



# THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

DECEMBER, 1986

## Dates to Remember

**January 8 & 9**

U. of New Hampshire Turf  
Conference

**January 26 - February 2**

GCSAA Conference and Show  
Phoenix, Arizona

**February 23**

GCSANE Regular Meeting  
Franklin Country Club  
Franklin, MA

**March 2 - 5**

U. of Massachusetts Turf  
Conference  
Springfield MA

**March 7**

MGA Spring Conference

## NEXT MEETING

Annual Meeting  
January 5, 1987  
Franklin Country Club  
Franklin, MA

9:30 am Directors Meeting  
12 pm Lunch  
1 pm Annual Meeting  
and Election of  
Officers  
1:30 pm Educational -  
Greens Construction

**Reservations Required**  
617-528-6110

## Directions

From Route 495 take King St.  
Exit. Go north to traffic light and  
turn right on Route 140. Club is  
about one mile down on right.

## President's Message

I know that you've heard this before - BUT - I am again asking for the membership of GCSANE to become more involved in the news and opinion making arm of the organization. One of the most important goals of our Association is to promote the development and exchange of ideas. There are any number of problems confronting the golf course superintendent and I'd be most interested in hearing from you regarding same.

Our monthly meetings, and newsletter, most specifically, the Super Speaks Out column, offer us a great opportunity to make our thoughts available to those both in and out of our Association.

If you have a pet peeve, gripe or favorite topic you'd like to see more about, let me, or Ron Kirkman, know. I am appealing to members of our Association, green chairman, friends of the Association and others.

Fresh thoughts and a cross section of ideas on subjects important to the golf course superintendent and the game of golf will be gladly accepted.

If any member would like to help on one or more of GCSANE's committees, please let me or the appropriate committee chairman know. Remember, this is your association and your efforts beyond passive participation at monthly meetings will help to make that association something you can be very proud of.

I'm not unlike Uncle Sam here, "I want you!" I want you to take a more active role in *your association*. I can attest to the fact that it doesn't hurt all that much and can be a source of accomplishment.

A special thanks to one who took the steps to get involved. Mike Hannigan, former Editor of the newsletter, did a great job for us and his efforts have not gone unnoticed. Thanks for everything, Mike.

A final note - unfortunately a sad one. I know that a great many of you share my sorrow in the passing of Tom Irwin. If ever there was a faithful friend of our association, it was Tom. All of his friends and associates pass along their condolences at this difficult time.



Dave Barber



## Things Aren't Always What They Seem

"Geez, what a great job! You work six months and then take the rest of the year off".

Sound familiar? How many times have you, the golf course superintendent, heard that one? How many times have you, the golf course superintendent heard that one and then considered the New England reprise of the Texas Chain Saw Massacre? On the hit parade, it has to rank right up there with, "Why can't we take the carts?", usually asked after a three inch rain, and "These greens are too slow!", yelled out as two members of a foursome slide off an offending "Slow" green because they forgot to sharpen their spikes prior to a Saturday round.

In New England, the winter activities of the golf course superintendent change with geography. On parts of Cape Cod, it is not unheard of to be cranking up mowing equipment in March while points North and West find the snow plows out on driveways, parking lots - and under some conditions - greens!

Looking at a period of one year on the golf course, you can roughly break down the year into seasonal and non-seasonal work. Roughly speaking, and many a golf course superintendent can attest to the fact that this is *very* roughly speaking, the seasonal part of the year runs from April 1 to December 1, with the non-seasonal taking up the slack for the rest of the year. Many are the maintenance crews that are still outside raking leaves, adding sand to bunkers, completing construction projects, installing drainage, applying fungicides, pruning, repairing and cleaning up tree damage, draining irrigation systems, etc., etc., etc., well into the non-seasonal period as defined above. It should well be remembered that, in many straight days of work - in the strictest meaning of the word strict - few golf course superintendents are able to take time off from the "job", whether this means a day or more - during this seasonal time frame.

Still staying with the numbers, if you figure in weekends, an unheard of phenomenon as far as family time is concerned during the seasonal time frame for the golf course superintendent, holidays and vacation time - We'll be wildly extravagant here and include three weeks vacation - you've lopped off another 55 days or so from the non-seasonal period. This leaves 66 days, just over two months, during the non-seasonal period and our

figures have of yet not included time for annual national and regional meetings. All things considered, there is a less than two month period for non-seasonal work.

So, I guess that means it's "feet up on the desk" time for two months, right?

Let's think a little more about that. And before we do, it is important to bear in mind the reduced staff involved in this non-seasonal work. Many maintenance staffs are cut to the bone and beyond during this portion of the year. Right off the top, New England winters are going to lop off a significant amount of time and effort as far as snow removal and sanding of parking lot, entrance roads and walkways.

Equipment maintenance and repair, and equipment rebuilding is often the more appropriate term for this work, takes up most of the remaining non-seasonal time. With many golf courses having an equipment inventory that has replacement costs of up to a half a million dollars, this is time very well spent. During the "season", the time available for this type of work is limited and this limitation emphasizes the need for this winter work. Keep in mind the increased degree of sophistication exhibited by the turf maintenance equipment of today. Fifteen years ago it was pull gangs and walk behind greens mowers. Compared with the triplex mowers - for green, tees AND fairways, and figuring in the increased degree of fine tuning required to maintain the consistent cutting heights that are so a part of the contemporary game, this non-seasonal period could well be completely consumed by the maintenance of this equipment. This is not simply sharpening and grinding as reels need to be rebuilt, bearings checked and replaced, equipment sanded and repainted, engines repaired and replaced and on and on and on.

Many a superintendent has other non-seasonal joys that occupy this time. For example, paddle courts, skeet fields, skating ponds, indoor tennis courts, bowling alleys and other facilities require close to daily attention. Winter functions in clubhouses keep many hopping as well. Budget and grounds meetings are certainly time consuming operations during this non-seasonal period. And there is still plenty of on-the-course work happening at this time as sand is finding its way to bunkers, trees are pruned and repaired, etc.

I know what you are saying. "Hey, come on Ron, I specifically remember you saying that bunker work took place during the seasonal period of the year. Ya, and you also mentioned tree work at that time".

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This is precisely the point. With the amount of work involved on the contemporary golf course, the only seasonal and non-seasonal aspect left today relates to the reduction in staffing mentioned earlier. As far as the work is concerned, it is a single season that stretches from January 1st to December 31st.

The next time someone says to me, "Geez, what a great job! You work six months and then take the rest of the year off", as I walk to the chain saw, I'll ask them if they are interested in some ocean front property in Needham!

Ron Kirkman

## The Super Speaks Out

*Welcome to the Super Speaks Out - A monthly feature which offers the golf course superintendent a forum to express his views on topics and issues relating to his profession. This month's question: How do you handle closing the golf course for the season and does the end of it bring a sense of relief?*

**Gary Duhmaine, Westboro Golf Club:** "Since I am a contract superintendent, I have little or nothing to do with deciding when Westboro goes under wraps for the rest of the year.

"Being a municipal course, a grounds committee sets dates for opening and closing. And that's it. This year, we opened the first of March and everything comes in on November 30.

"Oh, that opening date means when I come back to work. The start of the golf season is almost etched in stone. No one starts playing until April 15.

"I really can't say if I'm relieved or not when they close the doors. I guess it means I don't have to worry about grooming the course for a while and that may be a little relaxing.

"However, it also means that month of March is not so far away and March is my busiest time. Since I am a contractor, that month's set aside for repairing equipment while still getting the course ready for play.

"I suppose the only relief comes from the fact I don't make the decision to close. That keeps people off my back which is where I prefer them to be."

**Bob Johnson, Wampanoag Country Club:** "I got news for you. And it was news for me when I got here a few years ago. We never close.

"That's right. We have 20 to 25 members who play golf here year-round. That means February or whenever they think the weather is suitable for golf.

"My only explanation for this arrangement is tradition. I'm told it's always been that way here and, as far as I can see, it always will be that way.

"Members, who want to extend the season, also are allowed to play regular greens, except those that are covered for the winter. This year we have five new greens and covers will go on them.

"Therefore, as far as having a say in determining when we close, I have to report that I have no choice in the matter. Come to think of it, there is no matter, right?"

"What we do here, though, is close the course for a period in the spring or when the thaw is at its peak.

"Again, there's no telling when that will happen or for how long. Generally speaking, it's early March and could last for as many as three weeks.

"As for the setup, I must admit that I'd prefer to close for the winter months but I'm not going to make a federal case of it. So, it doesn't bother me just as long as my members realize they have made the decision to stay open."

**Scott Reynolds, Charles River Country Club:** "Technically speaking, the green committee decides when we close.

"Realistically speaking, when I feel the golf course should be closed, I call the committee and they say, 'okay, let's close it'. That way they keep the heat off me.

"I'd say I'm lucky in this respect, the fact that the members of the green committee are and have been very supportive of me since I took over this job last year.

"Right now, that committee and the rest of the membership are very interested in a project that requires most of my attention at this time of year. It's a tree program and it's major.

"When we lost trees from last year's hurricane, it brought a sense of awareness to the members that we had to be prepared for potential catastrophes. We had some hollowed-out trees that went down easily.

"What we're doing now is weeding out the weak, planting, replacing and generally just doing the things to make Charles River all that much better.



"So, closing the course is no problem. The rule of thumb is that the course-closed sign goes out as soon as it's time to snow. There's no arguments. It's cut 'n dried. My members are happy, I'm happy and life goes on.

"As for being relieved to close, it doesn't happen. At least, I have a good feeling this year. It's been a good one for a good membership. So, there's nothing to be relieved about."

Gerry Finn

## **GCSAA To Receive National Award for Excellence in Education**

The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) has announced that the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Lawrence, Kan., is to receive an award in ASAE's 1986 Awards of Excellence in Education competition. Sponsored annually by ASAE's Education Section, the awards are presented to associations that have demonstrated creativity and innovation in continuing education programming.

This year's tough competition attracted a record 100 nominations in seven different categories, representing a wide range of national, state and local associations. Monna Kohn, ASAE's Education Section chairman and the full-time director of education and affiliate services at the American Health Care Association, Washington, D.C., said this year's nominations "were of the highest quality and represented an impressive array of association education programming ideas."

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America won recognition in the category of Educational Curriculum and Coordinated Series of Educational Programs. The GCSAA Continuing Education Division I is the first phase of GCSAA's long-range continuing education plan to be fully implemented. The program consists of a defined series of multidisciplinary courses leading to a professional certificate in golf course/turfgrass management. The Division I curriculum represents 19 separate seminars involving 30

hours of classroom instruction from leading educators in the industry. Completion of Division I will be a prerequisite for entrance into Division II of the program, which is now being implemented.

GCSAA will receive its award at a special recognition luncheon to be held November 18 in conjunction with ASAE's National Association Management Conference in Chicago. Associate Executive Director and Director of Education James G. Prusa, an active member of ASAE, will represent GCSAA to accept this prestigious award on the Association's behalf.

"We are thrilled by the recognition ASAE has bestowed upon our Association," proclaimed GCSAA President Riley L. Stottern, CGCS. "To be recognized by a group that represents the professional management of all associations is an encouraging appraisal of GCSAA's performance. It is especially important to me that we are being nationally recognized for one of our chartered purposes: education. It is most fitting that Mr. Prusa -- the original architect of the program -- accept this award on our behalf. The kudos are as much his as ours. This recognition will only spur us on to set even greater goals for the GCSAA and higher levels of service for our members. I congratulate our entire staff."

GCSAA Board Member and Chairman of the Association's Certification and Education Committees Dennis Lyon added, "I, too, congratulate our staff and thank our committee members. This unique recognition will only serve to spur on the efforts of our staff and volunteer committees alike."

"It is especially gratifying," Prusa noted, "to have our endeavors recognized by my professional peers at ASAE. The credit for our success goes to my staff, GCSAA members and most especially the Board of Directors for their leadership and support."

The American Society of Association Executives, Washington, D.C., is an individual, professional membership society made up of nearly 14,000 association executives engaged in the management of the nation's 7,000 professional societies and associations. Its members are the employed executives who manage those organizations.

GCSAA -- which celebrated its 60th Anniversary in 1986 -- is the 7,000-member-strong leading professional association for golf course managers worldwide.

Congratulations to Scott Reynolds on his recent marriage.

"Many worry about zero weather  
who never fret  
about zero accomplishment."



## Divot Drift

The November meeting was held at the Presidents Golf Club in Quincy. Host superintendent, "Gentle" Jim Fitzroy was as sadistic in Pin Placement as his counterpart from Brae Burn was two weeks before. I thought all superintendents reserved those idiotic spots for their own club members. Can anyone remember how long its been since we've used the front or middle teeing area? Only kidding gentlemen, the tougher you make it - the better we play. Golf chairman, Jim O'Kelly had a blind draw for pairings and an individual quota tournament. First with a +5 was Doug Johnson - second with a +4 was Dick Duggan - third with a +1 was Mike Cornicelli. Tied for fourth at even quota was Kevin Lyons, Joe Rybka and Steve Butler. Before we even started, Kevin "snowman" Lyons was the leader in the clubhouse. Simply, his handicap is so high his quota was zero, which means he didn't make a par or bogey, birdie or eagle. Closest to the pin was won by "who else," Dick Duggan.

Doug Johnson, "the quiet one" from Pine Brook started a skins game and he had 27 players donate. I still don't know how he lured the twins in from Dedham and Woodland. I think "stormin" norman and "easy" Bob thought the skins game meant tripple bogeys or automatic pick-ups. The winners were Steve "Le-Broom" Murphy, Mike "basher" Cornicelli, Gary "gorilla" Lucini, Doug "critic" Johnson and Capt. Kirk. Did you notice that two of our great golfers, Jim O'Kelly from Brae Burn and Paul Miller from Tedesco are never in the winners circle? Well, rumor has it that these two gentlemen are saving their game for Tuscon and they will start their own skins game with Burt Frederick from Vesper C.C. and Tony DeBettencourt from Andover C.C. "Frigile" Dick Duggan didn't enter the skins game and he only had five birdies and he also three putted on four holes for bogeys. Next time this type of format is used the bidding will start at \$50 for Duggan. On one of the tougher holes at the presidents, Mark Klimm had a two foot putt for a birdie and he stated this will be an automatic win! Unfortunately for Mark, his playing partner snaked in a 45 footer. On a par five hole surrounded by water Doug Johnson hit a five iron for his second shot and made the eagle putt. I might also add, he did this all left handed. Leroy Allen is still trying to figure out how he hit a pitching wedge on the par three - 110 yard second hole 30 yards beyond the green. A big thank you to the entire staff at the Presidents, we had an enjoyable day.

At the GCSAA Turf Conference in Phoenix be sure to tune in on Bill Spence, the Country Club - Anthony Caranci, Ledgemont C.C. - Dr. Alex Shigo, University of New Hampshire and Dr. Patricia Vitum, University of Massachusetts in the concurrent educational sessions.

## Making His Way Through the Concrete Jungle

You're a golf course superintendent -- established, respected but unwanted.

"Well, I was out of work for over a year," recalls Pete Coste. "Oh, I guess there were jobs I could have had, but I didn't want to downgrade myself. At worst, I wanted to make a lateral move."

Turns out Coste upgraded that situation. In one simple step, he went from "worst" to "best" as one of American Golf Corporation's crack regional superintendents.

Presently, New York City and its perimeter are Coste's stomping grounds. And, to tell the truth, stomping through the concrete jungle is just part of his work routine. Then too, being on the go has to come natural.

Coste, whose last level of employment was top of the line as head superintendent at The Country Club, has six golf courses under his wing. That's responsibility for 108 holes, in case you're counting.

Two are on Staten Island -- South Shore and La Tourette. Two others are strictly in-city -- dyker Beach Golf Club in the Bay Ridge area and Clear View Park in Queens. The other 36 holdes are spread through Pelham Split Rock Golf Club, probably the major bump on Pete's work log -- a project owned by the City of New York.

## Correction

In the November newsletter Royal Crest Golf Club was advertised as being open for a superintendent's position. This job was not open. The golf course is maintained by the Professional Turf Management Company. A division of E and W Maintenance Irrigation Specialist Corporation.



Obviously, the roving superintendent doesn't make his calls on a tractor or mower. Pete's responsibilities are supervision-oriented. He visits each course, makes suggestions, solves problems and keeps a public relations profile around individual superintendents.

"I keep my hands off the actual maintenance," Pete explains. "We have qualified superintendents at each course and each is a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Most are young, willing, anxious to learn and looking to improve their situation. That's how our company works. We want only people who are on the ball and not afraid to work."

American Golf is a unique company in that it often evolves into the difference between a golf course surviving and expiring. It is a golf club managing firm which draws its supervisory work force from the great wealth of experience and expertise in members of the golf course superintendents and club managers professions.

The company has association with some 82 courses and clubs across the country. It owns a couple of them but, for the most part, concentration is on managing and maintaining them.

The theory in implementing its vast arsenal of qualified superintendents and club managers is based on a team concept.

"I'm working with supers and general managers all the time," Pete discloses. "We have a common objective -- to make the courses and clubs better. We strive to put them in working order, go on to improving them and bring them up to highest level of their capabilities."

Coste reports that the New York City area courses are a pretty fair representation of fair to better than average layouts.

"Some are good layouts and some, uh, are not so good," Pete tells. "My job is to see if there are ways to lift the standards of each of them. Average gets good, good gets better. That kind of project.

"I have to watch the budgets, just like I did when I was working the country club circuit. But, as such, I don't have the close personal contacts I once had with members in some of my other jobs. So, in essence, I don't have anyone telling me one thing when I'm supposed to be doing another.

"It's something different, but I'm happy doing it. My relationships are confined to the superintendents I advise and the people I report to within the managing company."

Coste also has a spin-off responsibility, that of recruiting superintendent trainees for American Golf and getting potential supers interested in entering the profession.

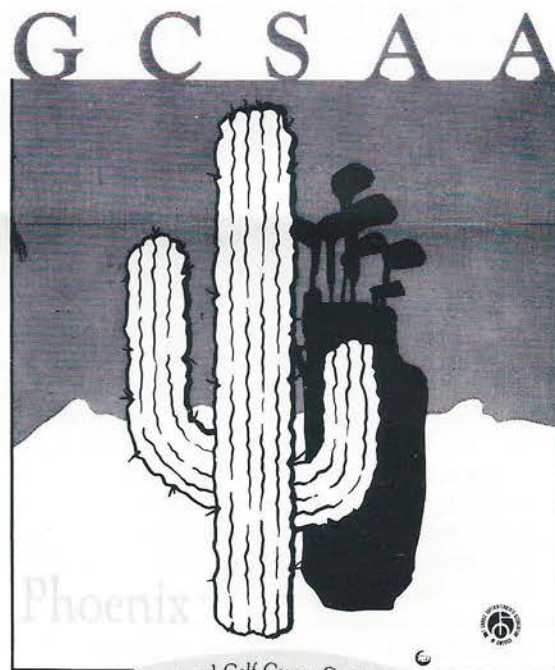
"That's where my public relations side has to shine," Pete tells. "I guess that's one of the reasons why I've really gotten into this line of employment. And, as things progress, I can see myself getting ahead, too.

"The way my life has turned upward I'm glad I didn't get some of the jobs I applied for when I was looking. You say New York and then golf in the next breath and maybe you wonder. But people, say playing golf in Brooklyn are no different that those playing back in Boston or wherever. this (superintendent) is my life and it's still an honest way to make a living."

Even in the concrete jungle where Pete Coste certainly is making his way -- in a big way, too.

Gerry Finn

Our apology to Gerry Finn. We failed to credit him for last month's article, "Same Old Dick Blake On the Go."



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The Education Session of the January GCSANE Meeting at Franklin Country Club will highlight recent green construction experience of Burt Fredricks, Ron Kirkman and Doug Johnson.

Burt Fredricks, architect and agronomist extraordinaire, rebuilt the 18th green at Vesper a few years ago and more recently helped Tony DeBettencourt remodel three greens at Andover. The greens were stolonized on a sand and loam topmix.

At Needham, Ron Kirkman brought in Tony Paganis of Arlington to re-build three problem greens this past fall. The greens were seeded to Penncross on a sand and peat topmix.

Over at Pine Brook, Doug Johnson tackled two greens in the spring with Billy Drake of Framingham. The greens were sodded with Penncross over a topmix of sand and peat. The sod was individually wrapped.

Come on out and hear how you might, or might not, want to take on that problem green at your club.

## Nominating Committee

Paul Miller Chairman  
Dick Zepp  
Bob Mucciarone  
Dick Duggan  
Don Lavangie

President Dave Barber  
Vice President Dick Zepp  
Secretary Paul Miller  
Treasurer Tom Schofield  
Trustee (3 yr) Charles Passios  
Finance Chairman Doug Johnson  
Golf Chairman James O'Kelly  
Educational Chairman Ed Brearley  
Newsletter Editor Ron Kirkman

We understand Jim Beane, Superintendent Mount Pleasant C.C. recently underwent surgery. We wish Jim all the best and a speedy recovery.

Voted Regular Member: Paul Veshi, Pleasant Valley Country Club

Voted Associate Member: Tom Colombo, New Seabury Country Club

Voted Associate Member: Lianne Larson, Saint Marks

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Tennis Court Const & Maint  
Sealcoating Hingham Inc Center  
Hingham, MA 749-6800

Nor-Am Chemical Co.  
Wilmington, Delaware  
David Sylvester, Rep.  
203-828-8905

Norfolk Power Equip., Inc.  
194 Main Street  
Norfolk, MA 02056  
617-528-3120  
Don Reynolds, Rep.

Old Fox Chemical Inc.  
Fertilizers-Seed-  
Turf-Chemicals  
66 Valley Street  
E. Providence, R.I. 02914

Richey & Clapper, Inc.  
28 Rutledge Road  
Natick, MA 01760

\*Sawtelle Bros  
565 Humphrey Street  
Swampscott, MA 01907  
617-599-4856

Scott Associates, Inc.  
60 Water St. Clinton, MA  
617-365-6341  
Pumps-Sales, Service  
Installation-Vertical Turbine Pumps Specialists

Scotts Pro-Turf Div  
Rep Ed Wiacek 401-253-4284  
Rep. Dave Schermerhorn 617-347-5211

Tuckahoe Turf Farms Inc.  
Exeter, R.I. Litchfield, N.H.  
West Suffield, Conn.  
800-556-6985  
Largest Producer of Penncross in  
New England  
Alan Anderson

\*Turf Products Corp.  
7 Coppage Drive  
Worcester, MA 01602  
617-791-2091

\*Turf Specialty Inc.  
84 Merrimac Street  
Hooksett, N.H. 03106  
Turf & Ornamental Supplies  
603-485-7866 (collect)  
Ken Turner-Kevin Lyons-Bob Lake

White Turf Engineering  
P.O. Box 1116  
Portsmouth, N.H. 03801  
603-431-4147  
Golf Course Irrigation Consultants  
and Contractors

Philip Wogan  
Golf Course Architect  
21 Budleigh Ave.  
Beverly, MA 01915

\*Contributors to the Troll-Dickinson  
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# THE NEWSLETTER

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