



NOVEMBER, 1979



Golf Course Superintendents Association
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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Connecticut is "Golden"

It all started at the Wethersfield Country Club with seven charter members taking the bull by the horn and trumpeting the formation of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents.

That historical gathering put their heads together in February of 1929. And several weeks ago in a gala celebration at the Tumble Brook Country Club, CAGCS turned "golden" with the marking of its 50th anniversary.

Actually, the group was an offshoot of the New England Association which had taken its first steps five years before on another February evening in 1924.

"It was mostly a matter of logistics," commented the 50th's party master of ceremonies Charles Baskin. "With most of the New England activity centered in the Boston area, it was almost a hardship for the Connecticut boys to make the long trip. Besides, the regionalization move was on at the time. What this did was to make the organization more compact with purposes, problems and other variables tuned into local environment rather than to the general New England scene."

The CAGCS was not unlike the mother New England association in that growth was slow but steady.

The seven charter members included J.O. Campbell of Wethersfield, J.R. Foster of Manchester, Thornton Griswold of Wampanoag, Otto Nelson of Farmington, Robert Smith of Indian Hill, Joseph Whitehead of Edgewood and George Wellin of Tumble Brook. At the first meeting, Campbell was elected association president.

Baskin, a past president of CAGCS, perhaps is the most illustrious member of the Connecticut cult in manner of earning national recognition. He served as president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and has been a booster of his own organization in the ensuing years.

"We have been guided by the purpose of the group from the very beginning," Baskin noted. "They were and are the education of the membership, promotion of the profession and improvement of the golf courses in Connecticut through continuing education. We really do emphasize the educational phase of our association goals and it's paid off."

Unlike some other regional superintendents' groups, the CAGCS is experiencing an increase in organizational participation. "We average anywhere from 60 to 80 members for each of our meetings," Baskin told. "I'd say that's an increase of 30 percent since I joined in 1963. Being a smaller group than many of the chapters, I think we tend to be a closer group...more of a family. There really is cooperation among the members. I think I've heard of only one unethical episode involving fellow members. I'd say that proves we pull together."

Baskin also revealed a strong call to serve by the younger superintendents of the state. "Our young members appear to appreciate the advantages of belonging to an association like ours more than some of the older people," Baskin disclosed.

"They see the need for it and the value of it. And our average age shows such interest. Again, when I first came in the average age was 50-55. Now, I'd say it's somewhere around 35 and maybe even below that figure."

The celebration dinner-dance was attended by more than 100 who were accorded the royal treatment which is synonymous with the Tumble Brook management. Host superintendent Dave Stimson did an excellent job in arranging the fete and creating an informal atmosphere.

"As you can see, we have no head table," Stimson advised. "We thought it would be nice to limit the formal limelight to only a few people. What we wanted to effect was the fact that the spotlight belonged to every member, present and past, of our organization. This makes for more time for renewing old friendships and just plain fun."

Also prominent in making an enjoyable night for all were the CAGCS officers who include president Bob Osterman of Aspetuck, Steve Cadenelli of New Canaan, past president Bob Rosch of Rickrimmon-plus directors Bruce Cardinelli, Ken Kelliher, Fred Bachand, Doug Stachura, Dick Cook, Mike Wallace, Charles York and associate director Al Arison.

Among the invited guests were Dick Skogley of the University of Rhode Island, Bill Dest of the University of Connecticut, Joe Troll of the University of Massachusetts and New England Golf Course Association president Dean Robertson.

Gerry Finn

Next Meeting
Whitinsville C.C.
Nov. 1, 1979

See last month's Newsletter
for details and directions.

Note
Winter meetings will be held
at the Franklin C.C.
Dec. 3, 1979
Jan. 7, 1980 (Annual Meeting)
Feb. 4, 1980

Can There Be Perfection?

Al Radko of the USGA Green Section dropped a few seeds for thought during his comments which helped the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents celebrate its 50th anniversary in late September at the Tumble Brook Country Club.

"The superintendents' profession is a unique one in that its goal for perfection is unlike many other fields," the GS national director noted. "Well, you hear of baseball players batting .333 and they're considered very good. You find that basketball players who shoot 50 percent are said to be excellent. The golf course superintendent would be disappointed with those marks, almost appalled by them."

Although the analogy may not seem that appropriate, Radko has struck a strong chord in the vocational chorus of the superintendent. Perfection means 1,000 percent when you're hitting baseballs and one hundred when you're shooting basketballs. Unless some phenom is hiding somewhere, there hasn't been born the athlete who could achieve such unthinkable numbers.

"Of course, it's most commendable to strive for perfection," Radko continued. "But I think the superintendent tends to get down on himself too much in reaching for that goal. I really believe there is need for a leveling off of aspirations. I can see no wrong in a superintendent taking off from the job for a day and going fishing. To keep gnawing away at endless problems without a break is not the thing to do."

Radko has enjoyed a golf season that was a departure from his usual routine of touring courses in an advisory capacity to superintendents with turf and other related problems. Therefore, he is unable to make a report on the general condition of the playing area.

"I had a very interesting experience working with the USGA in the tournament field," Al disclosed. "I was part of the or-

ganization's preliminary crew in inspecting courses for future competition, and I also was on hand for the playing of our championship events."

As a matter of fact, Radko brought new insight into the USGA tournament course setup with his observations and revelations pertaining to official competition.

"The whole concept of setting up a course to trick the players has been blown way out of proportion," Al remarked. "Somehow, the USGA is pictured as a sadistic tournament planner with the tendencies of golfer-devouring monsters. We really make few changes to make the course ready to strangle the players. On the contrary, I have been party to changes which actually made the course play easier. Well, maybe that's not the right word... make that 'practical'."

Radko cited the Brooklawn Country Club in Orange, Conn.-- scene of this year's women's USGA open championship.

"There were holes there which had been set too long for the majority of the girls," Al revealed. "One particular hole was virtually impossible to reach in prescribed figures. I think that a Nancy Lopez or a Jo Ann Carner might do it. But, they are the exceptions.

"What we did was to shorten the distance for the second shot by moving the tee up. It gave more players a chance and actually improved the overall competition for the event. There was another example of giving more girls a chance on a dogleg. Again, we suggested moving the tee in position where they could make the opening at the corner of the dogleg. I don't think that's being sadistic."

Radko reported that all of the USGA championship event courses he visited were a credit to the superintendent in charge of bringing them to full conditional bloom. "Every one of the courses was in marvelous condition," Al praised the particular supers. "And I think this is a credit to the entire profession."

However, Al reverted to his original observation of the golf course superintendent. "It just amazes me how these men (and women) put so much of themselves into approaching that level of layout condition fronting perfection," he concluded. "I really don't know if there can be perfection at the end of the superintendent's ambitious attempt to attain it. But, one thing is certain. They have contributed to creating some of the most beautiful landscapes in the world...that's what many golf courses become when they get through with them."

Take a bow, gentlemen. All of you are something above .300 hitters and 50-percent shooters. Not too many professionals can assume such lofty and admirable status.

Gerry Finn



1980 GCSAA Golf Tournament to be held in Guadalajara, Mexico

The site of the 1980 GCSAA golf tournament has been chosen. Tournament players will compete in Guadalajara, Mexico, at San Isidro Country Club and Club de Golf Santa Anita. The ladies tournament will be held at Guadalajara Country Club.

The tournament will be moved to a post-conference date for 1980 in order to better accommodate travel plans for those attending.

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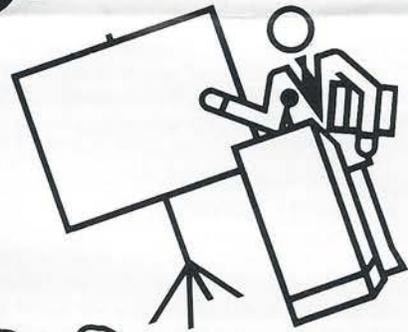
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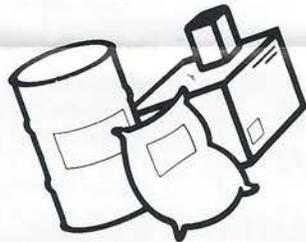
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