



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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

July 1989

NEXT MEETING

Monday, August 7, 1989
South Shore C.C.
Hingham, MA

9:00 am	Director's meeting
10:30 am	Regular meeting & Educational Session
12:00 noon	Lunch
12:30	Golf

Club Championship will be played at South Shore—The Tournament was cancelled at Concord C.C. because of rain.

Host Superintendent—
Neil Loomis

Reservations Required
(617) 749-8479

Neil has been a superintendent for 12 years. He and his wife Lisa have 2 children, Jessica and Philip.

Directions—Rte 3 South (toward Cape Cod) take Nantasket—Rockland exit (Rte 228) left off ramp and follow 228 approx. 4 miles. At this point 228 bends sharply to the right. Go straight across, off 228—3/4 mile into Hingham Center. In Hingham Center take a left (South St.) and follow for 3/4 mile and club will be on left.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome & Congratulations to
Carl Brooks, Associate
Fort Devens G.C.

Thomas Platt, Associate
Tara Colonial C.C.

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS

James Reinertson, Associate
Wayland, C.C.

Should They Look the Other Way?

This month a commentary is in order because this is what it has degenerated to:

"There's a fine line between confronting a golf course vandal or trespasser and turning your head and looking the other way. In that situation, you're always being stalked by retribution. Frankly speaking, that guy you face up to can come back at night with an automobile and put you out of business."

The speaker was a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England who suggested that taking a tough line against the incidence of golf course vandalism and trespassing is an invitation to potential disaster.

He may be right.

Consider the nightmare a golf course superintendent and his assistant experienced this spring at a public course in the Bronx.

What has been termed a life-threatening situation occurred when the two were attacked by 16 teenagers who had been chased off the golf course after illegal entry and a physical confrontation with the assistant.

Both were beaten with golf clubs, fists and feet. The superintendent suffered multiple contusions and abrasions, his assistant came out of the attack with a broken elbow.

It happened in New York. And, yes, it could happen here. In fact, one locally-based superintendent had himself sucker-punched on his home grounds for simply approaching a trespasser with the intent of seeking his identity. Instead, he was hit with a haymaker temporarily dazing him. When he looked up, his attacker had vanished.

What makes vandals and trespassers tick? Why are they determined to tear up greens and sneak on the course without legal right to use its facilities?

"It's the sign of the times," one superintendent offered. "We're living in a society where the younger generation has a problem with its sense of values. A portion of that generation has no regard for personal property or authority. Those are the people we're dealing with."

"That's a joke," another superintendent added. "We're almost to the point where we know we can't do anything about bringing criminal action against these people because of our judicial system. Once you catch someone breaking the law on golf course property and finally get him or her to court, the best you can hope for is a slap on the wrist. It's not worth the effort."

Some superintendents actually live in fear of confronting that "certain" person who might go "haywire" after being caught in the act of vandalizing or trespassing, or both.

A superintendent, whose course has been a frequent target of these culprits, has decided not to pursue challenging them beyond polite inquiry.

"I know that there are gangs around the area who are looking for more trouble than just getting their kicks tearing up a green or smashing a ball washer," he told. "Some of these guys want you to challenge them and set up a physical confrontation. They're just dying for a fight."

"Actually, I've come close to getting into it with some guys who had wandered

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LOOK THE OTHER WAY

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onto the course looking for some 'action'. I could only see a couple of them and when I started toward them, I could hear someone else in the bushes saying, 'let's jump him'. That's all I had to hear. That's as far as I went. I just turned around and got the hell out of there. I don't pretend to be a hero."

Apparently, that super's not alone. Others, reporting near-scrapes with vandals and trespassers who suddenly multiply into gangs of 10 or more when the confrontation heat's turned up, carry similar attitudes into the added responsibility of policing the golf course.

So, sad to say, there doesn't seem to be any solution to the problem of controlling the growing incidence of vandalism and trespassing. Sad to say, too, the situation seems headed toward a dead end where the golf course superintendent's recourse is to "live with the problem".

It goes without saying, then, that recourse is the saddest part of all...saddest while being the sanest. What a revolting development.

GERRY FINN

*Belated sympathy to
Joseph Butler & family
on the death of his wife.
Joe is retired from the
United Shoe G.C.
(now called Beverly C.C.)
and Joe served as
President of the
GCSANE in
1963 & 1964.*

The Super Speaks Out

Welcome to The Super Speaks Out — a monthly feature which offers the golf course superintendent a forum to express his or her views on topics and issues relating to their profession.

This month's question: *With vandalism, trespassing and other illegal forays on the golf course on the rise, what has been your experience with them and how do you deal with them?*



Tom Schofield, Wellesley Country Club: "Unfortunately, in some environments the golf course has become a place where you go to raise hell and Wellesley just happens

to be one of those places.

"Here, vandalism and all the other things that go with it is one of the unpredictable. One year we may get caught up in a rash of incidents, another we're hit with the little things we've come to accept as annoyances.

"I can remember golf seasons when the financial loss from theft of equipment and damage to the course ran as high as \$9,000. That's a high-water mark, though, but any form of vandalism is costly because of the effect it may have on the golf course superintendent.

"We're located in the middle of a risk area since there's a high school and two colleges nearby. In most cases that's the age group we're concerned with in regard to vandalism.

"Most clubs look to the superintendent to police the golf course even though everyone who plays it, supposedly goes through the pro shop before starting their rounds. So, we're stuck with keeping trespassers off the course.

"In this day and age that can be a testy job. Usually, people who don't belong on the course arrive in numbers, sometimes

in packs. Therefore, you have to be careful about the possibility of physical retaliation when you're literally playing the part of the cop on the beat.

"So far, I haven't had any personal experience as far as physical exchanges go. Most of the time the trespassers turn on their heels and leave. Maybe I've been lucky. Regardless, there doesn't seem to be much we as supers can do about the problem other than to keep our cools when confronting trespassers or vandals and hope that sometime they'll grow out of whatever it is that influences that kind of behavior."



Norm Mucciarone, Woodland Country Club: "So far so good this season but remember this is early June (time of interview) and graduating parties are right around the corner.

"That's when these people (vandals, trespassers) seem to be most active. What do they do?

"Well, they pull the regular tricks—steal flags, scratch initials in greens with those big nails on the ends of trap rakes, drive cars over the greens, steal anything that isn't secured and try to get away with sneaking on the course to play.

"I make no bones about who they are either. Most of them are students from Harvard, BU and BC. They have a lot of nerve, too. Heck, I've seen them drive into the club parking lot and march to the first tee as if they were paid-up members. They're not hard to recognize.

"One of the big drawbacks here is our location, right near Riverside. That's the last stop on the MBTA line and that's the route some of our 'visitors' take when they're in the mood to create some excitement and thrills.

We've put up fences around the course and it discourages some of them. However, if they really want to get inside the grounds, they find a way.

"In that case, I confront them with a warning that I'll call the police if they don't get out. If that doesn't work, I call

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THE SUPER *Cont. from page 2*

for help. There's no way I'm going to get into a physical hassle over this."

Bob Mucciarone, Dedham Polo & Country Club: "I think I've come up with the all-time vandal—the guy who came in here and cut himself a Christmas tree eight years in a row. That's low life stuff. I mean it.

"What gets me is that the same guy must be wired into my office. This year I was determined to catch him so I hired a high school kid to watch for him. He did it for three weeks, too, and the guy never showed. Come on, huh?

"The regular vandals pull the familiar stuff—like riding over greens and stealing everything in sight. The extremes run from coming right into the club and stealing furniture to stealing the club flag. That's so bad we run the flag up a cable instead of a rope.

"Even with all that going on, I've come up with a counter attack—my dog, Abergail. Don't let the name fool you. She's half-Doberman and half-German sheppard and mean as they come—uh, with strangers, of course. When I can let her loose, vandals and trespassers take themselves on a hike out of here.

"However, I have to keep her under control so she won't bother our members. She's also getting old and slowing down. Therefore, I have to rely on personal confrontation with the people who get their kicks sneaking on and wrecking the golf course. It's a problem all right—a problem that won't go away."

Scott Reynolds, Charles River Country Club: "This (telephone call) is a coincidence. Only two nights ago I really got hit and this time they even left their calling card—'Class of 1989'.

"Damage? They ripped out a water cooler, tore up a ball washer and took every yardage marker they get could their hands on. And to top it all off, they snapped a Japanese maple. That loss alone will run between four and five hundred dollars.

"Vandalism really is extensive here, probably because we're really exposed so to speak. Two neighborhood streets run

through the course, so we're virtually at the mercy of a lot of mixed up people.

"I've seen it all, even a six-wheel truck that crashed through trees to get at the greens. There's even evidence that someone's been fooling around with pipe bombs. It's so bad I had to go to court once when there was \$9,800 worth of damage to fairways and greens. That was an inconvenience that upset my maintenance schedule and had me running around in circles.

"There's really not much we can do about things like that, other than to catch the vandals and hope the courts can make examples of them. As for trespassers, I just try to be diplomatic confronting them. So far it's worked. I haven't experienced any physical threats. But that's the only thing I can be relieved about. It's crazy."

GERRY FINN

**The annual
University of Rhode Island
Turfgrass Field Day**

will be held on
Wednesday, August 30, 1989
at the Turfgrass Research Farm
Plains Road, Kingston, RI 02881.

For information contact:

Dr. C.R. Skogley
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**Assistant Superintendent
Charles River C.C.**

Contact: Scott Reynolds, (617) 244-7741

**Tournament Results
Willowbend Club**

1st Gross Eastward Ho C.C., Brian Cowan,
Doug Bohey, Ray Foster, Bob Hussey

2nd Gross Woods Hole G.C., Tom Flaherty,
Larry McDonald, Bill Newton, David
Chapman

1st Net Sky Meadow C.C., Doug Johnson,
Rich Gaisel, Mike Capatino, Gary
DiNardo

2nd Net Franklin C.C., Gary Luccini,
Richard Armstrong, John Padula,
Neico Luccini

3rd Net Thorney Lea C.C., Joe Rybka, John
Tosca, John Finnigan, John
Blomstrom

4th Net Hatherly C.C., Rich Caughey, John
Bellenger, Ken Chisholm, Don Beale

5th Net Needham G.C., Ron Kirkman, Paul
Carey, Jim Cotter, Doug Williams

6th Net Woodland C.C., Norm Mucciarone,
J. Degnam, P. Ochs, M. Corrigan

7th Net Heritage Hills G.C., Charlie
Dickow, Ru Garrity, Brian Clean,
Norm Brastow

Long Drive Tom Columbo

Closest to Pin #2 Steve Murphy

Closest to Pin #10 Alex Manocchoi

**Tournament Results
Twin Hill C.C.**

1st Gross Jack Hasset, Joe Rybka, Norman
Mucciarone, Bob Brown

1st Net Paul Jamrog, Bob DiRico, Gary
Luccini, Bob Johnston

2nd Net Larry Bunn, Bob Johnston, Leroy
Allen, Kon Kirkman

Nearest to Pin Mike Cornicelli

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**THE
NEWSLETTER**

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