

# Turfgrass Matters



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Mid-Atlantic Golf Course Superintendents Newsletter

## Superintendent-Pro Tournament May 11

### Walter Montross to host at Westwood

Westwood CC, built in 1954 and known originally as Westbriar CC., was designed by architect A.H. Tull, an Englishman who worked in the D.C. area in the early 50s. The course was built on a dairy farm purchased by a Mr. Horowitz to develop a golf course and home sites. In 1962, due to financial difficulties, it was sold to a group of 62 members who changed the name to Westwood.

Other than the original routing of the course, little to nothing remains of the past except the dairy barn, now the site of our maintenance facility. Many of the changes are the redesign work of Ed Ault and subsequently Brian Ault.

Over the years a few of our association members earned their stripes here—Buck Wetsel, Mike Burkholder, Jack McClenahan, Wally Steading and his humble assistant, Angelo Cammarota, Ken Comminsky and Tom Haske. I am still trying to figure out which one used the dynamite to aerate the 16th green. I heard this story years ago and I also heard they had to clean the sod off the barn roof! I assume the practice was discontinued about this time, but imagine the extra benefit of long-term grub control.

All these men put their personal stamp on the place, but the real changes occurred during Tom's 17 years: all the greens—except #7—were rebuilt, many new tees were added, cart paths

installed, and many of the trees I enjoy were planted.

Notes Walter, "I started here in April 1990 and have tried to put my own stamp on the place. With the generous support of the member-

ship we have been actively involved with change. Many new projects have been initiated and many still to be done. The most exciting: converting the 95% *poa annua* fairways to bentgrass in the fall of 1990. We hoped to achieve around 80% bent to 20% *poa*. We have not reached these numbers yet, but are slowly gaining on it."

Another project is replacing the old bridges. "We have done two and hope to do a third this fall. We also continue to rebuild the old tees. In the last three years we have five new ladies' tees and two men's tees. The major project last year was complete restoration of our sand bunkers. We removed all the old sand—3,000 tons—established new drainage and added new sand. While we were at it, we decided to build seven new bunkers and build target greens in the driving range with the waste material generated from the bunkers. All this, coupled with



**Golf/Dinner:** Because this is the Super/Pro tournament your entry fee covers all costs for golf, lunch, dinner and the cocktail party. If you are not playing in the tournament you are most welcome to come to the cocktail party and dinner. Cost for this is \$35 which is inclusive. Cocktails are at 6:00, dinner at 7:00. Coat and tie are required in the dining room.

**Directions:** From Baltimore/Eastern Shore take I-495 across the American Legion Bridge. Take exit 11B (Rt. 123, Chain Bridge Rd. toward Vienna). You will pass through Tyson's Corner, a large shopping mall. After approximately 2 miles on Rt. 123 Westwood will be on the right. From the west, take Rt. 66 to Rt. 123 north toward Oakton/Vienna. After approximately 6 miles, the club will be on your left.

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our own horticultural efforts has kept us quite busy. But we're not done yet. We hope to install a new irrigation system next winter and begin extensive erosion control work around the ponds and creeks.

"As I mentioned above, our goal is to grow bentgrass. There is still plenty of *poa annua*; after 20 years of cultivation, it won't go away easily. We are trying everything: growth regulators (excellent), preemergence products (?), and Prograss (I think it will ultimately be the answer). We are gaining in bentgrass percentages but the battle is yet to be won—and may never be fully won."

The greens are Penncross, the new tees are Penncross with the latest ones being Dominant. The old tees are ryegrass. The fairways are predominantly Pennlinks with Dominant overseeded the last two years. The greens and tees receive approximately 4 lbs. N/1,000 sq.ft. and 6 lbs. K/1,000 sq.ft. per year.

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The fairways receive 2 lbs. N/1,000 sq. ft. and 5 lbs K/1,000 sq.ft. per year. Interestingly, all fertilizer is applied during the summer. They spoon feed which pushes the bentgrass when the *poa* is naturally being stressed. Greens are cut daily at 5/32". We used to cut at 9/64" but, with the heavy contouring of the greens, the members found them to be too fast. The old ryegrass tees are cut at 1/2" and the bent tees are cut at 7/16". The fairways and approaches are cut at 1/2". Tees and

fairways are cut three days a week which is plenty with the use of growth regulators.

Walter is a 1975 graduate of the I.A.A., University of Maryland. He became a Certified Superintendent in 1984 and was president of the MAAGCS in 1989. His wife Linda teaches Latin at the high school level. "I don't know anything about this subject," says Walter, "but she can't tell the difference between Pythium and wet wilt, so we are even.

"We are blessed with two great kids: Tracy, who will turn 10

the day of this meeting. She was born the evening of this tournament in 1983 when we were at Washington GCC, and was the last time I won the 50-50. Geoffrey is 8. Both love all the things kids love and keep us busy shuttling them from event to event." Walter's interests are reading, gourmet cooking, hunting, fishing and golf.

Westwood's assistant superintendent is Kirk Intermill; the host golf professional is Glenn Brown, and the general manager is Michael Miranda.



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