



## CHICAGOLAND ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

### Verdure Newsletter

June 2006

Rick Bowden	President
Dan Dinelli, CGCS	Vice President / Forum
Dan Charlton	Treasurer
Jon Jennings, CGCS	Secretary / Verdure
Tommy Witt, CGCS	Director / Education
Dan Marco, CGCS	Director / Arrangements

### Upcoming Events

#### Chicagoland Meetings:

July 13 – Cress Creek Country Club,	Bill Kennedy
August 23 - Indian Hill Club	David Schlagetter, CGCS
September 20 - Bryn Mawr Country Club	Brian Bossert, CGCS
October 9 - Park Ridge Country Club (Founders Cup)	Joel Purpur, CGCS

#### June Meeting:

Our meeting was held June 20 at Exmoor Country Club. Host, Kurt Galisdorfer and the entire staff at Exmoor provided a fantastic evening for our group with a total of 14 members and 11 guests in attendance. This was our best attended monthly meeting for the year to date. If you did not go, you missed a terrific evening of education and camaraderie. The best part of the Chicagoland meetings is the availability to have open discussion with your peers. Our Immediate Past President, Chuck Anfield has stated numerous times that of all the associations, we enjoy the best meals. The staff at Exmoor treated us very well. How is this for dinner? To begin, pan seared sea scallops, wild mushroom risotto with roasted orange pepper puree. This was followed with a mixed green salad with white French dressing. The entrée was spectacular consisting of sliced smoked tenderloin of beef with a béarnaise sauce, chive potato croquette, and asparagus spear stuffed tomato. The closer was chocolate cake ala mode.



*Casual informative discussion is what the Chicagoland Association is known for. The greater the number in attendance, the more information that is disseminated.*



*Pictured above is the "Turf Team", consisting of Lee Miller on the left and Dr. Derek Settle on the right. This was Lee's final meeting with us as he has returned to school to pursue his PhD. Lee will be attending North Carolina State University. His focus will be a fairy ring study. Lee's last day was June 30 and he left for N.C. State July 5<sup>th</sup>. Lee thanked the Chicagoland area for the time he had spent in the area and for all he had learned along the way. We wish Lee all the best and hope that he returns to see us occasionally.*

Derek is now the lead person for turf diagnostics with the Chicago District Golf Association. Dr. Randy Kane will be offering some assistance in regard to diagnostics through the summer. This fall, Derek will be attending the Crop Science meeting to seek out another pathologist with a strong agronomic background. Derek's contact information is (630)685-2307 [dsettle@cdga.org](mailto:dsettle@cdga.org). We are very fortunate to have Derek in our area to assist with a variety of turf issues through the season.

### **US Open Highlights**

I had the opportunity to attend the final round of the US Open Championship at Winged Foot Golf Club Sunday June 18. I arrived in New York the evening of June 17. My plan was to get to the course as early as possible and observe the maintenance staff and group of volunteers set up for the tournament. The first shuttle left the hotel for Winged Foot at 5:30am, I was on it. Once inside the gate, I headed directly toward 18 figuring I could walk backward and catch a lot of the action. Within 300 feet of entering, I ran into Paul Ramina, the golf course superintendent from Hamilton Farm Golf Club in Gladstone New Jersey. Paul is hosting the LPGA TOUR HSBC Women's World Match Play Championship this weekend. We chatted for a few minutes and he indicated he had arrived at 4:00 to observe the set up. From that point I continued to walk from 18 green toward the tee and then across the course toward the maintenance facility.

I saw a lot of people working and setting up, however none of them were from the maintenance staff. The maintenance facility was eerily quiet as well. All of the doors were open and the offices were as well. But there was no one around. I walked around the back of the maintenance building and there was the volunteer tent. Inside were a number of people eating breakfast. What I learned at that point was with a staff of 130; they began work at 4:00 am and were off the course by the time I arrived.

After chatting with a number of volunteers, I walked back toward the clubhouse to watch some golf. The highlight for me was watching Ted Purdy from a totally blind shot in the front left bunker on the par 3 tenth hole his shot. He struck the ball from the sand and never saw it go in the hole due the elevation difference. Only when the gallery around the green erupted with cheers did he ask if the ball went in.

Another entertaining moment was the ever welcoming New York crowd heckling young Ian Poulter of England. As Ian made his way to the sixth green donning pink pants, a pink golf bag and matching visor, someone yelled from the grandstands “Hey Ian, didn’t anyone tell you today is Fathers Day, not Mothers Day?” Another heckler got him as he walked from 9 tee toward the fairway by saying, “hey Ian, did your Mom wash your red sweatshirt with your whites?” Ian, being a good sport smiled and waved and kept playing, not losing his focus.

There was a sea of people lining the fairways when the Mickelson / Ferrie group teed off in the 3:00pm tee time. I was able to follow the group down the fairway and walk on each of the greens after they completed the hole. The greens obviously looked stressed. However, they were by no means anything that would not recover with a wetting agent application and some water.

Being predominantly poa, there are some negatives to the putting surface when the turf becomes stressed. The increased humidity over the weekend caused the poa to swell and become puffy. The decision was also made not to roll the greens during the Championship due to the severe slope on a number of Winged Foots greens. The first green was so steep that they mowed it every other day just to keep the ball on the putting surface. If the Open is to return to Winged Foot, the green surface will probably be rebuilt to accommodate faster green speed.

Overall, the story was about golf. The pressure of the tournament and human drama that unfolded at the end of the day. I can still here the gasps of disbelief as Lefty struck bad one bad shot after another that Sunday evening. The headlines on the Monday New York Post had a picture of Mickelson holding his head and read “Idiot Mickelson loses Open”.

### **Area Renovations**

A number of clubs are beginning renovations shortly. It is hard to believe that it is already that time of the year. Dan Charlton of Evanston Golf Club mentioned he is exploring new levels of low mowing. Dan was gradually lowering the height of cut on his green mowers to .069” as he prepares the greens for methyl bromide. He commented that the putting surfaces, although not aesthetically pleasing, were very fast to putt upon. Evanston will be completely renovating the greens, tees and fairways this summer. Al Fierst at The Oak Park Country Club is about to undertake a large renovation. Oak Park is working under the guidance of local golf course architect, Rick Jacobson. Tim Anderson, CGCS at Naperville Country Club should receive the award for largest renovation. Naperville is completely re-building the entire golf course this year. Best wishes to everyone renovating this year. We will all have our fingers crossed for great grow in weather.

### **Seasonal Issues**

Rain has been really hit and miss over the last month. Some courses have had more than enough while at the same time, others have been very dry. The thunderstorms traveling through the region have left some courses very wet while others a few miles away barely got a few drops. Comments from players range across the spectrum from too soft, too slow, too wet for their liking. If this is the case, feel free to remind them of rule 13-1

### ***You play the course as you find it.***

Golf is played under a wide variety of conditions. Coping with the good or bad fortune that arises from these conditions is one of the ways that golf tests those who play the game. The principle of playing the course as one finds it is embodied, primarily, in Rule 13. Rule 13-1 provides the basic premise that the ball is played as it lies unless the Rules permit the player to do otherwise. Rule 13-2 lists the specific areas which the player may not improve and the types of improvements the player may not make in addition to providing a few exceptions. Although the player is generally prohibited from improving the lie of his ball, his line of play, or his area of intended stance or swing, a few key Decisions explain that, if such areas were worsened by someone other than the player after the player’s ball came to rest, the player may be entitled to restore the areas. Please refer to Decisions 1-2/1, 13-2/8, 13-2/8.5, 13-2/29.5, 16-1/13.

## Stay Sharp

Geoff Simril of Milliken and Company in South Carolina made a post on Turfnet earlier this week which I felt was poignant regarding perception and reality among players.

### **Here's what I think golfers "see" in order of decreasing importance:**

- 1) how the greens look (color, density)
- 2) how the greens roll
- 3) how fast they are
- 4) how much density there is in the fairway (they have to have someplace to tee it up)
- 5) how level and dense the tees are
- 6) how thick the rough is

There's a list of things they "experience", some of which is way outside the Superintendent's control:

- 1) elevation changes (they love to hit from elevated tees)
- 2) different textures, shades, and colors
- 3) natural beauty (ponds, trees, rivers, etc)

Then, there's a whole list of things that expect because it's what they "understand" as people, and therefore "demand," beginning with:

- 1) whether the bunkers are raked
- 2) no clippings
- 3) water in the ball washer
- 4) clean tee towels

They don't see "weeds" unless it's a glaring problem, like goosegrass in the collars (or goose crap on the greens).

One friend told me that 99% of his members couldn't tell one kind of grass from another, but 100% of them could identify dirt.

And, of course, generalizations don't make a lot of sense. The expectations at Kinloch in VA (\$150,000 to join) are a little different from those at Van Cortland Park in the Bronx. Single digit guys are different from 20 handicappers (but not that much, except for speed expectations). (There's a bigger divide along socio-economic lines, i.e., the more money they have, the more demanding they are, especially if they're under 40 and very rich.) You do have to know your members in general and your greens committee members (or owner) specifically.

Two last bits of advice:

- 1) Keep the lady members happy. They write all the checks and have all the..... well, you know. That means level ladies tees with lots of turf, flowers, and tons of courtesy.
- 2) When you have to make tradeoffs, don't let "perfect" stand in the way of "good enough."

Speaking of courtesy, like most of what matters in life, it's about building relationships. Superintendents are like doctors--if they love you, they won't sue you for malpractice.

Just my opinion

## **Chicagoland News around Town:**

The majority of golf course maintenance staffs around the country rely heavily upon Hispanic labor. Discussion of tightening the border and making sure that all employees are in fact documented laborers is something that has been the catalyst for hot discussion lately.

*Dave Ward, Golf Course Superintendent at Coyote Run in Homewood investigated to find out what some area clubs were offering in regard to wages, benefits and other incentives to keep their staff content and motivated through a long season.*

<b><i>Chicagoland News Around Town</i></b>			
<b>Seasonal Staff Policies and Benefits</b>			
<b>Question</b>	<b><u>Bob Maibusch</u></b>	<b><u>Paul Bastron</u></b>	<b><u>Les Rutan</u></b>
	<b>Hinsdale Golf Club</b>	<b>Glen Flora County Club</b>	<b>Crystal Tree Golf and Country Club</b>
<b>Ethnicity of Seasonal Staff</b>	95% Hispanic	80% Hispanic	100% Hispanic
<b>Pay Scale of Staff</b>	\$8.70 to \$12.00	\$7.50 to \$9.25	\$7.75 to \$11.50
<b>Staff Benefits</b>	Housing, meals 401K plan, double time on Sundays, 2 weeks vacation pay at end of season, +/- \$100 Christmas bonus on return in the spring.	5 days vacation time after 1 <sup>st</sup> year, uniform and foul weather gear, non-contested unemployment comp. 401K 8 hrs pay for holidays and special events for less hours worked.	Uniforms and foul weather gear, 401K after 1,200 hours, need-based paid (unofficial) personal or sick days, non-contested unemployment comp.
<b>Policy Manual in Effect</b>	Manual as of June 1 <sup>st</sup> . Not in Spanish, (written by Club without Bob's input)	Two page manual in English and Spanish, outlines rules and benefits.	Manual in English and Spanish, covers attendance, courtesy and safety procedures.
<b>Other Staff Moral Builders</b>	Catered luncheon at shop, fall golf tournament	Two barbeques per year, full family use on Mondays, occasional golf or bowling sometimes competing against other clubs.	Once a month fiestas, golf with party and prizes in the fall, (prize money from lake golf ball concession split with pro).
<b>Hypothetical Question of the Month: Can the golf course industry survive without the Hispanic workforce?</b>	We could survive but it would be incredibly difficult...player expectation would need to be diminished until we could find another source of labor to utilize.	Yes, we would survive...but it would be very difficult and cost more.	No, not as we know it today...the situation would evolve, but that would take some time.

### **Host a CAGCS Meeting**

We have been fortunate to have been provided with some fantastic venues to hold our meetings the last couple of years. It does not take a lot of effort to host a meeting and is very rewarding. Please consider hosting a monthly meeting at your facility. The meetings consist of cocktails, dinner and valuable roundtable discussions. If you are interested in hosting a meeting or would like to obtain further information, please contact Dan Marco, CGCS either by telephone, (630)986-4476 or via email [ruthlakeecc@aol.com](mailto:ruthlakeecc@aol.com) . Dan has a few remaining spots to fill for the year.

### **New Members**

The following is a list of new 2006 members. Please make them feel welcome. When you see someone new at a meeting, take the opportunity to introduce yourself.

Bob Lively - Flossmoor Country Club  
Todd Schmitz - Phillips Park Golf Course  
Sam Mackenzie - Olympia Fields Country Club  
John Nelson - Merit Club  
Jeff Frentz - Lake Shore Country Club  
Mike Siefken - Sportsman Country Club  
Harry Lovero - Orchard Valley Golf Course  
Jerry Dinelli - North Shore Country Club  
Josh Langell - Northmoor Country Club

### **Web Site**

The Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents has a new web site. Launched March 14, 2006, the web site is in its preliminary stage of introduction and growth. You will be able to check upcoming monthly meeting venues and see all the new information for the Association. Please visit [www.cagcs.org](http://www.cagcs.org) . If you would like to add something to the web site or have a suggestion, please email Jon Jennings [chicagogolfclub@aol.com](mailto:chicagogolfclub@aol.com)  
The web site was created to assist members obtain useful information.

### **e-Verdure**

If you would like to contribute to the Verdure or have some information you feel others would gain benefit, please contact Jon Jennings, [chicagogolfclub@aol.com](mailto:chicagogolfclub@aol.com) .The Verdure is another great way to disseminate information to our membership. By sending it electronically, the information is very current. The deadline for submitting information for the upcoming issue is the second Monday of each month.

### **Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents Shirts**

The 2006 edition CAGCS golf shirts are in. Be sure to pick up one of these handsome short sleeved shirts. The CAGCS logo is embroidered on the left chest. The price of these good looking shirts is \$45.00. You have the option of being billed for the shirt(s) or paying upon receipt. They are available in red, black, blue, yellow and white. You may obtain one at a monthly meeting or contact Dan Charlton,