



Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER



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1986 Meeting Schedule Opens At Historic Washington Golf March 11

The oldest golf course in this part of the country, historic Washington Golf and Country Club in Arlington, Va., will be the site of 1986's first meeting on March 11, and host superintendent Lee Dieter will be celebrating the start of his 26th year at the club, a rare occurrence these days.

Washington Golf was organized in February 1884 by members of the Metropolitan Club of Washington who had become interested in the sport newly imported from Scotland. Founders included Col. Henry May, the first president; British Ambassador Sir Julian Paunceforte; and other members of the diplomatic corps and U.S. Senators. Col. May and William Curtis of the British Embassy accepted an invitation to go to the St. Andrews course in Yonkers, N.Y., to play along with 30 other fledgling golfers in what was supposed to be the first U.S. Amateur Championship in October 1884. Reluctance on the part of some golfers to recognize the winner as national champion led to the formation a few months later of the United States Golf Association, and the Washington Golf Club joined the USGA in 1897 as the 13th member club.

The club's first course consisted of

nine holes on rented land in Rosslyn, Va., and it was forced to relocate in 1908 when the property owner decided to subdivide his land. The club then bought 90 acres at the present site on Glebe Road with a grand view of Washington across the Potomac River from Admiral Merion Preston Rixey, the Navy surgeon-general and White House physician. The admiral, who continued to live on adjacent land, laid out and planted a 18-hole, par-68 course for the staggering sum of \$1,800. Renowned architect Donald Ross is credited with making a number of design changes to the course during a visit in 1915, and these were incorporated in the early 1920's when architect William S. Flynn revamped the course and laid out the present 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th holes on newly purchased land.

During his nearly 26 years of service as superintendent, Lee has supervised the reconstruction and remodeling of six of the course's greens and all of its tees, planting the first bentgrass tees on a prepared mix. His course was the first in the area to have a continuous cart path, and the rules keeping golf cars on the path are strictly enforced. Lee also carried out a tree-planting program under which hundreds of trees were placed around the course, including almost every variety that can be grown in this area. Along with George Thompson, he was the first in the Mid-Atlantic to oversee perennial ryegrass onto tees, aprons, and fairways. He has promoted the use of warm season grasses for many years, sprigging new varieties of Bermuda as they have become available. He plugged three areas in Meyer zoysia in 1984 and was among the first superintendents in the area to use a personal computer in his operation; inventories, budget, personnel records, and operating schedules are all on the computer.

The program for the March 11 meeting will include Dr. Joseph Duich of Penn State University and Stan Zontek,



Still smiling after 25 years as WG&CC's superintendent is Lee Dieter, newly elected MAAGCS vice-president.

USGA Green Section agronomist for the Mid-Atlantic region, discussing "Putting Green Speeds: Have We Gone Too Far?" MAAGCS President Jerry Gerard has urged members to bring their assistants to this initial meeting of the year.

Washington Golf and Country Club is located on Glebe Road in Arlington, just east of the intersection with Old Dominion Drive. Almost any approach to the club that gets you on Glebe Road, either from I-395 (Shirley Highway), Route 50, or Lee Highway will lead you there, but from the Beltway, the best route is to exit at Route 193 (Langley Exit), cross back over the Beltway and turn right at the light on Ball's Hill Road. After about a mile, you will reach the light at Old Dominion, where you bear left, going several miles until you reach the light at Rock Spring Rd.; turn left there and proceed a half-block to the club parking lot on the right.

The program for March 11 is as follows:

Golf — From noon on, if course is open

Cocktails — 6 p.m.

Dinner — 7 p.m. (cost \$20; coat and tie required)

Meeting — 8 p.m.

Reservations — Call 964-0070



Top, the second WG&CC clubhouse that was torn down in 1958 to make way for the present one; bottom, the original Glebe Road clubhouse that burned to the ground in 1936.