

It's A Shore Thing

By Dave Cammarota

Though we may seldom recognize it, history is made somewhere everyday, and November 5-7th was no exception. They came from the North, they came from the South, and they came from the West; Educators, Golf Course Superintendents, and other turf professionals & associates, some 100 individuals, attended the Eastern Shore Association of Golf Course Superintendents' first, non-commercialized, high quality educational seminar, named the "Eastern Shore Golf Turf Conference," which was held at the Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel in North Ocean City, Maryland.

This event was a long time coming from its early planning stages some years ago, when the leadership began inquiries about the possibility of holding a professional sized, non-commercial event on the eastern shore. And kudos belong to the leadership and planners, who spearheaded this initiative, from the then President John Kotoski, VP Eric Snelsire, Joe Perry, Eric Linde, Tom Cassat, & Harlyn Goldman, to the administrative talents of Jody Farley, and Jill Barbon. Many others, whose names are a list too long to mention, were participants, and moderators in the Round Table Discussions, and other facets in the planning of an event this size.

Academic presenters included Dr. Jack Fry, who conducted an interesting format, breaking the room of approximately 80 attendees into small groups, who were challenged, in a limited amount of time, to work with fictitious limited financial resources, on the management of a fictitious golf hole. It was an exercise, and revelation, to see how the many diverse groups came up with their own unique methods for the care and maintenance of this sample golf hole. Other presenters following were Penn State's Dr Tom Watschke, and Matt Shaffer from Merion Golf Club.

On Tuesday evening, a cocktail social hour was presented in honor of J. Ben Stagg, the eastern shore's retired superintendent from Hog Neck Golf Club, in Easton, Maryland. Ben & Hilda, along with several family members, listened as Eric Linde presented Ben with a Lifetime Achievement Award, highlighting the many accomplishments and contributions Ben has made over the last 35 years of his participation in our profession. Congratulations go out to Ben from all of us for his dedication and selfless contributions for the

benevolence of all in his profession.

The final session on Wednesday was a Round Table Discussion where coordinators and recorders, for a limited period of time, moved from table to table with a set of challenging questions for table partners to discuss. For this writer, the exercise was a rewarding one, in that at my table, sat superintendents from very different employment situations, from private exclusive to semi-private, and public golf venues. Their views presented reflected each of their own experiences in dealing with their own set of challenges in golf turf maintenance.

This premier event was counted as a huge success, and has proven itself to be a worthwhile conference to be considered for future seminars on the shore.



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