own equipment, all they have to do is come out and give it a run."

Twin Hills has reconverted an area adjacent to its swimming pool as the site of a warming hut and snack bar. The skiers gather there for a bowl of soup, sandwich, coffee or whatever and spend many happy hours enjoying winter rather than praying for its demise.

To be voted on Next Meeting
Thomas F. Ohlson, Jr.
Associate Member

"This is only part of our plan to accommodate a multi-interested membership and perhaps to attract new members," Mackintosh revealed. "We do offer a separate winter package for nonmembers and we're going to make another push for more activity when we expand our tennis facilities in the spring."

What Twin Hills would like to do eventually is to offer a complete program around the calendar for members. "We have to keep this place alive 12 months of the year," Mackintosh added. "We have a beautiful clubhouse and it's a shame to see it dark on nights when it could be humming. All of our special membership offerings - like the cross-country and tennis-swim packages - also include a social membership for that particular sports season. The ideal situation would be to have a full membership which takes part in all of our sports programs."

Oh, does this venture mean more work for the superintendent?

"Well, as far as the cross-country skiing goes, all I've done is to help set the course and make sure the tees and greens are protected," Mackintosh told. "I've hired a ski shop manager and will add other people as the traffic dictates. The investment in skis is a small one. The investment of my time is likewise. Naturally, I'm interested in the progress of cross-country skiing. But it doesn't detract one bit from my main concern of course conditioning."

In order to round out the winter outdoor offerings at Twin Hills, a couple of ponds have been cleared for skating and a sleigh has been rigged for expanding the opportunities to attract more members to the club.

With the influx of cross-country skiing added to the spiraling popularity of platform tennis at many clubs, it looks as though there will be no separation or mark of seasons in the future. Those clubs with the foresight to envision the expansion of facilities, which touch their memberships from one end of the calendar to the other, figure to prosper in the end because there seems to be no end to the needs of a recreation-intoxicated populace.

Gerry Finn

Next Meeting
March 12, 1979
Franklin C.C.

Directors Meeting 9:30 A.M.
Regular Meeting 11:00 A.M.
Speaker on Pesticides 1:30 P.M.

It's Happening, Dad Burn It!

It won't come for several weeks. . . maybe more. But once the snow disappears from the golf course (for the final time, yet), the ravages of winter will reveal themselves. And the first catcalls from the golf world will rise in damnation of that unwelcome spring and summer visitor - winterkill.

It's happening right now, dad burn it. Can you feel it? Right under that cover of ice or that compacted drift of snow. . . winterkill is at work and there is nothing anyone can do about it. Nothing to do except hope that it doesn't hang on and make life a prolonged stage of the miserable for the golf course superintendent.

Maybe this should be construed as a warning, not to the supers who know too well they can't escape its touch, but to the uneducated golfers who believe that winterkill is the result of a malfunction in the brain of the man conditioning their courses. And it's timely, too, because one of the biggest bum raps of all the accusations tossed at the superintendent is his part in the contracting of winterkill.

If you can picture the turf underneath that cover of snow or that sheet of ice, you must realize that damage is bound to happen because of the lack of an oxygen route to the afflicted plant. And the longer that plant suffocates, the longer it will take to recover when the sun and rains attempt to perk it up in the spring.

Unfortunately for the superintendent, the treacherous hand of winterkill is such that its cause can result from a number of weather conditions. For the most part, it occurs when the oxygen is cut off from the plant roots for longer periods of time than usual.

There have been occasions when it was thought that an early snowfall - one that could survive January thaws and the like - was the best form of winterkill prevention. The idea here was that the snow would serve as a protective cover from the cold and wind while still being porous enough to keep the flow of oxygen going without interruption.

This is reasonable enough in theory. However, an overabundance of snow often accompanies the early drop, compaction forms that breathstopping lid and winterkill sets up shop in the plants below the white stuff. So, it would serve the super well to keep the snowfall explanation in his hat because it usually comes back to haunt him.

There is no guarantee a course will escape winterkill, even if it can afford to spread a plastic cover over its full 18 holes. And the most perplexing aside to the problem is the fact that winterkill often strikes fiercest on those courses where time and money have been purposely allocated to combat it.

One of the strange behavioral patterns of winterkill is its personal choice of sites to attack. It is a matter of record that winterkill may wipe out several greens on one side of the street and not even leave a trace of damage on the other. For reasons beyond the comprehension of the experts, winterkill just seems to hit where it feels like it. . . and spare other areas closeby.

This selectivity has been the basis of much criticism for the affected superintendent. The golfer only can see what the winter has wrought and is blinded by the inexplicable part nature plays in this bizarre selection process. There have been examples of one course going several years without winterkill problems and then being bombarded in one single attacking season.

Such action is baffling to turf doctors and experimental workers trying to pinpoint a uniform strain of behavior in winterkill. So far their efforts have been discouraging. In the spring of 1978, evidence of winterkill's sporadic incidence was widespread in the Northeast. Where certain courses were overrun with it, others escaped without a hint of damage. And the search for an answer goes on.

So, whatever you do between now and the first signs of golfing weather, do not raise your hopes to avoid winterkill high. Don't look upon loose snow cover as a sign that your course will come out of the cold season fit as a fiddle. And don't perceive that a mild winter is reason to expect a mild case of winterkill.

What superintendents and golfers, alike, should expect. . . sad to suggest. . . is the worst. All you have to do is look down and envision that pesty whatever at work meaning to spoil things when winter's wrapper is torn off your course. Winterkill's there and won't quit till he's done his damage. It's frightening; that's what it is.

Gerry Finn

University of Massachusetts Turf Conference and Industrial Show

Forty-eighth Annual Turf Conference and Third Industrial Show
"Better Turf through Research and Education"

February 27, 28 and March 1, 1979

Civic Center

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Sponsored by

Massachusetts Cooperative Extension Service

Massachusetts Turf and Lawn Grass Council

Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England

REGISTRATION

Lobby - Plaza Entrance

8:30 AM-4:00 PM Tuesday, February 27

8:00 AM-4:00 PM Wednesday, February 28

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Morning

9:00 AM-12:45 PM Industrial Show open.

Exhibition Hall

Snack Bar available

Afternoon

GENERAL SESSION

Banquet Room

Chairman:

Dr. Joseph Troll

University of Massachusetts

1:00

Welcome

Dean John Denison

Stockbridge School of Agriculture

University of Massachusetts

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1:15 My Maintenance Program at Aspetuck
Mr. Robert Osterman, Supt.
The Golf Club at Aspetuck Easton, Conn.

1:45 Extra Projects - A Program in Essential
Growth
Mr. Danny H. Quast, Supt.
Milwaukee Country Club
Milwaukee, Wis.

2:15 Fairway Experiences
Mr. Sherwood Moore, Supt.
Woodway Country Club Darien, Conn.

3:00 Break

3:15 Maintaining *Poa annua* and Bent
Mr. Harry Meusal, Supt.
Yale Golf Course, New Haven, Conn.

3:45 Sewage Effluent for Irrigation Use
Dr. Albert Dudeck
University of Florida Gainesville, Fla.

4:30 PM-6:30 PM **Industrial Show open.**
Cocktails available.

4:45 PM Annual Meeting
Massachusetts Turf and Lawn Grass Council
Banquet Hall

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

GOLF COURSE SESSION
Banquet Hall

Chairman: Professor John M. Zak
University of Massachusetts

9:00 **Morning**
Job Standards and Procedures and Job
Descriptions
Mr. Richard Blake, Supt.
Woodstock Country Club
Woodstock, VT.

9:45 Professionalism - Why Musical Chairs?
Dr. Marvin Ferguson
Golf Course Architect Bryan, Texas

10:15 Professional Ethics
Mr. Robert V. Mitchell, Supt. of Golf &
Grounds
The Greenbrier
White Sulphur Springs, West VA.

11:00 **Industrial Show open.**

Afternoon

2:00 The Need for Upgrading Golf Course
Personnel
Mr. George W. Cleaver, Supt.
Chestnut Ridge Country Club and
President G.C.S.A.A.
Lutherville, MD.

2:30 Topdressing
Dr. Robert N. Carrow
Kansas State University Manhattan, Kan.

3:15 Created Turf Problems
Dr. C. Richard Skogley
University of Rhode Island Kingston, R.I.

3:45 *Poa annua* - Prince or Pauper?
Dr. D. Thomas Duff
University of Rhode Island Kingston, R.I.

4:30-6:30 P.M. **Industrial Show open.**

7:00 P.M. **Evening**
Banquet and Winter School Graduation
Banquet Hall
Speaker: Mr. Angela Cammarota, Supt.
Hobbit's Glen Golf Course
Columbia, MD
"Altitude of Attitude"

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

ALTERNATE SESSION
College Room

Morning
Chairman: Mr. Charles Mruk
Hercules, Inc.
9:00 Maintenance of General Turf Areas in the
Northern Zone
Dr. Vaughn Holyoke
University of Maine Orono, ME.
9:45 Sod Production for the South and the
Transition Zone
Dr. Ralph W. White
Southern Turf Nurseries Tifton, GA.
10:30 Cemeteries Are A Community Resource
Mr. James P. Black, Supt.
Swan Point Cemetery Providence, R.I.

11:00 **Industrial Show open.**

Afternoon
2:00 New Ideas in Tree Care
Dr. Walter C. Shortle
Northeast Forest Experiment Station
Durham, N.H.
2:45 Maintaining PAT System Turf at Purdue
Mr. Lawrence E. Davis
Assistant Director Operations
Purdue University West Lafayette, IND.
3:30 Maintenance along the New Jersey Turnpike
Mr. David Grimm
New Jersey Turnpike Commission
Hightown, N.J.
4:30 PM-6:30 PM **Industrial Show open.**

THURSDAY, MARCH 1

8:30 AM-10:00 AM **Industrial Show open.**

GOLF COURSE SESSION
Banquet Hall

Chairman: Dr. Kirk A. Hurto
University of Massachusetts

10:00 Use of Ryegrasses in a Polystand
Mr. William Buchanan, Mid-Atlantic Director
U.S.G.A. Green Section Richmond, VA.

10:30 Anthracnose and Other Turf Diseases
Dr. Joseph M. Vargas
Michigan State University East Lansing, MI.

11:15 Golf Courses and the Environment -
Implications of the ASGCA White Paper
Mr. Philip Wogan
Golf Course Architect Beverly, MA

12:00 Turf 1978 - and the Future
Mr. Stanley M. Zontek, Northeastern Director
U.S.G.A. Green Section Highland Park, N.J.

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* Contributors to the Lawrence S. Dickinson
Scholarship Fund

NEWSLETTER

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OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.



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