

♦The Green Sheet♦

Volume 6 Issue 1

February 1998

Golf Course Dilemma: Shooting Birdies

by Brian Geoghan

York Dispatch/Sunday News

When the Heritage Hills Golf Course was built nearly 10 years ago, great pains were taken to incorporate its water retention ponds into the landscape.

With a fountain constantly spouting water in the middle of the largest pond, they provide a nice view from the course's restaurant and a scenic, yet menacing approach to the course's finishing hole.

Back then, in 1988, the idea of having a few geese strolling around near the ponds seemed quaint.

"We put in nesting sites to try to encourage it; it just got blown out of proportion," course superintendent Tony Goodley said.

Those few geese multiplied to a permanent flock of about 50 or 60 or more in less than a decade, and that's when something had to be done.

"You work in goose crap every day, get it on your hands, on your clothes, and in the machines, and they're flocking up on the greens and removing turf on the greens, shoulder to shoulder, pulling up grass, that was the last straw," Goodley said. "We just got tired of it."

Gumming up to the works: The goose droppings - - "It looks like a big grease spot," Goodley said - - gummed up the mowing equipment and killed grass. The equipment constantly had to be power-washed to operate. As the geese multiplied, the problem worsened to the point the warm, fuzzy aesthetics were outweighed by the damage the geese wrought.

In fact, the grounds crew had tried everything from removing newborn geese and releasing them along the Susquehanna River to setting off firecrackers in an attempt to scare the geese off, to the "great golf ball caper", this spring.

Course workers removed eggs from nesting geese and replaced them with golf balls. The fake eggs kept geese from mating again, Goodley said. But players began stealing the golfballs from the nests, so the workers switched to less-desirable range balls. The geese would sit on the range balls, trying to hatch them. That was successful but not fool-proof.

"The problem we had, the eggs in nests we never knew about, they would hatch anyway," Goodley said. That's when management decided to conduct a controlled goose hunt on the grounds. They contacted the state Game Commission to make sure they "had all their ducks in a row," Goodley said. "We knew, if we had to hunt them, we had to be very well organized," Goodley said. "We even brought in a hunt master."

Last Resort: When goose hunting season began September 1, a group of hunters made up of course employees and friends killed 25 geese in the first week. They hunted from 6:10 to 6:30 AM each day, just after daybreak but before any golfers took the course, and they made sure to stay more that the required 150 yards from nearby residences.continued on page 5.....

Winter Educational Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Bent Creek Country Club

Jim Loke, CGCS - Host

Reservations:

Call Wanda at:

(717) 274-6004

by March 4, 1998

Lunch - \$23.00

(Pay at Registration)

Coat & Tie

Registration begins at

8:30 AM

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Heather And Gorse

by Mark V. DelSantro, CGCS

What a disorderly world we live in today....find any good therapist and chances are that they'll describe for you a plethora of reasons (or in their terminology, disorders) explaining why you haven't lived up to your expectations, why you can't keep up with the (Jim?) Jones', or even why your life is so abnormally normal. Your child can't focus in school: most definitely "ADD", feed them Ritalin; you get uncontrollably mad at other drivers: must be "Road Rage", take Prozac. Maybe it's time for me to stop my annual donation to the "DARE" program. I think I need a good therapist to tell me exactly when and where all these disorders began and more importantly, when and where they will all end?

The same is true about golfing disorders. In most bookstores one can find enormous quantities of books and magazines written by both golf professionals and therapists that explain everything from how to make that dreaded three footer when the \$5 (for entertainment purposes only) nassau hangs in the balance, to how to shape your child into the next Tiger Woods.

But did you ever notice that when it comes to solving your golf course playability and conditioning problems, nary a good therapist can be found. Inside country club boardrooms, and some would say at the same club's nineteenth hole, all disorders suddenly become excuses, and excuses in the eyes of many private memberships are exclusively for losers. The last thing country club members want to hear is why their precious, tiny, old, compacted, push-up soil, tree-pocketed, malnourished, econo-budgeted golf course can't handle 50,000+ rounds of traffic, roll smooth and true at 11.0 on the stimpmeter, and in general, look

"Augusta National" perfect. In their eyes, superintendents are expected to be "abnormal" when it comes to growing turf, or as one of my old, less-than-wise general managers once stated, "it is the golf course superintendent's job to grow and maintain turfgrass at U.S. Open conditions, under less-than-favorable environmental conditions, with a less-than-lavish budget, where no mere mortal can." This "Neanderthal" mentality is enough to drive a "greenkeeper" out to pasture.

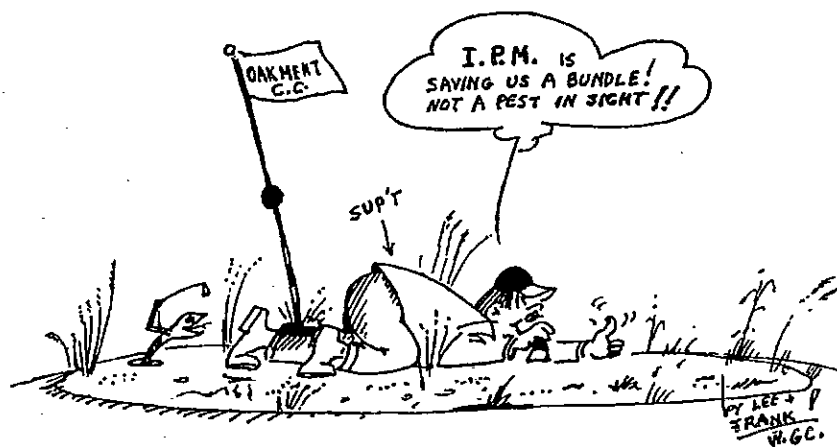
So as we approach another golf season, with all of the pressures and anxieties that seem to be prevalent on a daily basis, how does a superintendent find a daily balance between sanity and insanity? I believe the answer lies in taking a rather simplistic approach towards golf course management. While at times we all like to puff ourselves up with imaginary self-importance, the cold reality is that managing turfgrass is not rocket science. Keep it simple and stick to the basics!

Environmentally, grass plants need the right combination of sunlight, air, water, and nutrients to flourish under the stresses of summer. Rarely is there a turfgrass disorder that is not directly related to an imbalance in one of these things. Physically, you need a well-trained, consciously competent staff that knows how to do the right things, the right way, in the right amount of time. Personally, you need to apply the right combination of serenity, courage, and wisdom to your management practices. "Serenity" to accept the things you can not change or control; "Courage" to change or control the things you can; and the "Wisdom" to know the difference. Globally, the most difficult and greatest trick of all is to find a way to communicate all of this information to your membership in a way they will understand it.

Of course, that hot air, warm water disorder known as "El Nino" just might blow this entire theory to hell. That being the case, you might as well purchase two to three acres worth of artificial turf, a rather large and very powerful vacuum cleaner, and a very good therapist!

That's my view from the heather and gorse!

RUB OF THE GREEN



CPGCSA Winter Educational Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Bent Creek Country Club

8:30 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 - 9:30	GCSAA Update Samuel R. Snyder, CGCS, Hercules Country Club
9:30 - 10:00	Management of Aquatic Vegetation in Ponds and Lakes, Causes of Problems, Types of Aquatic Vegetation and Control Methods Bill Kirkpatrick, Aquatic Environmental Consultants
10:00 - 10:30	Golf Course Tree Care Management Scott Diffenderfer, Bartlett Tree Experts
10:30 - 10:31	President's Comment
10:32 - 10:45	Coffee Break
10:45 - 11:30	Design Program Kelly B. Moran, Golf Course Architect
11:30 - 12:15	The Man in the Middle - Construction and Renovation Tom Ristau, Pennink Arrimour, Inc.
12:15- 1:15	Lunch
1:15 - 2:00	To be announced

Directions to Bent Creek Country Club

From	Directions
Allentown	Take North/East Extension to PA Turnpike, get off at Exit 21 to Rt. 222 South to Rt. 30 West to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.
Baltimore	Take Rt. 695 North to Rt. 83 North to Rt. 30 East to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.
Harrisburg Airport	Take Rt. 283 South to Rt. 30 East to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.
Lancaster Airport	Make right from Airport Exit onto Airport Road. Continue to Koser Road; turn left. Follow to traffic light, make a right onto Fruitville Pike. Bent Creek is approximately 1 mile on left.
Philadelphia Area	Take PA Turnpike West to Exit 21 to Rt. 222 South to Rt. 30 West to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.
Philadelphia Airport	Rt. 95 South to Rt. 322 West to Rt. One South to Rt. 41 North to Rt. 30 West to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.
Reading	Take Rt. 222 South to Rt. 30 West to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.
York	Rt. 30 East to Fruitville Pike North Exit - make a right, Bent Creek is approximately 3.5 miles on left.

Goose...contd. from page 1

They harvested the geese they shoot. "Nothing was wasted," he said.

The hunting scared the surviving geese off, and they haven't returned. Goodley said the only geese around now are occasional small groups, probably migrators, that come and go.

A deer hunter himself, Goodley understands some people might think hunting the geese is a cruel solution. But he believes his crew tried every humane solution before resorting to the hunt.

"I've been looking at these things since they were hatched," Goodley explained. "I can't say I have a soft spot in my heart for them, but I just couldn't bring myself to (shoot) them."

"I must admit, it's a beautiful animal, but someplace else, not here."

Membership News

The following individuals have applied for membership into our association. If there are no written objections within the next seven days, they will be accepted into CPGCSA at the next meeting.

Robert Cuddeback, III .. Supt.

Flying Hills Golf Club...Class A

Don Petry.....Superintendent

Country Club of Hershey ...Class B

Hal D. NeilSuperintendent

Quail Valley Golf Club ...Class B

Pete Ramsey...Superintendent

Range End Country Club...Class B

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association or has questions on the status of their applications, please have them contact Tom Ocepek at (610) 488-1255.

Congratulations to:

Jeff Edwards, CGCS - newly certified

Charles Crawford - newly retired

1998 Meeting Sites

April Moccasin Run Golf Course

May Harrisburg North GC

June Heritage Hills Golf Resort

July Reading Country Club

Aug. Honey Run Golf & CC

Sept. Bridges Golf Club

Oct. Lebanon Country Club

USGA Mid-Atlantic Region

"Tip of The Month"

Beginning with the CPGCSA March newsletter, the "Green Sheet" will begin a seasonal "Tip of the Month" series in affiliation with the agronomists of Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of the USGA in West Chester, PA. Each newsletter will contain a brief article written by one of the agronomists either summarizing what they've recently seen in the field, or detailing commonly recommended procedures for that month of the year.

For those unfamiliar with the staff at the Mid-Atlantic Regional office, they are Stanley J. Zontek, Director; Keith Happ, Agronomist; and Darin S. Brevard, Agronomist. Anyone interested in scheduling an on-site visit with one of the agronomists may do so by calling their office at (610) 696-4747.

FYI

- March 15, 1998 is the deadline for 1998 CPGCSA Membership Dues
- If you are interested in becoming a "Green Sheet" Supporter for the 1998 season, please contact Wanda or forward a business card along with your \$100.00 payment.
- Please contact Wanda if you need your nametag replaced or if you have not received one.

GCSAA News

Regional Environmental Stewardship Award

The "Green Sheet" staff would like to congratulate Scott Schukraft of Huntsville Golf Club, in Shavertown, PA for receiving a regional 1998 Environmental Stewardship Award. Scott is one of thirty-three award winning superintendents who are being recognized for underscoring their commitment to stewardship efforts on the golf course through contributions that enhance the local environments. The award also recognizes overall course management excellence, outstanding programs to maximize pesticide and fertilizer efficacy and irrigation and equipment efficiency, as well as wildlife preservation and enhancement.

If you feel you have the credentials for Environmental Stewardship Award consideration, you should contact either Jeff Bollig or Kristi Frey at GCSAA (800) 472-7878.

GCSAA Web Site

Redesigned

Media will now have access to the latest information in the golf course maintenance/management industry through a special section on the redesigned GCSAA web site as of January 29th. In addition to the media section, the GCSAA site has expanded its public access areas allowing users access to research information, the first phase of the GCSAA store, the online buyer's guide, *Golf Course Management Magazine*, golf and the environment, golfer information on: turfgrass terminology, alternative spikes, etiquette, golf course career opportunities, among other topics. According to analysts, the GCSAA site rates well above average for associations in terms of use by its members. If you're an Internet subscriber, check out the new design at www.gcsaa.org.

The Rules of the Game

Question: A player whose ball was in a bunker entered it without a club, dug in with his feet and simulated a stroke. He then left the bunker, got a club, dug in again with his feet at the same place and made a stroke. He explained his actions by saying he wanted to get the "feel" of the shot he was about to make. Was the player in breach of the rules of golf?

Answer: No. Rule 13-3 states: "A player is entitled to place his feet firmly in taking his stance." The definition of "stance" states: "Taking the 'stance' consists in a player placing his feet in position for and preparatory to making a stroke." The player was "placing his feet in position for and preparatory to making a stroke," thus, there is no penalty.

Now, what if: While waiting to play a bunker shot, the same player went into a different part of the bunker, took a firm stance and simulated his bunker shot without using a club? Is this a breach of the rules?

Answer: Yes, the player tested the condition of the bunker in breach of Rule 13-4a, and should be penalized two strokes.



The Green Sheet

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