



Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER



VOLUME XXXVIII

SEPTEMBER 1985

NUMBER 7

Sept. 10 Meeting Set For Hobbits Glen

Hobbits Glen Golf Club in Columbia, Md., will host the September 10 MAAGCS meeting that includes another round of the match play championship. Bill Neus is superintendent at the Eddie Ault-designed course, which was built in 1966 and which has been the site of a number of local golf tournaments. Its front nine is fairly open, with the back nine becoming more rolling and wooded. The course has four sets of tees and stretches 7,226 yards from the blue, 6,901 from the white, 6,292 from the gold, and 5,634 from the red tees.

Bill Neus and his crew cut the Penn-cross bent greens six times a week to 3/16", the ryegrass fairways three times a week to 13/16", and rough once a week to 1 3/4". His fertilizing schedule is 5# N per year on greens, 1 3/4# N on fairways. Some 6,800 feet of cart paths have recently been installed, three new tees build, nine bunkers rebuilt, and a new snack bar, pump station, and auto-



matic tee irrigation have been added. The greens at No. 1 and No. 5 are scheduled for rebuilding this Fall.

Directions to Hobbits Glen from Baltimore are: take 70 west to Rte. 29 to Columbia, turning right at Rte. 108; go 3.2 miles to Harper's Farm Road, turn left, then take first right on Willowbottom Ave., going several blocks to club on the right. From Washington, take 495 (Beltway) to Rte. 29 north to Columbia, turn left at Rte. 108 and continue as described above.

Continued on page 3

President's Message

The 1985 season will be remembered as one of extremes here in the Mid-Atlantic. April was the driest ever while June was the coolest on record. Many clubs suffered from near-drought conditions at a time when nearby clubs were receiving record amounts of rainfall as thunderstorms dodged about the area. But, by now many of us are well into our annual renovation programs and can begin to look forward to cooler weather and the less intensive day-to-day pace of Fall. I think we all agree that there isn't anything much nicer than being on a golf course during the Fall months.

A special note of thanks goes to Bill Neus for organizing and to Gerry Gerard for hosting another successful family picnic. The continued growth of this annual event is testimony to its popularity.

Our September meeting will be on the 10th at Hobbits Glen with Bill Neus as our host. It's been many years since the Mid-Atlantic has met at Hobbits Glen, and I anticipate a good turnout. Remember to register by calling our office at 964-0070.

Michael J. Larsen, *President*

It was picnic time at the Bretton Woods Recreation Center, and one of the largest groups ever of MAAGCS members and their families gathered to enjoy Chesapeake crabs, hamburgers, hot dogs, fresh corn, and tables full of homemade goodies - not to mention a few kegs of brew. At top left, host Bill Neus welcomes some new arrivals; top right, past presidents Mike McKenzie and Ben Stagg tell their latest fishing story; bottom left, there was plenty of everything, even this large a crowd; bottom right, George Renault and Mike Larsen hold an impromptu Board meeting.



Musser Tournament Set for October 15

The 7th Annual Musser Tournament, sponsored by the Maryland Turfgrass Council and the MAAGCS, will be held Tuesday, October 15, at the Country Club of Maryland, with a 1 p.m. shotgun start. The entry fee of \$250 per four-man team covers green and cart fees, individual and team (two net best-balls of foursome) prizes, plus longest drive and closest to the pin awards, and dinner (at 6:30 p.m.).

The Musser International Turfgrass Foundation, of which Dr. Fred V. Grau has been president since 1969, is a tax-exempt, nonprofit, charitable, and educational organization that provides grants for needed research in any part of the turfgrass industry and furnishes help to graduate students at turfgrass-oriented institutions in order to provide well-trained professionals as future leaders in the industry.

Mid-Year Conference To Aid Assistants

A new training seminar designed especially for experienced assistant golf course superintendents and young golf course employees who are potential assistants will be offered at the GCSAA first Mid-Year Turfgrass Conference and Show September 19-24 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

The seminar, entitled, "The Assistant Superintendent: Functions and Responsibilities," will be taught by Mary T. Rau and Bruce R. Williams and will address such management concerns as delegating tasks, motivating employees, handling problem situations, making decisions, and managing time. The one-day seminar begins at 8 a.m. Friday, September 20, and all new members who join GCSAA before August 19 will receive free admission to it as well as to the entire Conference.

Bruce Williams, superintendent at Bob O'Link Golf Club in Highland Park, Ill., regards the seminar as a rare opportunity for assistants to meet as a group and discuss ideas, pointing out that as the superintendents of the future, they are the lifeblood of the association.

NEW MEMBER

Jeffrey B. Yingling
Change classification from D to B
Superintendent, Yingling's Golf Center
Hagerstown, MD

The Finger Points Again

Something a bit disturbing happened in big-time golf in August. After a good year of widespread public appreciation of the golf course superintendent and his job, with every tournament winner on the Tour thanking the superintendent on TV for getting the course in such terrific shape, suddenly a superintendent found himself taking a lot of heat. The tournament was the PGA, the course was Denver's Cherry Hills, and the superintendent getting the bad press was Armen Suny.

The first murmurs of unhappiness with the condition of the course began on Saturday, the third day of the tournament, when the greens to all intents and purposes stopped holding the ball. Shots would hit the putting surface and just take off. Short putts that missed the center of the cup would lip out and run 5 feet past. On some of the more sharply sloping greens, a long putt was an invitation to take two (or three) more. The pros began to complain, on the course and in the press tent. In stories coming out of Denver after the last round in which Hubie Green emerged as the winner, two shots in front of Lee Trevino, Lee and other players were not hesitant to speak their minds to the writers. Steve Hershey in USA TODAY quoted Lee as saying, "I hit six good shots to greens, and they all bounced over the back. There is no way they could have gotten that hard in one night unless they rolled them." Fuzzy Zoeller, generally regarded as a good-natured sort, said, "I've never seen such a difference in the condition of the greens. One day they were soft and holding and the next day they were like a parking lot."

With these verbal attacks reverberating around the club, Superintendent Suny called a news conference at which he said that he had indeed rolled the greens, not to harden but to smooth them. Dick Taylor, writing in GOLF WORLD, accused Suny of being overprotective of his golf course after Thursday's low scores. Taylor's view was that Suny took it personally and proceeded on Saturday morning to double-cut the greens and roll them with a 60-pound roller. He also decided not to water them, and when strong winds came up Saturday to dry them out even more, the greens would no longer hold an iron shot. Taylor went on to describe the writers at Suny's press conference as "stunned at his belligerence" and "flabbergasted when the man said, 'they (the pros) finally realized where they were, in the third round of a major (championship).'" For the moment, at least, the honeymoon between superintendent, players, and press seemed to be over.

What does all this mean to a country club or public golf course superintendent in Maryland or Virginia who may have to prep his course once in every few years for a local association championship or, more often, for a pro-am? Obviously, not very much. But, more than one superintendent has taken the rap for a green committee chairman who wanted the course toughened up for a local event, with disastrous consequences for players and course. And how about a situation in which a committeeman wants the greens or fairways cut shorter than they should be, considering the humidity and temperature? Where does the blame go when the greens turn purple, then brown? Such things have happened in these parts and could happen again. The point being made, and it applies to Cherry Hills as well as to Valley Muni, is that there must be two-way communication between the superintendent and club or tournament officials to avoid situations like the one that developed at the PGA. That episode may be reverberating for a long time, to no one's credit. — C.C.

Meeting Schedule, 1985

- September 10 — Hobbits Glen G.C., Bill Neus, Host
- October 14 — International C.G., Steve Nash, Host
- November 12 — Hunt Valley G.C., Bob Orazi, Host
- December 10 — Naval Academy, Mike McKenzie, Host

Sept. 10 Meeting

Continued from page 1

The program for September 10 is as follows:

- Lunch — Available (cash)
- Golf — After 11 a.m.
- Cocktails — 6 p.m.
- Dinner — 7 p.m. (cost, \$15)
- Meeting — 8 p.m.
- Reservations — Call MAAGCS office, 964-0070