

# Turfgrass Matters



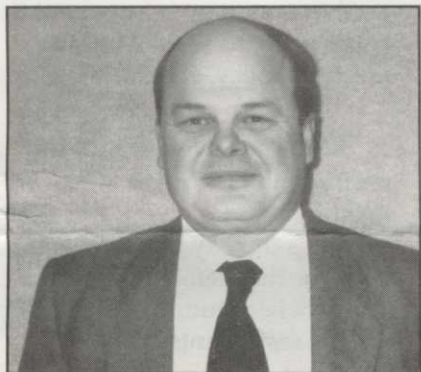
May 1992, vol. 45, no. 3

Mid-Atlantic Golf Course Superintendents Newsletter

## Queenstown Harbor Golf Links will be Site of Superintendent-Pro Tournament

by Bill Shirk, C.G.C.S.

Queenstown Harbor Golf Links (QHGL) is a 27-hole public course owned and operated by Washington Brick and Terracotta Company. This family-based real estate



partnership, located in Washington D.C., is managed by Art, Lex, and Charlie Birney. These individuals deserve respect and admiration for their perseverance in the seven-year struggle to make QHGL a reality. (For a history of the property, see Lex Birney's article on page 6).

A Lindsay Ervin design, the course winds through wetlands, forests, and farmlands. Construction officially began on July 20 1990. Ryan Eastern handled all the mass earth moving. Kenova Company was responsible for construction of the greens and tees, drainage and irrigation, and the final grading. The three nines to be built were *Harbor*, *River*, and the *Woods*. Carved out of 405 acres are seven acres of greens, six acres of tees, and forty acres of fairways.

Seeding began on October 10, 1990 on the *River* course. All greens and tees were seeded to Penncross Bent, with Penneagle Bent roughs. The *Woods* course was seeded in the spring of 1991, and completed during the first week of June. Mounding and limited time led to the hydroseeding the entire golf course in hopes of eliminating erosion and establishing a playing turf more quickly. Opening day was scheduled for July 1991! In addition, all greens and tees were covered with a Terra-Bond product to speed turf establishment. Much to my amazement (no thanks to Mother Nature!), we did open the the *Harbor* and *River* courses on July 1, 1991—just 11 days shy of one year from when construction started. The *Woods* course opened April 1992. The Superintendent-Pro Tournament will be played on the *River* and *Woods* courses which measure 7110 yards from the blue tees with a slope of 138 while the white tees measure 6599 yards with a slope of 132. The greens are mowed at 5/32", six days a week. Twice per week, tees are mowed at 3/8", the fairways at 1/2", and the rough at 3".

The irrigation system, designed by PSI, consists of a variable speed pumping station which is capable of pumping 1800 GPM. In addition, there is a well whose pumping capacity is 800

GPM and which can be used to run the irrigation if necessary. TORO's Network LTC computer system controls the 1000 sprinklers on all three courses using VT-4 satellites.

A water monitoring system involving thirteen wells also exists. Testing for various metabolites and pesticides is performed four times a year by Horsley, Witten, Hegemann, Inc.

The greens were built to USGA specifications with the same root zone mix for both greens and tees: 90% sand (very small percentage of clay particles) and 10% peat. The percolation test

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**Bring plenty of golf balls as sixteen of the eighteen holes have water or environmentally protected areas.**

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under laboratory conditions showed a rate of 28.2 in/hr. The fertilizer composite was added directly to the root zone mix as it was being blended. As a new golf course we tried to maintain a 1-1-1 ratio on the entire course. From October 1990 to December 1991, application was 22 lbs. N/m on the greens, 16 lbs. N/m on the tees, and 10 lbs. N/m on the fairways and roughs. I have yet to decide on a crabgrass control program as I am venturing into

See *Tourney*, page 8

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**GOLF NOTES**

Our April meeting at West Winds Golf & CC saw a beautiful day on a well-maintained and challenging golf course. Thanks again to John Haley and his fine staff for a wonderful outing. Winning scores were as follows:

**Non-superintendent & guest**

1st low net—Bill Wintz (65)  
2nd low net—Ken Flisek (69)

**Superintendent**

1st low net—Mitch Williams (72)  
2nd low net—Dean Graves (73)

**Golf Notes***Continued from column 1*

1st low gross—Nat Binns (81)  
2nd low gross—Bill Shirk (81)  
**Note:** If everyone would please turn in all score cards at the pro shop after playing golf. And don't forget to include your last name on the card. It would help tremendously!!

*Bill Shirk, CGCS  
Golf Chairman, MAAGCS*

**RHYS'S PIECES**

○ **Randy Dayton**, one of our favorite Eastern Shore beach bums, successfully passed his Certification Test in New Orleans and now holds the coveted title of CGCS. Good job Randy!

○ Congratulations go to **Chris & Dawn Dieter** who had a 9-1/2 lb baby boy, David Michael on March 18. The question now is: Do we call Lee "Grandpa" or "Pop-Pop?"

○ Congratulations also go to **Brian & Sarah Zickafoose** who had a 7 lb, 12 oz. baby girl, Sadie Elizabeth, on April 1.

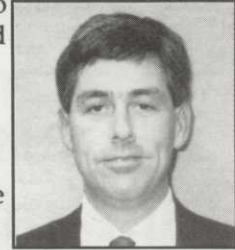
○ Jeff Blind's wife, Marlene, is recovering well at home after recent surgery. We all wish her the best in a speedy recovery.

○ Congratulations to **Betty & Jim Ford**, who will be celebrating 40 wonderful years of marriage on June 4. Word has it that Betty & Jim took a romantic vacation to Bermuda to celebrate the occasion. What I want to know is: did Jim get to take his clubs?!

○ **Paul Masimore** informed us that Chesapeake Hills C.C. has changed from private to semi-private, and has changed its name from Country Club to Golf Club.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Many thanks to John Haley and Brian Zickafoose for hosting our April meeting. The golf course was great and we had an



outstanding meeting, if you missed it you only hurt yourself.

Do you remember that T.V. commercial, the one with the egg and the hot skillet. They say, "For the last time, this is your brain," crack, "This your brain on drugs." Well this analogy is just about the way the Board feels about the meeting policy. For the last time:

☞ We need your meeting reservation the **Friday before the meeting**. It does no one any good to call us the day of the meeting or even the day before. We need an accurate headcount, country clubs are not restaurants.

☞ Those of you who joined this association for free green fees 10 times a year better resign before I catch you. No one is excused from the dinner after the meeting. If host clubs found out about this we would never be able to find meeting sites.

Just put yourself in the host superintendents' shoes. He owes his club an accurate headcount and doesn't want players changing shoes in the parking lot and leaving without spending a dime after using the facility.

☞ Lastly, two of our members host major tournaments this month, and I know they will have their courses in top shape. Good luck Tom and Dean.

*Ken Ingram CGCS  
President, MAAGCS*

# An Integrated Approach to Summer Patch Control in Turfgrass

by Dr. Bruce B. Clarke, Extension Specialist in Turf Pathology, Rutgers University. Reprinted from The Greenerside, newsletter of the GCSA of New Jersey

Summer patch was first recognized as a disease of cool-season turfgrasses in 1984. Prior to that, it was an unidentified component of Fusarium blight. Summer patch has been reported in North America on fine fescue and Kentucky bluegrass. The casual agent has also been isolated on occasion from bentgrass and perennial ryegrass. The disease generally occurs on turf that has been established for more than two years.

**Symptoms.** On Kentucky bluegrass, symptoms first appear in early summer as small, circular patches of wilted turf 1.5 to 3.5" in diameter. Patches may enlarge to more than 24", but generally remain in the 2-to-12" range. Affected leaves rapidly fade from a grayish-green to a light straw color during sustained hot weather (daytime highs of 82 to 95 F and nighttime temperatures exceeding 68 F). Irregular patches, rings, frog-eye and crescent patterns may also develop and coalesce into large areas of blighted turf.

In mixed stands of bentgrass and bluegrass maintained under putting green conditions, patches are circular and range from one to 12" in diameter. As annual bluegrass yellows and declines, bentgrass species frequently recolonize patch centers. On fairways and lawns, rings or frog-eye patches may not develop. Then, symptoms may appear as diffuse patterns of yellowed or straw colored turf that are easily confused with heat stress, insect damage or other diseases. In-

fectured roots, rhizomes and crowns turn brown as they are killed. Examination of these tissues typically reveals a network of sparse, dark brown to black, ectotrophic hyphae from which hyaline penetration hyphae invade the underlying vascular tissue. In the latter stages of infection, vascular discoloration and cortical rot are extensive. No fruiting structures have been observed under field conditions.

**Casual Agent.** *Magnaporthe poae* Landschoot and Jackson, the casual agent of summer patch, is a newly described fungus whose asexual stage had previously been misidentified as *Phialophora graminicola* (Deacon) J. Walker. The fungus forms dark brown to black, septate, ectotrophic runner hyphae on roots, crowns and rhizomes of turfgrass hosts. Sexual fruiting bodies, which have only been observed in culture, are black, spherical and have long cylindrical necks.

**Disease Cycle.** The pathogen is believed to survive the winter months as mycelia in previously colonized plant debris and in perennial host tissue. Colonization and suppression of root growth has occurred between 70 and 95 F under controlled environmental conditions, with optimum disease development at 82 F. In the field, infection commences in late spring when soil temperatures stabilize between 65 and 68 F. The fungus moves from plant to plant by growing along roots and rhizomes. Symptoms develop during hot (86 to 95 F), rainy weather or when high temperatures follow periods

of heavy rainfall. Patches may continue to expand through the summer and early autumn and are often still evident the following growing season. Summer patch may be spread by aerification and dethatching equipment as well as by the transport of infected sod.

**Epidemiology.** Summer patch is most severe during hot, wet years and on poorly drained, compacted sites. Although heat stress plays an important role in disease development, drought stress is usually not a predisposing factor. Under ideal conditions, the casual agent can spread along roots, crowns and stem tissue at a rate of up to 1.5" per week. Symptom expression has been shown to increase with the use of nitrate-based fertilizers, arsenate herbicides and many commonly used contact fungicides. The disease is frequently stimulated when turfgrass is maintained under conditions of low mowing height, high pH (>6.0), compaction and frequent, light irrigation.

**Control.** Because summer patch is a root disease, cultural practices that alleviate stress and promote root development will reduce severity. Since low mowing enhances symptom expression, avoid mowing below recommended heights, particularly during periods of heat stress. In the Northeast, symptoms are less apparent when lawns are maintained at a height of two to three" and golf greens and fairways are cut at or above 5/32 and 3/8", respectively. Fertilize turf with

See Summer Patch, page 7

# The Key to Job Security

by Bruce L. Marcus, Esquire

This article is the last of a three-part series on the necessity of, the elements of, and negotiation posture inherent in employment agreements between golf professionals, superintendents and club owners. In the first two articles, I discussed the purpose of the written contract and its value to the professional. In the second article, I discussed certain contractual elements and issues relating to employment agreements. In this last article, I will endeavor to provide some practical pointers on negotiating tactics.

One of the most difficult things for an employee to undertake is the presentation of his/her position relative to continued employment. Most, if not all, employees are reluctant to strongly request a written employment agreement out of concern that the employer may not find the employee's position compelling, or may find the employee to appear greedy, or may question the value of the employee to the overall function and operation of the club. Each of these concerns is reasonable and well-founded. For example, in the event that an employee presents a contractual proposal which incorporates significantly more money than the employer is prepared to pay or believes to be necessary to procure the same or similar services the employee may create a situation which results in termination or a more disadvantageous employment agreement. Alternatively, the employer may be disinclined to execute an agreement for fear that the employee will then become "vested" in his/her employment, i.e. the written contract may afford an employee a

right for a specified period of time providing that the employee adheres to all the terms and conditions set forth in the written understanding.

An effective way to begin contractual negotiations is to contemplate the presentation of a "Standard Contract" which is endorsed and supported by the Association. While in reality there is never a "standard" agreement as every situation is different, the concept and terms of a "uniform" agreement tend to legitimize the concept of a contractual agreement with the professional. By producing an Association-approved and suggested agreement, the individual is not confronted with the idea that he or she has generated a document that places the individual in the position of appearing greedy or overbearing. The suggestion that the Association has recommended such a document places the onus on a faceless, non-specified entity rather than the professional. This technique allows an individual employee to negotiate from the document and to make changes which are consistent with the requirements with an individual position.

Secondly, it is important for the individual professional to highlight the benefits and achievements which are milestones of prior service to the club or to other employment positions. Many of us are reluctant to "toot" our own horns, however, there is no substitute for enlightening a club manager, owner or committee about individual accomplishments and achievements. Accordingly, it is important to remind or advise each committee of the quality of

service offered by each individual professional.

Thirdly, you must evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of your position. In the event that you are employed by a club or should seek employment at a club where the turnover rate has been very high, it is safe to assume that little regard has been placed with the professional and the negotiating posture may be weaker than one would hope or expect. It is totally unwise to make demands and to rigidly adhere to a proposed contract when the result may be to disenfranchise a professional from the golf committee, chairman, club manager or other individual who is responsible for overall management of the club. This skill is probably the most difficult to master and many individuals who perform these functions on a day-to-day basis have been unsuccessful in determining what avenue will best accomplish the client's need. In many instances, lawyers or agents are used to soften the approach of a prospective or current employee and to the extent that an agent or attorney is used for this purpose it is important for the employee to remember that the spokesperson must likewise honor the requirement of being rational and reasonable in his/her negotiating approach. Simply because an individual is an agent or lawyer does not imbue them with the requisite negotiating skills to successfully accomplish contract negotiations.

In closing, I would reaffirm the concept that this Association, like its sister organizations, must confront certain practical realities.

*See Contract, page 5*

*Continued from page 4*

Significant among these are the upgrading of the status of the professional and the increased awareness of clubs and club owners about the need for competent and professional superintendents. Absent a more rigid professional outlook, the plight of superintendents will be left to the individual skills of superintendents and to a large degree the

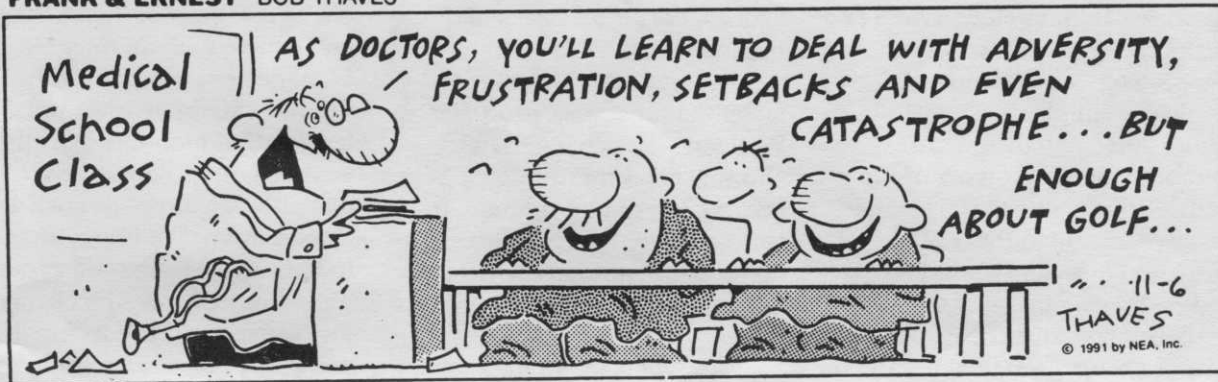
luck of a particular association member in successfully consummating a written agreement. By improving the lot of one or two members on an annual basis, the increase in the quality of positions and the lot of the whole membership cannot be far off.

I very much enjoyed the opportunity to meet with the Association last fall and hope that my comments will be of value to

all the members of the Association. For further information you may contact us at Bruce L. Marcus, Marcus & Bonsib, 6411 Ivy Lane, Suite 116, Greenbelt, Md. 20770.

*Bruce L. Marcus is an attorney in Greenbelt, Md. with the firm of Marcus & Bonsib and has represented golf course owners, clubs, golf professionals and superintendents for over ten years.*

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### Queenstown Harbor— Regulatory Nightmare to Dream Course

by Lex Birney. This is a portion of Mr. Birney's article on the history of the course.

Golfers have the capacity to recall nuances and details of golf courses and can conjure them up at watering holes after every game.

Queenstown Harbor Golf Links will create more than its share of memories. It plays along rivers and creeks, through mature forests, and hop-scotches across wetlands.

Seems simple doesn't it? Build a golf course. But even Lord Baltimore (original owner of the land), with all his hardships could not have imagined the Kafkaesque scenario that was to unfold for the next seven years.

Every government agency and citizens group since time began got involved in the process. This

included forty-three public hearings and involved at one time or another county agencies of planning and zoning, liquor board, public works, sediment control, environmental health; state agencies of department of agriculture, department of environment, fish and wildlife, sediment and stormwater resources, water resources and administration, the Maryland Historic Trust, forest service; and everyone's favorite federal agency, the Army Corps of Engineers.

At times the rules changed faster than the processing. Wetlands laws changed twice and the inspectors' philosophy became one of non-opinion. It was easier to procrastinate because no one knew whether or not tomorrow would bring new rules.

New agencies seemed to be created just for the project. The

Maryland Critical Areas Law was passed, creating a one-thousand-foot line from mean high water that overlay existing county and state zoning requirements with stringent new development limitations and mandates. Agriculture suddenly became a protected use in spite of the harm that unrestricted fertilization techniques can do.

Finally, logic prevailed, and Washington Brick was able to prove to even the most rabid critics that a properly managed golf course with an Integrated Pest Management program, and groundwater, pesticide and fertilization monitoring wells was an excellent use for an environmentally sensitive site such as Queenstown. Trading with the Indians must have been easier.

After many design changes, the course was built in less than one year (a miracle in itself, but that's another story).

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**Summer Patch, from page 3**

ammonium sulfate or a slow-release nitrogen source like sulfur-coated urea. Irrigate deeply and as infrequently as possible without inducing drought stress. Aerification, improving drainage, reducing compaction, and syringing to reduce heat stress are other practices that will aid in the control of this disease.

Overseeding affected areas with perennial ryegrass, tall fescue, or resistant cultivars of Kentucky bluegrass represents one of the most cost-effective means of controlling summer patch. Use mixtures or blends of resistant turf cultivars or species for best results. Conversion of golf areas from bluegrass to bentgrass will also reduce disease incidence.

Fungicides are available that can effectively control summer patch. Applications should commence on a preventative basis

in late spring or early summer when soil temperatures stabilize between 64 and 68 F. Systemic fungicides, such as fenarimol (Rubigan), propiconazole (Banner), triadimefon (Bayleton), and the benzimidazoles (i.e., Tersan 1991 and Cleary 3336), have proven to be most effective but must be applied at high label rates. Repeat two to three times at 21-to-28-day intervals for best results. Efficacy is enhanced when products are applied in at least 4 gallons of water per 1000

square feet. The continued use of contact fungicides at high label rates may stimulate symptom severity.

*The author would like to express his sincere thanks to the GCSANJ and the Metropolitan GCSA for supporting this research.*



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*Continued from page 1*

new territory with bent fairways. Last summer was a success with Acclaim, Methaz-30 and Impact.

Some projects still need to be completed. Nine miles of cart path paving is scheduled for completion by the first week of May. A better growing season this year would help thicken the turf density in the roughs. And in the fall, the wooded areas of the golf course will undergo major seeding.

In association with the Chesapeake Wildlife Foundation, QHGL is presently funding a project, to improve wetlands and wildlife habitats. We will assume control for an additional 100 acres, not including woodlands, to create feeding and nesting areas. The Foundation has already installed many wood duck and bluebird boxes, purple martin and bat

houses, and osprey platforms. All the environmentally protected areas are being seeded with wild flowers and natural grasses.

My wife Cheryl, a registered nurse, is Nurse Manager of the ICU at Memorial Hospital in Easton and takes classes toward a masters degree two nights a week at the University of Maryland. We have two children, Adrian (10) and Ashley (8). Taking care of all their projects and tolerating a husband with a wild and crazy profession, she is truly the backbone of this family.

I certainly hope everyone gets an opportunity to play our new and very exciting course soon. Bring plenty of golf balls as sixteen of the eighteen holes have water or environmentally protected areas. Maybe in three to five years we can again host a MAAGCS meeting so everyone

can see how the course has matured.

Other hosts for the day will be head pro Trent Wright who came from Wakefield Valley Golf Course and is adapting well to Eastern Shore living; Thad Hoy, who will handle food preparations; and Jeff Wolfe, my assistant, who graduated in 1991 from the turfgrass program at Penn State University (my alma mater-1972). Good luck to everyone!

**Cocktails & Dinner** will be at 6:30 and 7:00. **Cost:** \$30 per person for those **not** playing golf. For those in the tournament, all is included in that cost.

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Continued on page 10

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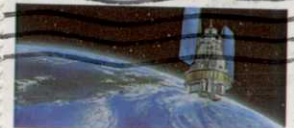
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