



CHICAGOLAND ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

Verdure Newsletter

June / July 2007

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Vice President Forum
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Upcoming Events

Chicagoland Meetings:

July 31 – Ball Horticultural Company / Prairie Landing Golf Club Host – Jeff Gibson / Tony Kalina, CGCS
November 14 – Naperville Country Club, Annual Forum Host – Tim Anderson, CGCS

Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents Monthly Meeting July 31, 2007

Host: Ball Horticultural Company Jeff Gibson – Host

Prairie Landing Golf Club – Tony Kalina, CGCS Host

The next meeting of the Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents will be held on Tuesday July 31st, 2007 at Ball Horticultural Company with dinner to follow at Prairie Landing Golf Club.

Education

We will be touring the Ball Horticultural Company facility and then at Prairie Landing we can have a roundtable discussion on any topic you choose related to our profession.

Time

We will meet at Ball Horticultural Company from 4:30 – 6:00 PM and then go to Prairie Landing Golf Club for dinner and our meeting. [The attire is golf casual.](#)

Please RSVP to Brian Bossert, CGCS at 847-677-4112 up until Monday July 30th. To confirm your attendance.

Directions Enter the parking lot from the South driveway (1st drive you come to heading north on Town Road) Park in the rear of the building and walk back to the main garden entrance on the south side of the concrete plaza area.



Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents Monthly Meeting June 14
Cantigny Golf Club



Although attendance was a little light for the evening, we had a great meeting at Cantigny Golf Club last month with our host Scott Witte, CGCS Golf Course Superintendent. Discussion regarding the issues and experiences of the summer thus far carried much of the education as well as timely updates from Dr. Derek Settle of the CDGA.



Scott Witte discusses his planning for the 2007 United States Amateur Public Links Championship held at Cantigny June 9-14. Scott highlighted the preparation involved with conducting the Championship at Cantigny which included the organization and implementation of staff, meals, uniforms and mowing patterns captivated all in attendance. Congratulations to Scott, his staff and the many volunteers that made the event an outstanding success. You represented our area well and made a lasting positive impression with all that participated that week.

The U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship has been an unqualified success since its inception in 1922, giving exposure to many public-course players who otherwise might not have an opportunity to compete in a national championship.

The championship's prime mover was James D. Standish Jr., of Detroit, who convinced his colleagues on the 1922 USGA Executive Committee that the time was right for such a grass-roots competition. Standish pointed to the public-course golfer, whose ranks were swelling following World War I, and to the growing number of municipal and daily-fee courses in America.

The first championship was conducted at the Ottawa Park Course in Toledo, Ohio. The USGA had no way of knowing how many players to expect, but a satisfying 140 entries were received. Less than half that number wore golf shoes. The first champion was Eddie Held of St. Louis, who joined a private club soon after his victory and thus became ineligible to defend his title in 1923.

In 1923, the first team championship was conducted at the same time as the individual competition. East Potomac Park in Washington, D.C., was selected as the site, causing a great deal of excitement in the nation's capital. President Warren G. Harding, a golf enthusiast, donated the team trophy. Harding wanted to enter the championship himself, but time didn't permit, and besides, he was a member of at least one private club, which would preclude his entry.

That those earliest championships drew upward of 18 teams representing cities from coast to coast, was a tribute to the spread of public-course golf in America. From the initial entry of 140 players, today's annual entry has surged to a massive 6,000 competitors or more.

Colt Knost, 22, of Dallas, Texas, won the first three holes and never looked back in posting a 6-and-4 victory on Saturday over 18-year-old Cody Paladino of Kensington, Conn., in the championship match of the 2007 U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship at Cantigny Golf.

Knost, a recent graduate of Southern Methodist University where he earned third-team All-America honors this past season, played the equivalent of 6-under-par golf – with the usual match-play concessions – over the 32 holes of the scheduled 36-hole final. In six matches, Knost registered just seven bogeys and over the final two days of the competition, a total of 66 holes, he was the equivalent of 13 under par.

The win gave Knost exemptions into the 2007 and '08 U.S. Amateur and a likely invitation to the 2008 Masters Tournament provided he remains an amateur.



Colt Knost won the 2007 U.S. Amateur Public Links title at Cantigny Golf, defeating Cody Paladino, 6 and 4, in the scheduled 36-hole final. He is the sixth player from Texas to win this championship.

Minimum Wage Increase Effective July 1, 2007:

An item I hope everyone caught on July 1 was the increase in the Illinois minimum wage raising it from \$6.50 to \$7.50 per hour. There will be subsequent increases for the following three years bringing the 2010 minimum wage to \$8.25 an hour. If you are paying above that rate for starting wages, you have no problem other than making sure that all of your labor posters are up to date. If you hire employees at minimum wage you have to think about what that does to your other hourly employees.

If you have an employee that started with you four years ago at minimum wage and you have given cost of living increases each year to that employee, they now make \$7.31 an hour. They automatically move up to \$7.50 an hour with the minimum wage increase and make the same as a new unskilled person walking off the street!! The old adage states the "A rising tide raises all ships". The wage increase is a push from the bottom up otherwise the gap closes in on even top wage earners such as technicians and full time staff.

A mid season increase is a challenge to incorporate within an already set in stone budget. Proper communication is necessary, but you will need to be aware that the minimum wage continues to rise each year for the next three following this year. Also keep in the back of your head that the minimum wage is based on the Federal Minimum Wage rate, but each state has the flexibility to set their own minimum.

Illinois Minimum Wage Rates

ILLINOIS	Future Effective Date	Basic Minimum Rate (per hour)	Premium Pay After Designated Hours ²	
			Daily	Weekly
<i>(Applicable to employers of 4 or more employees, excluding family members)</i>				
	07/01/2007	\$6.50		
	07/01/2007	\$7.50		
	07/01/2008	\$7.75		
	07/01/2009	\$8.00		
	07/01/2010	\$8.25		

July 1, 2007 – Why does that date ring a bell? That's the deadline if you are one of the approximately 815 'grandfathered' Class A members who were placed in the initial four-year renewal cycle and who have not fulfilled the requirements for maintaining Class A status. If you are one of these members, please be aware that time is running out, so you must act quickly to maintain your current status. Remember, all activities and educational offerings attended since July 1, 2003 are eligible for points. Visit [My Member Central](#) to review your current status and access the appropriate affidavits for recording points. Congratulations are in order to the more than 910 Class A members in the initial four-year cycle who have already fulfilled the requirements.



Bradley S. Klein
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Unreasonable voices

For years psychiatry has been called the impossible profession. But the folks who maintain golf courses for a living have the head shrinkers beat when it comes to dealing with certified nuts. Perhaps, though, the following rules will help greenkeepers survive in their current posts. They also should help everyday golfers appreciate the pressures that superintendents face. Consider this a survival guide, strictly by the numbers.

>> Ninety-nine percent of golfers have no idea what superintendents actually do for a living. They haven't been to the maintenance office. They don't understand the difference between tending a lawn and tending a golf course.

And yet golfers don't hesitate to offer their advice on matters far more technical than anything they likely deal with themselves. Trouble ensues when trained scientific professionals are forced to take their marching orders from neophytes and wannabes.

>> Thirty percent of all members at private clubs actually can't afford to be members and continually offer resistance to any upgrading or improvement for fear the changes will be costly and reveal them to be financially overcommitted. So they resist. Worse, such people tend to be the ones who most use (or abuse) their privileges in a desperate attempt to justify their membership.

Further obstruction is accounted for by . . .

>> The 90/10 rule, which argues that dedicated club professionals (managers, directors of golf and superintendents), along with club boards, spend 90 percent of their time defending themselves and answering the complaints of 10 percent of the members. The resulting paralysis overlooks the fact that the vast majority of the membership is quiet, supportive and willing to follow if persuasive, thoughtful and accurate arguments can be arrayed on behalf of a sensible plan. But the majority is bullied by the vocal 10 percent.

Efforts to persuade that 10 percent are further impeded by the fact that . . .

>> Five percent of that minority membership is always disgruntled, as it seems their chief goal in life is to make everyone else miserable. These people can't be persuaded of anything, and trying to engage them in rational conversation is a fruitless enterprise. They must not be allowed to serve on any board-level committees.

As for specific progress on course conditioning, a reasonable sense of the actual maintenance at one's home course is scarcely possible because of some simple facts of life.

To start with . . .

>> Four or five low-handicap golfers at every club tend to be the source of the most incessant

blessed with . . .

>> Six or seven sensible members who take on the role of humble and committed leaders to infuse the club with a modicum of sensibility.

No one should underestimate the time, politics and energy required to pull this off successfully, but no club can function well without a half-dozen golfers of mixed handicaps who become stewards of the club, its history, traditions and its professional staff. Without this protective cover, the good folks at any facility don't stand a chance.

>> Eighteen years is about the shelf life of even the best superintendent at any club. After that

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and detailed complaining regarding maintenance. They play their golf together in the same little clique, travel widely to other first-rate clubs and visit the latest and greatest courses throughout the country. They also tend to subscribe to (and worse yet, even read) the professional trade journals and study innovative techniques for drainage and aeration, trendy turfgrass cultivars and innovative products such as bunker liners.

Not that they could come within a mile of getting any of this stuff right themselves, but they are all, in essence, that most venomous of country club species: the green committee chair in waiting.

They tend to bombard the board and the superintendent as well as the golf professional with their superficial knowledge. And they tend to carry a certain weight with unsuspecting higher-handicappers because of their golf games and their appearance of being golf worldly. They also tend to be Shakespearean (if not Machiavellian operatives) in their approach to club politics.

The only way to counteract them is to be

tenure, the folks who hired the greenkeeper are no longer on the board and certain loyalty gives way to a "change the furniture" mentality – usually uttered in terms of "it's time to go to the next level." It's a generational shift. Besides, by that time, the greenkeeper is probably making more money than half the membership, and the folks on the board are the same snot-nosed youths whom the greenkeeper chased off the course years ago. Now they've grown up and are set to take their revenge. When that dynamic sets in, it's hard to reverse the tide of adverse sentiment.

Maintenance certainly has its ups and downs – such as the fact golfers tend to look down on the ground at their home club, and look up in the air and all around when they play elsewhere.

It turns out that golfers see all of the little details and blemishes at their own course, whereas on the road they enjoy the long views and skip over whatever flaws might be there. Now if only golfers could enjoy their home courses as much as they enjoy being elsewhere, some balance and rationality might rule course maintenance.

Two Generations of the Dinelli Family



Very rarely do you hear of a superintendent being at the same Club for more than 10 years. The average tenure is less than that at 7.5 years. Joe Dinelli was the Golf Course Superintendent for 30 years at North Shore Country Club in Glenview, Illinois. From 1960 until his retirement in 1990, Joe oversaw and cared for North Shore.

In 1990 his son Dan took over the legacy at North Shore and has been the golf course superintendent ever since. Congratulations to the Dinelli family for 47 years of caring for one great facility.

Host a CAGCS Meeting

Planning for the 2007 season is well under way and we are looking for venues to host monthly meetings. We have been fortunate to be 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 Tommy Witt, CGCS either by telephone, (847) 926-5540 or via email tommywitt@hotmail.com.

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. If you would like to add something to the web site or have a suggestion, please email Jon Jennings 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. 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 new edition CAGCS golf shirts are in and available now. Be sure to pick up at least one of these handsome short-sleeved shirts pictured below. 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. These high quality shirts by Peter Miller as pictured below are available in all sizes and an array of colors. Stock up for your spring golf trip!!

