

NEWSLETTER

September 1984



Golf Course Superintendents Association

OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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Narry Set to Do Nothing - for a Change

Narry Sperandio came close to losing his job only once. Or so he thought.

"It was one of those meetings the green committee dreams up every now and then," Narry recalled. "The minute I arrived, they started telling me what I'd done wrong with the course and what I should be doing. I was mad, so I just told them I was sick and tired of 'amateurs' telling me, a 'pro,' what to do.

I figured I had talked myself right into a pink slip, but I didn't give a damn. Well, there was this lady on the committee. Before anyone moved, she got up and said, 'you know, what Narry says is absolutely right.' And that was that."

The confrontation, that never really materialized beyond that happened somewhere in the middle of the 40 years Sperandio has spent as golf course superintendent at the Concord Country Club. In fact, he turns 40 at Concord January 1, the same date he marks 50 years of service in the profession and end of a memorable - if not monumental - career.

Narry celebrated his 71st birthday last month and many of his peers showed up at Concord to recognize and punctuate his presence with a gift. He loved it, ate it up.

"I think they think they're getting rid of me at their meetings," he joshed. "Well, I'm not going to upset any apple carts but I reserve the right to express an opinion. Heh, nobody ever paid attention to me, anyway."

Not so. Narry has held just about every elective office in the Golf Course Superintendents' Association of New England and carried out their duties with distinction. His candid approach to creating and cementing relationships is the talk of that group. He is, in a word, one of its legends.

Obviously, he holds a special place at Concord where he once told club officials they'd have to come to him with a job offer after having shocked them with salary demands in a previous interview.

In a gesture, that goes beyond wild imagination, the club is building Narry a new home in back of the 11th green. "I'm overwhelmed by their generosity," Narry sighed. "This makes it just perfect for Phyllis (his wife) and me. We were beginning to think we'd have to buy one of those two hundred thousand dollar condos and sink ourselves into another mortgage. Who says people aren't thoughtful and nice?"

So, how does a superintendent win his way into the hearts of club members - especially those demanding crocks who blame him for everything from bird droppings on the green to flat tires in the parking lot? What's Narry's secret?

"I just yes my bosses to death and then do what I want to do," he cracked. "I've always made my own decisions. That way, if I do get fired, I have no one to blame but myself. However, my relationship with Concord and its members has been wonderful."

That relationship hasn't been strained, either. Some-



how, Narry avoids scrapes and bad scenarios despite a tendency to bull his way through a disagreement.

"I'm a stubborn guy," he admitted. "But I can bend, too. It's just that no one seems to come up with the right answer to make me bend. Seriously, life's a two-way street. I travel both sides. I know I can be wrong, just like the next guy."

When Narry turns his job over to his successor (and there has been a slew of inquiries at Concord), it will be the first time he hasn't had to answer a work call since he was in grammar school.

"I've known nothing but work all my life," he remarked. "I remember when I was a kid, I used to leave school during the lunch hour and do my paper route. It took me that one hour and I'd have to rush back to make first class after lunch.

"Actually, it's been work seven days a week for me all along. It's going to be different, all right, not having to set the alarm and all that. But I'm going to do nothing until I get sick of it. Who knows? I may like doing nothing."

Of course, Concord will miss this self-driving patriarch of the profession whose expertise and lifestyle always have made Narry one of the club's family. Surely, he must have been doing something right for the last 40 years.

"I don't know about that," Narry concluded. "Whatever, I think you'd have to say I did it my way. I suppose you could call me the original rebel of our business. Anyway, I survived and I think all parties are better for it. I have so many friends. The game, the profession really have been good to me."

And you to them, Narry. Do nothing to your heart's desire and, then, do it some more. You deserve it a hundred times over.

Gerry Finn

September Meeting Monday, September 10, 1984

Joint meeting with Conn. Golf Course
Supt. Association

Charles River C.C.
483 Dedham St.,
Newton Centre, MA

Director Meeting - 10 a.m.
Membership Meeting - 11 a.m.
Lunch - 12 noon
Shotgun - 1 p.m.
Host - Steve Kristof

Directions - Rt. 128 to Rt. 9. Head east to
Parker St. Right on Parker to end to Ded-
ham St. take left to club.

Golf Course Superintendents Association

Everything You Did Not Want to Know About Moles...

By John Stephensen, CGCS

I will tell you about those pesky little buggers. They have a name; the common mole and they belong to the Mammalian classification; order of Insectivora and family Tolpidae and their general species of *T. Micrura*. But, what I REALLY call them would make Abdulia, the camel driver blush!!!

The mole is not very big; about 5¼ inches long and has a cylindrical body with a club-shaped tail. The female is slightly smaller and they have a long snout which is rather pointed. Moles have small eyes that are hidden in the fur; an internal ear that is no more than a ridge. The head and snout have long bristles.

The fur is velvet and very soft to the touch. Usually, it is dark gray to almost black; although, moles have been found that were grey-yellow, orange, cream, or white.

All four limbs are short and enclosed within the skin of the body. The limbs are well forward; the front paws are broad with 5 toes and an extra crescent bone, giving even greater breadth. Each toe has a strong claw; the hind feet are small by comparison but not as weak as they are usually described.

Moles are solitary and are seldom seen together except at maturing times when females will build a nest from 18 inches to 3 feet below the surface and will stack it with dead grass and leaves. They usually mate during late March and early April and the litter is born in 5 to 6 weeks. They are blind, naked, and pink in color and start getting their fur in 2 to 3 weeks. They are usually 3 to 4 moles in a litter but there can be as many as 7 and as few as 2. Young moles leave the nest at 5 to 6 weeks and go out on their own. They become sexually mature at 10 to 11 months old.

The mole is a restless creature and will alternately rest, feed and hunt every 3½ to 4 hours. It is quite common for them to be tunneling right after sun-up, right after noon and at sunset.

Their natural habitat is the forest or woodland areas but they will seek any place that may offer food. They live almost wholly underground, seldom coming to the surface and when they do, it is only for short spells and they are looking for a new run.

Their chief senses are smell and hearing and they have an extraordinary sense of touch at a distance. They can pick up the slightest of vibrations.

Surface runs are primarily for feeding and hunting and they can travel at a rate of 7 to 8 inches a minute. When in an area they have as many as 3 layers of tunnels; surface, as mentioned, another at 3 to 6 inches below the surface (also for feeding); and then a set 18 to 20 inches below for resting. There is no pattern for these tunnels. They seek the path of least resistance or if the soil is distasteful, they will go in another direction. A mole can cover anywhere from ½ to 4 acres with intersecting tunnels. When not digging, he can move rapidly through these tunnels, using a swimlike method. It can move equally well either backwards or forwards. When a large mound is seen in an area of a surface run, this is usually a nesting or resting area and may be a vertical tunnel to as much as 3 feet in depth.

The mole eats insects, wireworms, cutworms, grubs, etc., however, its principle food is earthworms. It cannot survive more than a few hours without feeding and when earthworms are plentiful it may store them. It bites off the tip of the worm's head. With its four teeth it twists the worm into a knot and pushes it into a cavity in the soil.

These stores can sometimes include hundreds, even thousands of earthworms. Should the mole not need them, the worms in time regrow their heads and burrow away. When eating a worm, the mole holds it down with its forepaws, bracing the body with its hind feet and chews it from the front end backwards. A single mole will eat 40 to 80 lbs. of food per year. It does not need to drink when feeding on worms, as they are 85% water.

The moles have no natural enemies except possibly man and then only when he leaves a wooded area and trespasses into lawns, parks, and golf courses. There is a long list of remedies to rid moles but most of them are old folklore. But as a personal note, I think at one time or another, I have tried them all with various degrees of results. The examples are:

Drowning: Not practical because of the length and depth of runs; you can have water in a lot of places where you don't need it.

Carbon Monoxide & Other Gases: again, due to runs, gas can be all over and create some problems, especially on Ladies' Day.

Strychnine Treated Worms: somewhat effective but you do not know if you really got him or if he moved.

Poison Peanuts: moles will avoid these because they recognize that the run has been disturbed and also they do not normally eat peanuts.

Trapping: somewhat effective, but care must be used in setting trap; mole can recognize run has been disturbed.

Physically Catching: being at the run when mole is working; kicking him out of the run, then killing. After getting a mole out of the run, don't stand there and admire him; just that quick, he can be back into the ground and gone. I feel this is the best way.

Distractors: windmills or anything that will cause vibrations; the moles extreme sense of touch will sense the vibrations and move to another area.

Chemical Distraction: Spraying barrier strips with an insecticide using 1½ rate and 6 to 10 feet wide; the mole doesn't like the taste and will move on and will not cross it if it is wide enough.

August Results at Concord

The August meeting was held at Concord Country Club on July 9, 1984. We had a good turnout for golf, which was a team of two blind draw. The winners were:

Ron Kirkman, Needham GC and
Dick Duggan, Maynard GC 59 net

Divot Drift... We had some great pairings at Concord for a team of two blind draw. The most talked about was Pete "helo" Coste and Bob "Chopper" Brown. Rumor has it that Chopper scrubbed so bad he quit after 11 holes and then shagged golf clubs for his partner after his poorest (all) shots... The winning team consisted of two well known sandbaggers - Ron "what a nick" Kirkman and Dick "I haven't been playing" Duggan. Kirkman who boasts about the time his handicap was 2 (now 16), has been cleaning up big this year (qualified for Tedesco tourney, won at Marshfield, now at Concord). Golf Chairman Steve Murphy states his handicap will now be 12. Duggan is still well known for his 12 handicap a couple of years ago at the team of two championship... Finally our thanks to Narry Sperandio and Concord CC for being such gracious hosts.

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A Method for Setting Pins

by Robert A. Van Nest CDGA Past President

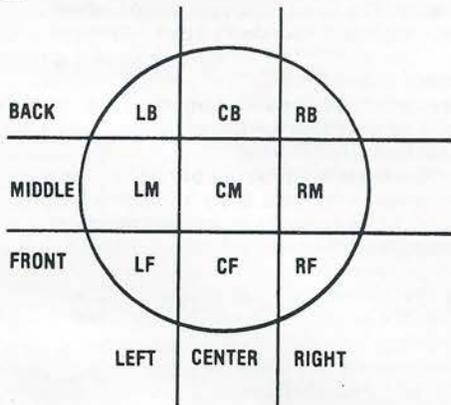
The great game of golf has many intriguing features which set it apart from other games. One of its most appealing aspects is that each course is distinct and different from all others. Each has its own personality and own playing characteristics.

Because of this individualism, course conditioning and set-up become of paramount importance, in order that players are given a fair test of their skills, thus increasing their enjoyment of the game. Cutting heights on greens, fairways and rough as well as tee and hole placements are extremely important. Probably the most controversial of these is the hole locations, commonly referred to as "pin settings."

Some years ago it became apparent that some systematic methods of placing pins was important, and particularly so for tournament play. If done haphazardly, often unusually difficult and sometimes unfair placements resulted. Some set-ups favored one side of the greens and often either the backs or fronts. Over the years we have developed a simple approach to controlling most of these factors and the four steps are as follows.

1. Divide Each Green Into Nine Segments

Each green is divided into three sections by width, referred to as (a) left (b) center and (c) right and three in depth, referred to as (a) front (b) middle and (c) back. This divides the green into nine small segments as shown:



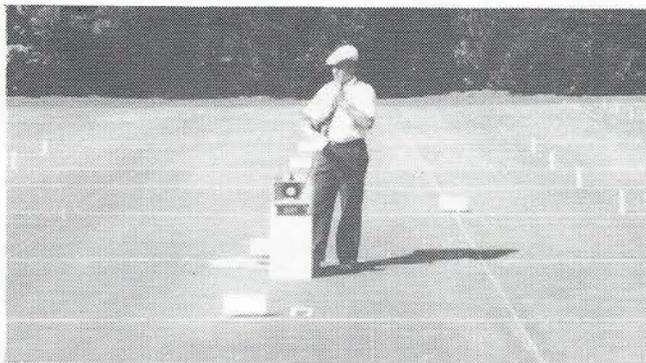
2. Grade Possible Pin Locations by Degree of Difficulty

Using a rating system from 1 to 4 rate the possible pin locations for each hole by degree of difficulty:

Hole Difficulty	Pin Count
Least difficult	1
Next least difficult	2
Next most difficult	3
Most difficult	4

3. Determine Count to be Used

The degree of difficulty of the course plus the quality of the tournament field should determine the total pin count to be used. For most CDGA events with an average field and an average course, we try not to exceed a pin count in excess of 20 points on each side, or 40 for 18 holes. An evaluation of the average difficulty of the greens must be kept in mind. Courses with large, flat, easy greens may require a higher count than very diffi-



Dr. Skogley of URI at Field Day August 22, 1984.

Dates to Remember

September 21, 1984

Supt.-Club Official (3) Tournament
Wellesley Country Club
Wellesley, MA - Contact Tom Schofield

October 2, 1984

GCSANE October Meeting
The Country Club of Brookline
Team of Two Championship
Contact: Pete Coste

cult, undulating greens. In general, the more difficult the course the lower the pin count should be. For our strongest fields, such as the qualifying rounds for national championships, we might increase the count to 45 to 48 on an average course. Counts much higher than this border on "tricking up" the course, which is not our intent. Many counts we have observed, as done by club members for an Event Day or League Play, may run as high as 60 to 70, increasing the problem of slow play and sometimes rendering courses almost unplayable.

4. Placing The Pins

A scorecard should be used as pin selections are made matching the section used and pin count as follows:

Hole	Pin Location	Pin Count
1	CM	1
2	RF	3
3	LB	2
etc.	etc.	etc.

We try to use as many of the nine sections of the greens as possible, and by keeping a scorecard, strike a balance between Front, Middle, and Back as well as Left, Center, and Right. Hopefully, six in Width and Depth can be used over the 18 holes. Each shot to the green should be analyzed in order that the longest and most difficult shots will have the least difficult placements and the shortest and easiest shots the most difficult. A good mix for 18 holes would be three No. 1 locations, eight No. 2, five No. 3 and two No. 4. This would total 42 for the 18 holes.

This is our method for controlling pin locations and virtually eliminating complaints from players. We have a slogan at the CDGA - "Bad pins develop bad champions and good pins, good champions." Good champions are our goal.
Our thanks to Dick Blake.

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