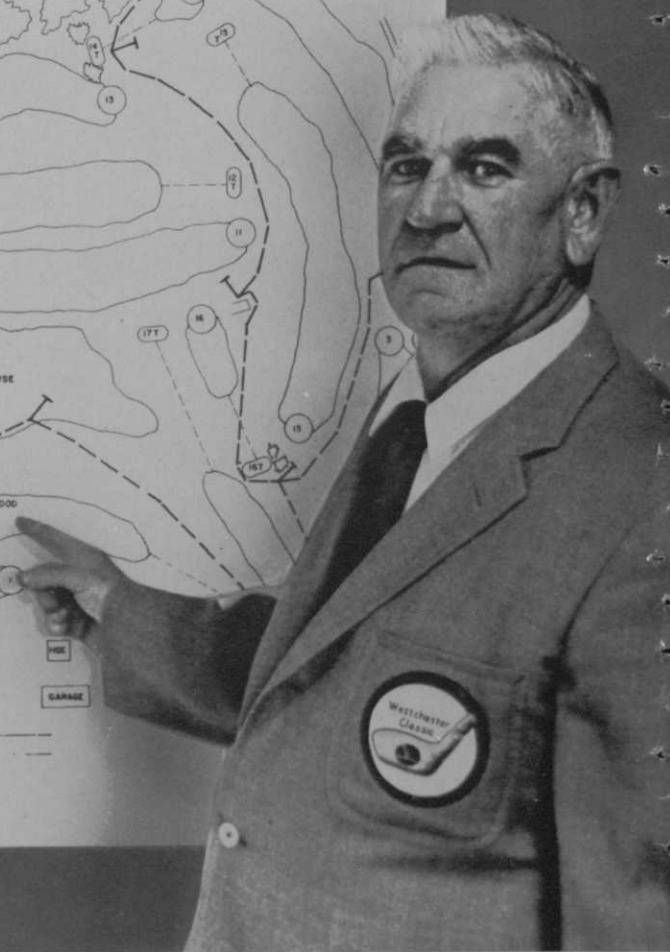
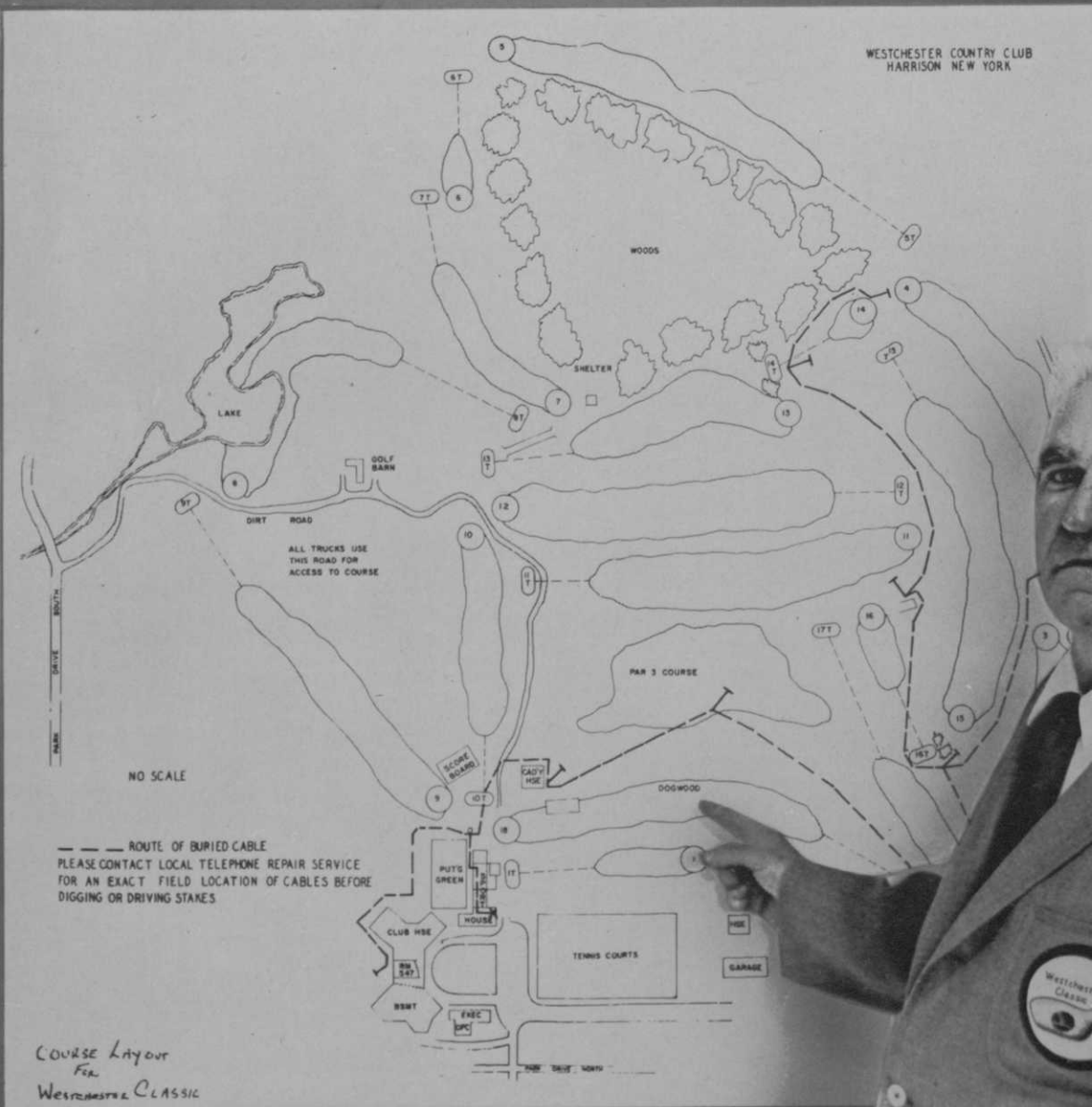


Westchester in August: a double challenge

JOHN GARVEY

Superintendent of Golf Courses, Westchester Country Club, Rye, New York
(Mr. Garvey was formerly with the Pike Brook CC in Belle Mead, New Jersey.)



With over 350 acres and 45 holes to take care of, our 21-man staff keeps pretty busy most of the golf year. But in August, we really have our hands full.

That's when we hold the annual Westchester Classic. Although this is quite a new tournament, we've had national TV coverage from the beginning. Last year, Julius Boros took the top prize of \$50,000. The tournament profits are shared with the neighboring hospitals.

The event is carried by six local stations, taped for sports shows, and in 1969 ABC will be carrying the national TV coverage.

About 95% of our TV cables are permanently installed so we can keep the setup time to a minimum.

While the tournament is in progress on the West course, we keep our South course and our 9-hole pitch-and-putt course open to members. Add to that our crowd of something like 22,000 spectators, and you can imagine the work we have waiting once the Classic is over.

One of the problems we have to handle is crowd control. For this, we get members of Westchester and neighboring clubs to act as marshals. And we've had police patrolling the grounds the week prior to the event—ever since the year we found a 12-foot gash on the 16th green four days before the tournament.

The Classic is only one aspect of our August problems. The other is the heat. Its effect on our fairways is murder.

Our principal grass is *poa annua*. I say grass, but I really feel it's more like a weed. It's fine in spring and fall, but during July and August, I've seen *poa annua* disappear in a matter of hours on a good, hot afternoon. And once, a week



before the Classic, we had a half-inch of rain in a half-hour. The *poa annua* started wilting. The roots just couldn't handle the water fast enough. The temperature was in the nineties, too.

This is why we're changing to bent. To drive out the *poa annua*, first we'll be cutting down the water. Then we'll aerify and verti-cut the fairways, over-seed and fertilize. Once we get the bent in, we should have pretty good control of the situation.

On the roughs, we have bluegrass. We keep it four to six inches long for the Classic.

Our soil type is primarily clay. And based upon recent soil reports, we've switched fertilizers and are now using

Milogranite in the summer.

The water we use comes from the Westchester Joint Water Commission.

Our mains are cast iron pipe. They were installed in 1938. My foreman, who's been here fifteen years, recalls only a single break in the entire cast iron system. We operate at pump pressures of 140 to 160 pounds; our high spots are 75 feet up and pretty good distances are involved, too.

All in all, the pros consider Westchester a top course with near-perfect greens. We here at Westchester Country Club consider this the greatest country club in the world. I know we work hard to keep it there. In August, we don't get much sleep.



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