



*Volume X Number 6
April 2008*

Ballston Spa Country Club

The Fox

President's Report

I would like to make you all aware of our Fall Membership Specials and ask you to make anyone you know who might be interested, aware of them or have them call Laura in the Business Office for all of the details. The specials are very similar to years past with a payment made this fall and that payment being applied towards next years' dues. Specifically, a Single can deposit \$500 and a Family can deposit \$750 and play for the rest of the season with all membership privileges and no restaurant obligations for 2008. The Fall Specials are available on our web site.



The Board of Directors and those on the Facility Improvement Committees (FIC) continue to hear rumors that are just not true regarding a new or renovated clubhouse. All of those involved continue to work very hard at getting the word out about what is going on, what progress has been made and what each committee is working on. I strongly urge all of you to take the time to stay informed. The bulletin board outside of the business office has a section dedicated to the FIC. The web site is continually being updated with the latest information (meeting minutes are posted, committee charters, sub-committee charters) so please take a look at it. We continue to use the Fox as still another method of communicating to our membership. If none of these methods work for you, stop and talk to someone on the Board or the Committee Chairpersons, I know they would be very willing to share any information with you.

If you have any comments, suggestions or complaints, please don't hesitate to contact me. My email address is tucats@nycap.rr.com or you may call me, (W) 395-6472 or (H) 371-1926.

Rick Fumaro

Congratulations

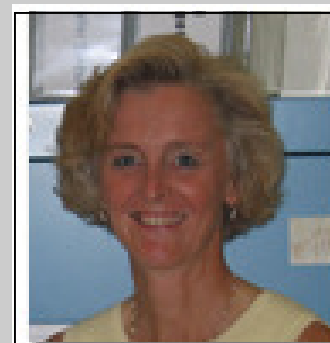
Sue Kahler captured third spot in the New York Senior Women's Amateur
In Buffalo in August.

Kate Oppedisano aced the 15th hole on Sunday
August 24th

John Keyzer aced the 2nd hole on Monday
August 25th



Kate



Sue

September 2008

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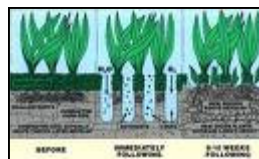
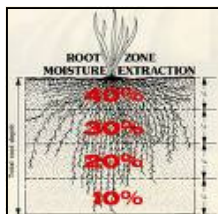
I just have a couple of things to mention this month. First is the condition of the course. This past month as you know, has been very wet. This excessive moisture has made mowing the course extremely difficult. It seems like all we do is mow. We have lost some grass due to the excessive moisture. Areas in fairways that are usually wet, could not handle being under water day after day.

Some of the greens have started to thin out. The poa annua that is the weaker grass has died out on some of the greens. Poa dieing out will always be a problem on greens that do not see sun all day long. Poor drainage, poor soils, walkup areas are also reasons why some areas of our greens thin out this time of year. These areas will not fully heal until we aerate, topdress, and seed. All in all, the course looks great and is in pretty good condition. I apologize about some of the rough getting out of hand these past few weeks. We try to mow it twice a week and it still looks like it needs to be mowed.



Superintendent's Report

The other item I wanted to mention is Fall aeration. I am hoping to aerate the tees and approaches the Wednesday after Labor Day. The greens will get done the following week. Weather depending, we will close the front 9 down on Wednesday September 10th to aerate, topdress, and seed the front 9 greens. Thursday September 11, we will close the back 9 to aerate, topdress, and seed the back 9 greens. Hopefully the weather will hold because I can not aerate if it is raining. The aeration plugs turn to mud if you try it in the rain. I will try doing the fairways the following week. I would ask everyone to please be patient with the aeration that will happen next month. It an extremely important part of turfgrass management. Breaking the top layer of the turf will enable air, water, and nutrients to get to the roots of the plant.



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From the Golf Shop

*Todd
Manderson*

Golf Shop Credit

The golf shop is full of stock still for the rest of the season. Use those credit certificates before the selection begins to fall off. All of the certificates must be used by the end of the season. They will need to be redeemed by the October 31st.

We will be offering a September redemption sale. Anyone who redeems their credit during the month of September will receive 10% off their entire purchase.

Golf Shop Staff

We would like to say good luck to Brad Krohl and Sean Miles as they go off to their first year of College. Brad will be attending Philadelphia University and Sean will be attending University of Albany. They will both be returning next season to us.

Tournament Information

We will be experimenting with changing a few events that are stroke play here at the club to help the pace of play issue. We will be going to 9 minute intervals and will be playing in threesomes for the club championship this year. After the event, we will determine whether this was successful or not for our facility.

Golf Course Divot Bottles

We have installed a new rack down by the 11th tee. We would like to say thank you for all of those who have used the bottles and replaced it with a newer one that is full. This is an important part of maintaining your golf course to a high level. Great job and keep up the good work.

Pet Peeve

This is a venue for members to voice their opinion on issues that they believe should be noted for the betterment of the Club. These opinions are garnered from conversations with Members whose only goal is to make BSCC a better Golf Club.

I would like to ask the membership to please consider Members who bring friends to the Club to dine. My last experience was not pleasant. We were seated in the trophy room, as we wanted to be able to converse with our friends without the exuberance and loud conversation of BSCC golfers newly off the course and celebrating their victory.

Understand that I have no problem with this exuberance. But I ask that it be restricted to the bar. My party chose to dine in the trophy room because we wanted quiet, however the loud conversation of some Members near our table made it an unpleasant experience. Please be considerate of other diners, they could be new members, our main source of Club revenue.



Thank you for our consideration in this matter.

Experts

JT Pollard, Architect
Jay Hopeck, Architect, BBL Construction
Tom Shannon, Mechanical Engineer, Contractor, Member of BSCC

Member Observers

Don Gallagher, Member BSCC
Dick Cody, Member BSCC



Purpose: Informal assessment of the structural soundness and potential for renovating and expanding our existing clubhouse facility.

The group looked at the exterior of the clubhouse, interior basement, main floor and second floor. In addition they looked at the cart barn.

This was a visual inspection. The experts did not remove or drill into any walls or ceiling panels. They visually examined the electrical panel, AC/HV, plumbing and asked questions re the sewer and water supply.

Informal Observations:

The basic structure is sound but there are many observable issues with the building. The basement is only useable as a storage unit. The primary mechanical infrastructure must be replaced. This includes the AC/HV system, the boilers, electrical service. The exterior could be saved and could be brightened with simple power wash and chemical solution.

The experts agreed that there are two options:

- A) A complete rebuild, or
- B) Renovation/ Addition.*

The experts agree that once you change the footprint of the present structure (which would occur with Option B) you must make the whole building ADA (American Disabilities Act) compliant.

Option B would entail addition to the existing building - towards the 9th green and the 10th fairway. Additions include an expanded kitchen, banquet facility, with locker rooms and mechanical room under the additions. The degree of renovation to the existing structure will be determined by the cost to meet new codes and ADA requirements and the level of renovation, for example gutting the main floor, moving the barroom, interiors walls, plumbing, electrical etc.

Pollard and Hopeck while they agree that Option B is possible, it is not their preferred option. They believe that the cost for renovation will be very high and you still have an old structure with some of the inherent problems. Renovation/addition may be Tom Shannon's preferred option.

The experts did a visual inspection of the cart barn. They agreed that it is a well built pole barn and should be maintained. They do not believe it can be used for any other purpose.

Next Step:

Pollard and Hopeck will cost out Option B.

Dick Cody



BSCC: Our Story

Our club history to date has never been written in one document. It is our intent to remedy this situation to the best of our abilities, starting with this year's first issue. We will be dedicating a page in the Fox every month or so until we have as much of the history on record as possible. The full history will be posted on our website and eventually published. If any of you, your family or friends have any documents, pictures or anecdotal material that might be of interest to this endeavor, please submit them to the Fox by contacting: Tucker

wtucker2@nycap.rr.com

or

893-7646.

Thank you.

In The Beginning Part Four

In 1935, minutes note it was the coldest April and May, the wettest July and driest August in the history of the Club. Despite these adverse conditions, the playing conditions remained fine. New bridges were built during the year and membership dues remained at \$25 a year and \$15 for women.

The Club was able to function during the war years when ten Members paid \$25 dues in advance for 4 years. The \$1,000 kept the Club going until 1945. Memberships were down to 20 and credit was denied by the bank because of a \$3,000 outstanding loan.

Paying the advance dues were DeForest Weed, Arthur Galbrecht, Duane Fuller James Beverly, Walter Mooney Sr., Frank Noonan, Emil Steiner, George Cunningham, Edward Smith and E.J. Shutts.

In 1942, all Members in good standing at the end of the 1941 season, who were called into the armed forces, were continued in membership without dues for the duration of World war II.

During this same time period in the 1940's, the exact date is not known, a humorous story is told about Art Garbrecht, winner of the Handicap Tourney. It seems that following the presentation of the coveted silver trophy cup by George Cunningham, one of the fans, a practical joker, borrowed the cup to look at it and deliberately left it out on the 8th fairway. Imagine Mr. galbrecht's chagrin after returning to the clubhouse and being questioned as to its whereabouts. Someone conveniently spotted it shining on the far off fairway, making it necessary for the winner to make a quick trip to retrieve it.

Social members were first admitted during 1947 at \$20 per season.

Over the years, the Board was dissatisfied each year with basic things on the course, such as lack of proper equipment, power and course conditioning. In 1954 the sum of \$1,500 was earmarked for refurbishing the tee areas.

Dues, which were kept to a minimum, began to escalate with each successive year. In 1955 they were increased to \$60 for individuals, \$48 for women and \$84 for family. In 1956 to \$72 for men, \$60 for women, \$102 for family and \$30 for students. Another jump came in 1965 when the single membership was raised to \$100, family to \$130 student to \$40 and social to \$25.

NOTE: The rule to call balls out of bounds when in the wrong fairway was made June 2, 1941.

1952- A special meeting took place to discuss an addition to the Clubhouse for which an expenditure was approved of \$8,500 for the addition to the west side of the building.

The following year, Members loaned \$5,000 at 5% interest for 10 years and \$3,500 was borrowed from Mechanicville Bank to meet this expense.



Parrying the 19th



Tucker

I have been golfing for 47 years. 1961 - 2008. Lucy has snatched the football away from Charlie Brown for exactly the same number of years. 1952 - 1999. Coincidence? I don't think so.

I know some of you already get the whole idea I'm driving at here, but for those of you who aren't para psychos, let me explain.

Every Fall, starting in 1952, Charles Schultz drew a Peanuts comic strip where Lucy would hold the football as if for a field goal kick, and every Fall Charlie Brown would be convinced by Lucy that she would not snatch it away at the last second, causing Chuck to miss and land flat on his back. No matter how many times this happened, Charlie still believed this would be the year he would actually make contact with the pigskin.

Every year, at some point, I shoot an exceptional round (for me) and I believe I will, from that moment on, continue to shoot low numbers *because I've finally got it figured out*. It's not that I've figured it out because I've been working hard at getting it figured out. The low round happens because oh, I don't know, I've discovered a mind set that keeps me focused, or I'm forcing myself to lurch with a certain consistency on all my shots, or some other exotic rationalization. Every one of you understand what I'm saying here.



No matter. I convince myself each year that this will be The Year, because of one low round. Just as Lucy convinces Charlie that this will be The Year, despite the precedence of all those other years, that she will indeed hold the football for his kick.

Another parallel is the stupidity factor. "How many times do you think you can fool some one with the same trick?" Sally asks her brother Charlie. Then answers her own question, "Pretty often, huh?" That's me. I have an IQ of at least the high double figures. I've been smart enough to dupe a wonderful woman into marrying me. Can I really be stupid enough to believe This Will Be The Year? For 47 years? Sadly, the answer is affirmative.

Last month I shot my low round of the year. Two days later I gave up 8½ points in my Tuesday Night League match. A couple of days later I shot a score 14 strokes higher than my best round of the year.

There are tangential vignettes within this comedy/horror show called my golf game that are essentially a microcosm of the problem. Just before I shot my miracle round of the year, I was talking to a friend who said he had had a putting lesson and that he was now sinking everything in sight. He related the crux of the lesson to me and I decided to incorporate it into my next round, as I've not been the Poster Boy of Putting over the last several years and I'm willing to try anything to improve.

Naturally, I sunk several long putts in my low round using this advice and was convinced I had found my personal Holy Grail of Golf. Next round, full of confidence, I proceeded to return to the competence level my friends expect from me on the green, carding a few three-putts.

I had just lived out a mini version of the whole theme of this article.

I believe, however, that the Lucy Hex will disappear next year. Why? Because there are no more Charlie Brown Football Gag comic strips past the 47 year string that Schultz put out, I have been golfing for 47 years, and the two phenomena are clearly linked.

There I go again.

The Golf Pencil

Mike Martin

Golf has a storied history with a number of legends that go back into the 1860's with Old Tom and his pro shop and the early British Opens that are still played yearly or better known as The Championship.

The number of holes on golf course as determined by the number of shots in a fifth of whiskey is legendary. I couldn't imagine playing golf with all of that liquor in my system and even if there was a foursome and the whiskey was spread around. It must have been an interesting sight for sure.



The golf ball goes back to the feathery and then it slow maturation to what we have today to play with. I am sure we all remember the balata balls and how soft they were and how they spun when they hit the greens. Today we rely on square grooves and balls that don't cut to play golf. To be honest the only way I know of backing a ball up is to hit into a sloped green and if I get lucky it may come back to me. For the most part though the ball will hit the green and bounce forward or possibly hit and bounce to the right or left and stop if I am fortunate.

Have you ever compared the golf clubs of today versus the old persimmon woods or even the hickory shafted clubs. Technology has changed the game and the average golfer loves to see the ball launch off the club and head down the fairway, only to leave the golfer an iron to the green that he forgot to practice on the range while hitting his driver. But this could be a whole other story in itself.

While putting together some of the stories about the golfing experience I decided that some of the history and also some of the funny things that also happened must also be documented. Along with that I also wanted to poke a little humor at different parts of the game and also the tools of the trade, if they can be called that. I have done a good deal of pondering about the golf pencil and how it has emerged as the instrument of choice on the course. It seems to be a universal thing from what I can gather. Every where a golfer goes he gets a score card and a pencil. Did Tom Morris have a pencil when they were wondering around the field of Scotland hitting a ball around the sheep dung? Where did the golf flag come from and did Old Tom invent this to identify the holes location? Sorry I got off the story line there for a minute.

When the first ball was struck on the fields of Scotland was it chalk and a slate to mark the score? Or was it even necessary to keep score?? Who decided not to put a back stop behind the hole like most other sports. Golf it seems is the only sport where you can hit the ball past the target and still get the ball in from the other side? I would assume the need to keep score came with the advent of a playing for a couple of bucks a hole or what ever the Scottish currency is? I am sure that the rules of golf came from here also because of people trying to improve their lie and moving the ball without penalty. Can you imagine the controversy and discussions that were had early on as the rules of golf were being decided upon!!

But when and where did the pencil become the norm for golfers? I can remember when going to play golf with my father before I was a teenager. It didn't matter what type of golfer you were everyone took a score card and pencil. Scores for each hole are barked out at the end of each hole and recorded. Possibly with Old Tom it was written down on the slate and then a shot of whiskey taken. That could be the reason that everyone records the score and at the end the golfers in the group are all adding and coming up with the same score, they hope. If not, then a challenge happens and the scores are checked and double checked.



Going through some of my old golf things I found some old pencils and they all were about 3 1/4 inches long. These were from Maine to Virginia and many places in between and all seemed to be about the same size. All had the same blunted point. Did you ever wonder who decided these things? Is there a patent on a special sharpener to get that blunted point? I know the sharpener I have doesn't produce a point like that! The only place I have ever seen anything like that is the golf course!!

Do you remember when erasers first became part of the golf pencil? Golf pencils were always the pillar of the integrity of golf. There were no second chances to get the score right. Did Old Tom have an eraser for his slate? I think not!! So why should the golf pencil have one. Why did the golf pencil grow from 3 1/4 inches to 3 3/4 inches when the eraser was added? Why not stay the same length? Who made that decision? Was it the R and A or some manufacturer?? How many tournaments have been won or lost because of an eraser. Until recently there that would not have been an issue.

(continued)

It was about 15 years ago and it one of my first trips to the mid-Atlantic to play golf. We were in a small town in Virginia and it was early in the year. There was still snow on the ground up north but in Virginia there was spring in the air and it felt really good to get a jump on the season. We entered the pro shop and paid our greens fees and of course got the customary score card and pencil and there it was!! An eraser!! Never before had I seen an eraser on a golf pencil. Not sure if it was the eraser makers that lobbied the pencil maker to include their product or not? But it was there! Of course there was an inquiry to the pro as to why and how the eraser was added. He declined to know the answers to either question but did offer this little tidbit of reality. He stated "the scores at the club were down but lessons scheduled were up" The reality of the situation is that the pencil or should I say the eraser has made people better golfers on paper but not on the course.



Where will the eraser evolve to and what is in store for its future is unknown. It appears to have found its niche in life will be there for a long time to come!