



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.

April 1990

Neil Loomis...He's Not After Your Job



At first, the idea was seeded by the adventure in his soul. "It was something new and I wanted to try it," explained Neil Loomis, who began scratching the surface of a golf course management service company back in 1982. "The potential for making a lot of money was there. However, I didn't focus on money. I couldn't have because it was six years before I got a contract."

Loomis is the brains behind Certified Golf Course Management Corp. He is its founder, president, chief operating officer, and central target of the headaches that come with owning a business.

The operation is self-explanatory. Loomis comes into a golf course and takes charge, so to speak. That's in an across-the-board contract such as the agreement he has with the South Shore Country Club, a municipal layout owned by the city of Hingham.

"We run the whole show at South Shore," he disclosed. "That means hiring people to maintain the course and operate the clubhouse and pro shop. The complete package setup is represented at South Shore, as opposed to my other account—Saddle Hill (Golf Club)."

Neil's association with Saddle Hill is restricted to the area of golf course maintenance. He has a long-term contract with South Shore. The Saddle Hill pact is year to year.

"The South Shore job gets me involved in all phases of a golf operation," he said. "It's really what I

prefer. There's more risk because of the investment factor, so, naturally, the rewards are greater if my management team is a success."

Certified Golf Course, etc. runs the pro shop there. Neil hires a golf pro to administer the game, teach, and sometimes the pro's duties may overlap into other parts of the operation. The pro shop manager is responsible for work related to what the title implies. Therefore, Loomis also has to know something about retailing.

"Frankly, I rely on my experience as a superintendent to serve as the foundation for the total involvement I have as head of the company," Neil leveled. "That background is invaluable. It's my strong suit. I mean it."

The 12-year super also means it when he says he's not after any superintendent's job.

"That doesn't make sense," Neil told. "I have hired superintendents at both South Shore and Saddle Hill. My brother, Dean, has the South Shore job and Chris Bowen heads the maintenance staff at Saddle Hill. I should add that each is a member of the 'national' (Golf Course Superintendents Association of America)."

Loomis is in the process of submitting bids for other courses that are available on a lease basis. However, he emphasizes that no code of ethics violation occurs where he is involved.

"Let's face it," he continued. "There are course owners who think management company operations is the way to go. Someone's going to get

MAY MEETING

Monday, May 7, 1990
Woodland Golf Club
Auburndale, MA

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

Golf after lunch, Shotgun start

Host Superintendent
Norman Mucciarone

Reservations Required by May 3
(617) 527-6968

Following high school graduation in his home town of Franklin, MA, Norm attended the 12-week program at the Stockbridge School of Agriculture, UMass, Amherst. Upon completion of a two-year stint in the U.S. Navy, he was hired as the Superintendent at Woodland where he has dutifully served for 38 years.

Norm and his wife Blanche currently reside in Waban where they have raised 9 children, 4 of which remain at home. He has served the GCSANE as a Trustee and in his spare time enjoys all sports.

Educational Session

Richard Shaw
John Hancock Insurance
Retirement Plans, S.E.P.S., Life Insurance, update on regulations.

FROM THE NORTH

Route 128 S to exit 21A. Bear right at lights to Route 16 East. Go through 3 sets of lights, the golf club entrance is on the left.

FROM THE SOUTH

Route 128 N to exit 21, Route 16 East. Go through 3 sets of lights, the golf club entrance is on the left.

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the contract, so why shouldn't it be me? There's no possible way I'm being unethical. As far as I'm concerned, if a superintendent does the job, it's his to keep should I take over management of his course."

Loomis became interested in the business when golf course management arrangements began to become popular in 1982. There were leases to be had in the next six years and Neil made a lot of bids. He put a lot of himself in learning the ropes and when South Shore accepted his presentation in 1988, it was the breakthrough that launched a new career.

"The only negative aspect of that moment was the tough situation it created with leaving Point Judith (Country Club)," Neil revealed. "It was an overnight opportunity. South Shore contacted me about accepting my bid on June 27th and wanted me on the property by the first of July.

"The members at Point Judith wanted me to stay and if I didn't, they wanted me out of there, pronto. It was a bad scene. I told them I'd stick around to keep the maintenance program going and to help them find a replacement, but it was no go. Believe me, parting was not such sweet sorrow."

Loomis would like to characterize his switch to the executive branch of the game as a "gradual evolvement into something bigger" than his original station as head super. He also looks at the venture as a means of raising the standards of golf course management and the game itself to a higher level. In addition, he'd like to be part of that philosophy with more accounts. "The sky's the limit," he remarked.

Regardless, Neil Loomis has a solid grasp on his future. Sky or no, you'd have to say he has his feet on the ground.

GERRY FINN

The Super Speaks Out

This month's question: *Sometimes golfers assume that the superintendent closes up shop and heads for sun country at the first sign of winter. So, what did you do on your "winter vacation"?*

Ken Lallier, The Quechee Club: "I'm just about ready to get into the overlap zone here. Overlap in my case means switching or trying to switch from ski area manager to golf course superintendent.

"Hey, my winters are just as busy as my summers. We have a small alpine skiing area. It's only a 670-foot vertical drop. Then there's our cross-country skiing program. And it's all not just sitting around and watching the snow fall.

"Believe it or not, we're into snowmaking during the winter when the natural stuff comes up short. This year wasn't too bad because we still had about a foot left at the end of February. Last year we had none, so our 'winter irrigation' project kept us going.

"What does it entail? Well, we have a crew of three people who might be manning the snow guns an average of three, maybe four nights a week. After that, there's the matter of grooming. We have two crew members doing that chore.

"So, there's no such thing as the slow season for golf course superintendents in these parts. The only difference here is we green the course in summer and make the slopes white in winter."

Tom Brodeur, Essex County Club: "The winter game here is platform tennis. We have three courts and they're pretty busy. My job is to make sure they're playable.

"But, really, it's no big deal. There are five of us here full time and we alternate being on call for weekend storms. Come to think of it, all of our storms have come on weekends.

"The courts have heating elements for icy conditions and we have to make sure they're in working order. Otherwise we do the regular plowing and equipment refurbishing jobs that have to be done when the course is closed. As I said, it's no big deal, but keeping ahead of the paddle players is one of my responsibilities, and winter is when the sport thrives."

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GCSAA 1990 Trade Exhibition, Orlando, Florida.

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**Barrie Robertson,
Lake Sunapee Golf
Club:** "It's just
starting to take hold,
but we're becoming
more and more
involved in cross-

country skiing as the sport continues to grow here.

"This winter some of my time was spent upgrading a pump house and then converting it into a dual purpose piece of machinery that irrigates the golf course one season and makes snow the next.

"So, the snowmaking system has been a major item on the winter agenda even though we did have one storm that dumped about three feet of snow here. But even that had its setbacks, since it turned into a plowing problem you can't believe.

"Cross-country skiing really has caught on here. There are times when we accommodate from 600 to 800 skiers a day. That's what it's all about. We have to have something for our members and their guests to do to keep them on the premises.

"Eventually, grooming will be another winter job for me as the skiing becomes more popular. It just so happens we took on maintenance of the golf carts this year, so you can imagine how busy it's been. I'd say I'm about three weeks behind getting ready for the golf season. Never a dull moment here...summer or winter."



**Jack Pluta, Country
Club of Pittsfield:**
"Okay, what do you
want to talk about
first? Racquetball?
Squash? Cross-country
skiing? Platform tennis?"

Or how about ice skating? We have it all here, and guess who gets to take care of it?

"The winter action is so heavy, in fact, that I even take on part-time help. Presently there are three full-time people, the two part-timers, and myself here in the winter. Actually, we're just as busy in the winter as we are in the summer.



Attending the USGA Seminar at the Orlando Civic Center are (left to right) Tom Colombo, Dave Robinson, Jeff Carlson, and Kip Tyler.

"Some of the sports don't tie down too many work hours. For example, each year we go over the racquetball court with steel wool to remove ball marks, then slap on a coat of paint. That covers about one percent of my budget, so you get the picture in that area.

"The cross-country trails we groom and the ice skating pond boils down to a matter of keeping it clear and smooth. Needless to say, weekends at the Country Club of Pittsfield aren't very quiet. We're into year-round maintenance and improvements. There's no off season, none at all."

GERRY FINN

—ASSISTANT SUPT.—

Sandy Burr G.C.
Wayland, MA
18-Holes, Public
Pesticide License Needed
Salary based on experience

Send resume to:
Charlie Zeh, Jr.
897 Elm Street
Marlboro, MA 01752
(508) 485-4254

—ASSISTANT SUPT.—

C.C. of Halifax
Halifax, MA
18-Hole, Private

Send resume to:
Frank Murphy
P. O. Box 485
Halifax, MA 02338

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CALENDAR

—OF EVENTS—

May 7	Woodland C.C. Regular Meeting
June 11	Belmont C.C. Supt.-Chairman
June 21	U. of Mass. Field Day

TREASURER'S NOTE

The second billing for 1990 membership dues has been mailed. I have received dues payment from the majority of our membership. Thank you for your quick response.

The first billing for "Friends of the Association" has been sent. Your payment helps offset the association's expenses. Your prompt payment is appreciated.

RON MILENSKI

President's Message



I would like to take a moment to extend congratulations to Charles Passios on his election to the GCSAA Board of Directors. Truly an honor for Charlie and we are all proud of him. Secondly, I would like to thank our new Board of Directors of GCSANE for their active participation this spring. Paul Jamrog and Chip Brearly did an exceptional job with the booth at Springfield, as well as all of those who worked it. Bob DiRico has the tournament schedule and reservation number (617-527-6968) in place and posted on the back of the membership card. Bob Ruszala is updating our membership directory and should be out around mid-May. Kevin Osgood is compiling our education sessions that are looking very informative. The newsletter has been terrific as well as all of our printing, many thanks to Kip Tyler. The projector and help at the conference was handled by Ron Milenski and a multitude of members, not to mention his treasurer duties. Eric Newell is keeping us abreast of legislative actions. Charlie Passios and Dick Zepp have been very active with their Research Committee. I think the results of this hard work is very evident! Again, many thanks.

I wish all of you good luck in the upcoming season and hope that both winter and spring have been kind to you. The Board of Directors of GCSANE would like to emphasize the importance of reservations at meetings and proper attire.

PAUL MILLER

CONGRATULATIONS

Certified
Golf Course Superintendent
Wayne Zoppo
Agawam Hunt Club



At the February meeting, 25-year member pins were presented to (left to right) Dean Roberts, John Petraitis, and Len Blodgett.

Divot Drift

Mike Hurdzan, golf course architect, gave an excellent presentation at the MGA Spring Conference on Environmental Concerns in Golf Course Construction.

Jim Snow, N.E. Regional Director of the USGA Green Section Service, is now the National Director of the same.

The 1990 Mass. Turf Conference and Industrial Show was dedicated to Ken Turner, formerly of Turf Specialty, Hooksett, NH

Thanks to Jim Beane, Ron Milenski, Scott Reynolds, and Kevin Osgood for running the GCSANE hospitality suite at the Orlando Peabody in February.

Charlie Passios, Hyannisport Club, is a new Board of Directors member for GCSAA. He was elected recently at the National Conference in Orlando. *Well done, Charlie!*

Congratulations to Paul Skafas of Tom Irwin Co. and his wife Kim. They were blessed with a baby boy, Daniel, 7 lbs. 3 oz. on March 20, 1990.

Richie Selvo, golf course mechanic at Salem C.C. for 30 years, is recovering from quadruple by-pass heart surgery.

Don Levangie, formerly of Norfolk G.C., is now Superintendent at Brockton C.C.

Mike Schockro is the new Superintendent at Norfolk G.C. He was formerly Superintendent at Pawtucket C.C. in Rhode Island.

John Streeter, past Superintendent at Cliffside C.C., is now the new Superintendent at Woodbridge C.C., Woodbridge, CT.

John Kotoski, formerly of Berkshire Hills C.C., is now Superintendent at Oxford Golf and Racquet.

Eric Kleinsurge, formerly the Assistant Superintendent at Myopia Hunt Club, is now the Superintendent at Sterling G.C.

Prize winners at the GCSAA Golf Tournament in Orlando, Florida in February...

Bob Boulard, Weston Green Chairman, Affiliate Gross Winner

Steve Chiavaroli, First Flight, 7th Gross
Paul Jamrog, Second Flight, 3rd Gross
Gary Luccini, Third Flight, Net Runner-up
Mark Gagne, Third Flight, 4th Gross
Wayne Zoppo, Fourth Flight, 4th Gross

—POSITION OPENING—

SUPERINTENDENT—Lost Brook Golf Club, Norwood, MA, has immediate opening for qualified individual. Minimum three years experience in all phases of golf course maintenance and two year turf degree preferred. We offer a competitive salary and benefit package commensurate with experience. Reply in confidence to:

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(617) 326-5717

COMMERCIAL NEWS

Boston Irrigation Supply announces the appointment of John Allen as its golf salesman south of the Mass Pike. John has been with BISCO for five years as inside and contractor salesman. He has had extensive golf experience in that time. North of the Mass Pike will be covered by Paul Kenyan, one of the owners of Boston Irrigation.

Letters To The Editor

I am writing in response to your article entitled "The Super Speaks Out", in the February 1990 GCSANE newsletter. The article was on whether Superintendents use portable radios for daily communication use.

I found the article to be very negative as to the value of these radios. I first tried these radios when I borrowed a couple from Bill Spence (The Country Club) to try out. He had to call me to return them after a couple days as he missed them very much.

I immediately purchased three "Motorola Radius" radios which are very small, light weight, and clip directly to your belt. You can hardly tell that you have them with you. They have become extremely valuable to myself and my crew for daily operations and have greatly improved our productivity and efficiency here.

We now have a total of six of these radios and I would not want to live without them.

**Kevin Osgood, Supt.
Newton Commonwealth G.C.**

After reading the "Super Speaks Out" column in February, I decided to offer a second opinion concerning two-way radios. We use them at Ocean Edge and I feel they are essential to communication within my department and between golf maintenance and the pro shop. Our golf course is spread over about 485 acres and we average about 14 tournament days per year and host two golf schools. These events, coupled with the weekly outings that resort-style golf courses seem to be blessed with, make communication between our shop and the pro shop frequent, subject to change, and contradictory.

Two-way radios make the entire process smoother. There are a few

characteristics of the radio and the operator that make them work much more successfully. The radio must be a good one with more than one channel (pro shop on a separate channel) and no interference from the local truck drivers. Ours cost about \$1000 per unit. No one on a mower can use them, earphones or not.

Also, there seems to be some employee resistance to talking into a "black box". We found that myself, my assistant, the mechanic, and the person setting up in the morning are the best people to have with radios. Of course the best part of all is to turn them off at lunch because they will drive you crazy!

**Jeff Carlson, Supt.
Ocean Edge G.C.**

I was surprised to read in February's newsletter the lack of favorable responses to the use of two-way radios on the golf course.

Here at "The Orchards" we have used three HT90 Motorolas since the spring of 1987 and added two HT600 Motorolas in the spring of last year with nothing but excellent results. These radios are in use every day and are a big labor saver.

One example of where I feel we have saved the most, and a major reason we purchased them in the first place, is the time in which crew members spent trying to track down me or my

assistant. It became clear that numerous trips around the course and to the shop could be eliminated through the use of two-way radios. One radio is always in the shop whether the mechanic is there or not, so there is no excuse for not getting answers to questions or receiving new assignments.

Other ways in which radios have helped us at "The Orchards" has been in syringing and irrigating the golf course (we have a manual system), starting up the irrigation system, system repairs, blowing out the system at the end of the season, better communication with the golf professional and clubhouse manager especially during tournaments and outings, directing crew members to areas not occupied by golfers, and of course in emergency situations.

I would like to think that the results of using two-way radios are only as good as the system and radios you purchase. There are many poor and unreliable radios out there and I have tried citizen band radios and to me they just don't fit in on a golf course.

Remember, golfers don't like to be disturbed, whether it's from unnecessary grounds crew traffic or noise from cheap, squelch riddled radios. So for us at "The Orchards", quality two-way radios have drastically improved our day-to-day operations.

**Paul Jamrog, Supt.
The Orchards G.C.
South Hadley, MA**

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS

Robert Lake
Regular Member
Holden Hills C.C.

Randy Kehres
Regular Member
Pleasant Valley C.C.

Richard McHugh
Assistant Member
Framingham C.C.

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Rep. Bruce Roberts

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508-791-2091

***Turf Specialty Inc.**
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1-800-228-6656
Bob Flanagan, Kevin Lyons,
Dave Schermerhorn, Ed Wiacek

Philip Wogan
Golf Course Architect
17 Walker Road, Topsfield, MA 01983

Winding Brook Turf Farm, Inc.
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THE NEWSLETTER

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