

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER

Published by this Association to aid the advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent through education and merit.

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From the Golf World

A look at the brief history of Chevy Chase Club, where we will be playing in September, reminds us that golf courses are never static but ever changing. This is particularly true of the early courses in this country, which were often hurriedly laid out at amazingly low costs, even for those times. By the 1920's, most historic courses in America were pretty well fixed on their existing land, although many of them have been modernized or redesigned from time to time as fashions changed, as better equipment and instruction improved the caliber of golf, or to meet the requirements of holding major tournaments. Much of the work of golf course architects these days comes from re-doing established golf courses, many of them of excellent reputation.

Then, too, a number of courses have been forced to rebuild or reshape some of their holes by freeways, beltways, and superhighways encroaching on their land; Agawam Hunt Club in Rhode Island is an excellent example of a fine old course that lost a large portion of its land to highway construction, forcing it to replace a number of its holes.

The Old Course at St. Andrews is, perhaps surprisingly, another example of a course that has been in a process of continuous evolution. Shaped by nature, it has been modified by man, in bits and pieces. When first played, the course was only 40 yards wide, and golfers played to the same greens and cups coming back as they had going out in the loop. In 1764, the number of holes

The President's Message

The month of September marks our arrival at the downhill side of yet another golf season. August was a tough month, once again reminding us of how unpredictable the weather can be in our Mid-Atlantic region. But, by now many of us are into our fall renovations and looking forward to cooler weather.

The association's family picnic on August 14 was again a complete success, despite the threat of rain. Every year the annual Mid-Atlantic picnic continues to grow, which is testimony to its increasing popularity. My personal thanks to Bill Neus and to our host at Bretton Woods, Gerry Gerard, as well as to all those others who worked so hard to make it such an enjoyable day.

Remember, if you plan on volunteering a part of your time during our upcoming National Conference in Washington, D.C., please fill out the volunteer form that was enclosed with your August Newsletter and return it to me as soon as possible.

Our September meeting will be at the Chevy Chase Club, and MAAGCS Director George Renault will be our host. Remember to call the Mid-Atlantic office at (301) 964-0070 to make your reservations for golf and dinner.

Michael J. Larsen, *President*



was cut from 22 to 18, the figure that then became the standard for golf courses (however, much later, Prestwick had only 12 holes when the first Open was played there by Scottish professionals). Until the 19th century, there were no tees; golfers simply drove from the green they had just putted on (that's a happy thought for superintendents!). Now, of course, added irrigation is available on the Old Course, though judging from some of the dusty spots visible during the TV broadcast of the 1984 Open, it has not been extensively used.

Also, the old drying sheds by the 17th hole, once railroad buildings with notched roofs that were torn down when the Old Course Hotel was built, have been reconstructed, and it is across these roofs (which are out-of-bounds) that you must drive in order to have a chance to reach the green in two. So even on one of the most famous (and feared) holes in golf, change is still taking place.

Deadline for nomination for the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award is September 1, and the names of candidates who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of golf course superintendency, both regionally and nationally, should be sent to James H. Taylor, Sr., chairman of the Communications/Awards Committee. Last year's winners were Warren Bidwell and Keith Nisbet.

It's not exactly hot news by now, but Billy Buchanan has left the Richmond office of the USGA for the PGA Tour post of Head Agronomist. He'll not only be concerned with Tour courses — those on which events are scheduled — but will be involved in the agronomical side of all those Tournament Players Courses

the PGA Tour is building. One of the most recent to open was the TPC of Connecticut, where the Sammy Davis, Jr.-Greater Hartford Open was held last month. This was a public course converted to the stadium golf concept by Pete Dye, and from the views shown on TV, he made a pretty severe track out of it, despite all those 63's the pros shot.

A note of apology is due all readers (but Bob Orazi in particular) for the statement here last month that Hunt Valley is part of the Club Corporation of America. Not so; it is under the management of the American Golf Corporation, and your editor should have known better.

The USGA's next effort promises to be all-out war on "sandbaggers," the crooks who inflate or otherwise distort their handicaps. One way to go about this is to identify scores posted in tournaments, where the payoff is for all those deliberately missed putts; if it shows up on the computer that a golfer does consistently better in tournaments than he does in casual rounds, he's due for a little chat with his handicap chairman. In Britain, they learned how to deal with this years ago; there, only rounds posted in competition are considered in establishing a handicap.

1984 Meeting Dates

- September 11 — Chevy Chase Club, George Renault, Host
- October 9 — Maryland Golf and Country Club, Ron Hall, Host
- November 13 — Hobbits Glen Golf Course, Bill Neus, Host
- December 11 — Lakewood Country Club, Jerry Robine, Host