

Turfgrass Matters



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Mid-Atlantic Golf Course Superintendents Newsletter

Annual Two-Man Tourney at Turf Valley on July 9

Mike Gilmore has his team lined up and the south course ready for the annual two-man tourney.

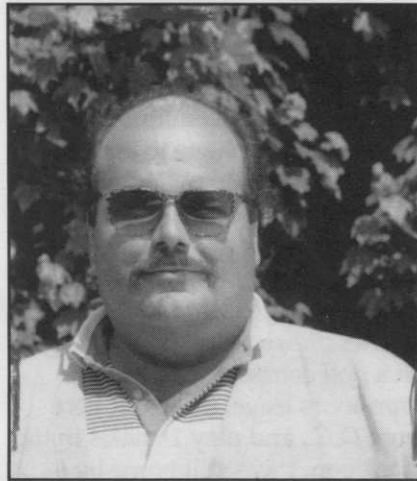
Turf Valley, boasts two 18-hole courses plus another nine-holes; one is reserved for club members, the other for outings and "B" members. That the courses are switched every week, constitutes an appealing feature for its members. "People join for the variety," says Mike.

The club, in existence about 30 years, is owned by the Mangione family of Baltimore. About five years ago, they added a hotel and conference center, and just this spring the nine holes.

Mike is starting his second year as superintendent here. His big project has been to rebuild a dozen or so tees. "We are fortunate to have a bulldozer, big track loader and our own operator. With this, we have been able to complete six or seven tees on the north course and four or five on the south course. We are lucky we can do it in-house."

Mike hopes to begin work on the last nine holes in the fall or spring. The final nine, as was the entire layout at Turf Valley, is an Ed Ault design.

The biggest challenge to overseeing 45 holes is the organization, Mike declares. He credits his smooth-running operation to the help and enthusiasm of three excellent assistants, Bill Bopst, Ben Bryan, and Eric Van Janek. Says Mike, "You're only as good as the people you have working for you and their willingness to carry out plans. They are the ones who



make my job easier."

At Turf Valley, greens are mowed six days a week at 5/32", the fairways and greens three days a week at 5/8". This alone helps keep a work force of 39 busy, but this spring, in addition, they have done extensive plantings. One major project is a beautiful perennial border along the pro shop. It helps, however, that this year they have been on a turf growth regulator program—especially on the south course which has a tendency to stay wet. "So far," says Mike, "it has lived up to its billing. I look at it as a tool to help reduce mowing."

Mike grew up in Lutherville, Md., attended the U. Mass Stockbridge school, and began his career at Woodmont Country Club working for Mike Larsen. He was, notes Mike, "a big influence on me. I learned a lot of valuable information there." Mike then spent a year at Glendale CC in Greenbelt before becoming a superintendent for the Baltimore

Golf Corporation which supervises five public courses. Before beginning his tenure at Turf Valley, however, he was superintendent for two years at Clifton Park and two years at Mount Pleasant.

Mike's principal hobby is golf. He tries to play a lot in the spring and fall. He prefers, as do most superintendents he says, to play on other courses—he'd rather not look at his own problems.

As for additional pastimes, Mike loves to spend time with his family—wife Jody and her three children—Lucas, Megan and Katie. Married since last September, Mike and Jody are expecting their first baby in September. With his schedule, Mike may have to learn to change diapers on the run.

Mike urges everyone to come out and enjoy the day. Lunch is available in the Terrace Room, and he assures us the dinner of shrimp scampi and filet will be marvelous. Ed Crow of the Maryland Department of Agriculture will speak on pesticide storage.

Reservations: Call 301-381-0030
Cost: dinner, \$25; carts \$10.

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Directions: From Baltimore: I-695 to I-70 west to the Marriotts-ville Rd exit. Turn left on Marriottsville Rd. At the first stop sign turn left onto Route 40. Go 7/10 mile to Turf Valley Road. From Washington: Take I-495 to Rte 29 north. Go to I-70 west then follow the Baltimore directions.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One day last week while I was standing near our starting board talking to one of our customers a gentleman walked up to the starter to find out how long he had to wait to get on the course. When he was told there was a 50 minute wait, he went to the phone to make a couple of calls. By the time he returned to get his name on the board, three more groups had moved ahead of him. As he went by us he said, "If this game really catches on we won't be able to get on a golf course. I used to take four hours leave, drive out here from D.C., and play 18 holes in the afternoon. I was still home by 6 p.m.



I think we all know this game "has caught on." As superintendents we also know our jobs are more demanding. The golfing public is better-informed than it used to be, but sometimes people know just enough to be dangerous.

The effect that has on each one of us is different, but the one thing that is constant is the fact that it

makes us realize we have to put our priorities in order. Perhaps we should not take anything for granted, but in these "hard times" the things we can appreciate most are good health, family and friends.

The last few weeks have been difficult for most of us, but it is a real treat to hear from superintendents who are concerned about their peers and how willing they are to help each other out where possible.

That is one of the things that keeps the MAAGCS strong. I personally feel very good about the friends I have made in this association and I know we have a strong and close group. During times like this, we must keep in mind that all of us are fighting the same battles and we must not lose sight of our priorities.

Our next meeting is at Turf Valley Country Club and our host Mike Gilmore has promised us a first-class day.

See you on July 9.

*Nick Vance, CGCS
President, MAAGCS*

GOLF NOTES

Congratulations to our June winners. Low net went to Tom Walsh with a fine score of 63. Our low gross winner was Tom Wojcik with a score of 73. Many thanks to Wayne Brissey and his entire staff for a great day of golf.

The July golf tournament is our annual two-man Team Championship. Mike Gilmore and Turf Valley will be our host. The two-man team will be a point system tournament with your handicap figured in at the end of the round. So get yourself a partner and come out for a fun day on the golf course.

*Scott Wagner
Golf Chairman, MAAGCS*

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Preparing for the LPGA

by Betty Ford

Thursday before the LPGA at Bethesda CC. The course is swarming with green June beetles but Dean Graves is pays no attention; he's concerned with other swarms: concessionaires erecting bleachers, workers installing one Mazda in the middle of the lake, two on special stands in front of the clubhouse and another on the tee beside the entrance gate, NBC people who will begin stringing cable and erecting TV towers, others of his crew who are weeding and mulching flowerbeds and repairing divots, and suppliers who are checking with him on last-minute needs.

"The concession people are the biggest pain," says Dean. "They come out, try to get their job done in a hurry and don't care what they do, don't care if its rainy and the course is soaked, they are only going to be here for a week then leave. The TV people try to take over and run cables wherever they want. They simply don't care!"

In spite of the fact that Dean increases his normal summer staff of 13 by 25 percent two weeks before the tournament and 200 percent the week of the tournament, they are still too busy to

watch everyone. On Wednesday, however, an employee did witness someone *drive across a green*. Dean reported it and the culprit was fired on the spot.

The activity mimics those darting Junebugs. An area behind the club house is occupied by 13 giant trailers. It's reminiscent of behind-the-scenes at the circus. Poles and boards for bleachers are laid out in orderly fashion ready for assembly, employees in carts dodge golfers' carts, a parade of UPS trucks bring giant cartons to the Pro Shop.

Newly planted flower beds with white gravel spelling MAZDA look fresh. They were obviously planted at just the right moment. "We have a full-time horticulturist in charge of all the floral arrangements, but now he has three extra people helping him. We don't want to put the plantings in too early because of the maintenance, but we can't wait too late because they must get used to the area."

Dean starts work for the LPGA about a year in advance, with planning meetings and fairway preparations. The activity reaches its peak the week prior to the tournament. The number of details is astronomical. Dean and his crew work, literally, from dawn to dark. He eats lunch

while talking on two walkie-talkies. And when the last members tee off at 1 p.m. on Sunday, "We'll be following them around cleaning up after them."

Once the tournament starts on Monday morning with the Celebrity/Pro-Am, "we go on auto-



matic, says Dean. We work from 5 a.m. to about nine when golf starts. Then we can quit until the last golfer is finished and work until dark."

In spite of the unimaginable extra work, and having 80,000 spectators and 1200 volunteers tromp the course, Dean loves having the tournament. "It's really rewarding to see your course on national television. The staff really gets excited. It's not like preparing for anything else—member-guest and club championships are normal for any club. This is 20 steps above that. The best women players in the world are here, it's quite an honor." There are other benefits as well: Children's Hospital and other charities receive substantial donations.

Dean has enough staff to take care of everything except his worst nightmare—a big storm leaving the bunkers full of water. As a contingency he asks near-by superintendent friends to have standby help ready to pump and rake sand. "My friends are so great, all I have to do is pick up the phone; they'll send me as many people as I need."

Despite it all, declares Dean, "I'd be disappointed if they should decide not to have it here in '92."

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Lyme Disease: It Can Happen to You

A fellow superintendent's trials with the "great imitator"

Lyme disease, because of its ability to mimic a wide variety of other illnesses, has been dubbed the "great imitator." And few people know that better than Superintendent Dave Pijnenburg (Redding Country Club in Redding, CT), whose symptoms were misdiagnosed until the disease had reached its more debilitating later stages.

What follows is an account of his ordeal with the disease—a story he hopes will spare others from serious complications that can arise when the Lyme disease bacterium—Borrelia burgdorferi—isn't treated promptly. By the way, Dave never spotted the offending tick or the telltale rash that frequently warns people they've been infected.

Last July, while I was preparing the golf course for our annual member-guest tournament, I started feeling exhausted in the afternoons. At first, I shrugged it off, figuring it was because I'd been putting in a lot of

long hours.

Wrong. Two weeks after the tournament had passed, I felt even weaker. I'd go home around 11 a.m. and take a two-hour nap, just so I could make it through the day. I went to the hospital; they ran all kinds of tests but couldn't come up with anything. Their diagnosis: Probable virus. Their prescription: Get plenty of rest.

The next week, I began having constant headaches and dizzy spells. I almost passed out at the wheel one afternoon. I went back to the hospital. This time they took spinal fluid to check for meningitis or Lyme disease. Once again, their tests came back negative. They gave me aspirin for my headache and told me to take it easy for a while.

By the beginning of September, I felt extremely weak. Then, just after Labor Day, I woke up and the left side of my face was numb. I returned to the hospital and, after

another spinal tap, I was diagnosed as having Lyme disease.

Because the disease was now in a later stage, I was admitted to the hospital and put on intravenous antibiotics. The next day the right side of my face—and body—was paralyzed. I couldn't move my lips or blink my eyes.

After four days, I was released from the hospital and given a new antibiotic—Ceftriaxone—to take once a day for 14 days. My health slowly improved and by the end of October I had regained full control of my facial muscles.

I've been in good health since but I do have to go back to the hospital every three months to be sure I haven't had a relapse—one of the hazards of having contracted Lyme disease.

After all this, I can't emphasize enough that prevention is your best medicine for Lyme disease. *Educate your employees.* Now's a good time

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to start. Because we had a mild winter, ticks are bound to be more plentiful and active this year. With that in mind, here are some tips that'll help you and your crew guard against this serious health threat.

If you're going to be working around wooded or tall-grass areas on the course:

- Wear light-colored clothing so ticks will be more visible.
- Tuck your pant legs into your socks or boots and your shirt into your pants.
- Tape the area where your pants and socks meet to keep ticks from crawling under your clothes.
- Spray your pants, socks and shoes with an insect repellent. Those containing DEET (diethyltoluamide) will repel ticks for hours. Permethrin is a new insecticide that kills ticks on contact but cannot be applied to skin, and it's not approved in all states.
- Check your body and clothes for ticks throughout the workday.

This article and accompanying "Tick Tips" reprinted from Tee to Green, the MetGCSA newsletter.

Tick Tips

Here are little-known facts from Dr. Durland Fish of New York Medical College in Valhalla, NY.

1. Know your risk. Be particularly vigilant in June and July when nymphs, no larger than a poppy seed, are most prevalent. Nymphs are responsible for the majority of cases. About 25 percent are infected.

Larval ticks, which are even smaller than nymphs, are most abundant in August. But so few are infected (less than 1 percent) that they don't constitute much of a risk.

Adult ticks, most common in spring and fall, have a higher infection rate (50 percent) than nymphs. But their larger size—similar to an apple seed—makes them more likely to be felt and removed before the infection can be transmitted.

2. Scan your body for ticks. Favorite attachment sites for nymphs are the groin, underarm and behind the knee. Adult ticks commonly attach in the head—often behind the ear. But no part of the body is out of bounds.

3. Don't delay tick removal. It

takes nearly 24 hours for a tick to transmit the infection so daily tick checks are critical to prevention. The best way to remove a tick is to grasp it with a sharp pair of tweezers as close to the skin as possible and pull it away. Never use petroleum jelly, mineral oil or a hot match. These methods can do more harm than good.

4. Be aware of the symptoms. The most common indicator of Lyme disease is a skin rash which resembles a bull's eye, blotch, or red spot and appears two to 10 days after the bite. Because only 60 percent of patients get a rash, however, it shouldn't be your only means of diagnosis. Other early indicators are fatigue, headache, stiff neck, jaw discomfort, muscle or joint aches, fever, chills, or swollen glands. Weeks or months after the tick bite, you might also experience irregular heart beats, Bell's Palsy (facial muscle paralysis), weakness in arms and legs, depression, and arthritis.

If you experience any of these symptoms, seek prompt medical attention.

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Photos by David Fairbank



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