

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Timothy J. Harrington

Hail the 1993 Rhode Island golf season! In a couple of short months we will be teeing it up to begin our quest for a successful year.

One of the charms of the great game of golf is the belief that we can improve, and be better players as we start a new season. Along that line we should make a firm resolution to play golf faster. Slow play is harmful to the player, his companions and indeed the field itself.

Remember to renew your RIGA membership when you receive the 1993 application and encourage non-members to join and participate in the 1993 golf year. We at the RIGA are prepared to make your golf season pleasant and competitive.

Good luck in 1993; we look forward to seeing you on the course.

## BURKE FUND 1993

Each year the John P. Burke Memorial Fund awards scholarships to deserving caddies. During the current school year, there are 65 students receiving awards totalling more than \$50,000.

The Burke Fund is supported by RIGA member clubs and individual golfers. For a small state, we do a big job of providing much needed financial support. Since its inception, the Burke Fund has awarded over one million dollars in scholarships to more than 400 caddies.

Although the number of caddies has remained fairly steady over the past ten years, there are many clubs that do not have caddie programs. To expand its scope, the Burke Fund is proposing changes to the by-laws that will also make young men and women who

work in pro shops and on golf courses at any RIGA club eligible for scholarships.

This will allow all member clubs to fully participate in the program, both by recommending scholars and by providing financial support. Our goal is to have a Burke bag tag on every golf bag in Rhode Island, allowing us to increase the number of scholars and the amount of each scholarship.

Hopefully you will buy a bag tag this year and help us work toward that goal. Believe me, the Burke scholars appreciate your support.

— David S. Chaffee  
President,  
John P. Burke Memorial Fund



Paul Quigley (left) accepts 1992 RIGA Player of the Year Award from RIGA Vice-President Ed Mauro. The award was presented at the Annual Appreciation Dinner, held October 28, 1992 at the Wannamoisett Country Club.

## AUDUBON COOPERATIVE SANCTUARY PROGRAM



Mal Wendall (left) and Kirk Whiting, Superintendents at Rhode Island Country Club and Sakonnet Golf Club. Both have enrolled their clubs in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

We've often heard a round of golf described as "a walk in the park." The Audubon Society of New York is taking that idea a step further. They've set up a program aimed to benefit both the game of golf and the environment — the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP). The program seeks to educate the public and the golfing community on the benefits of golf courses and the role they play relative to the environment. The program provides ecologically sound advice and project ideas to golf courses who want to participate. There are currently 612 courses participating in 48 states, Canada, Spain and Guam.

The USGA supports the Audubon Cooperative because of its commitment to increasing environmental awareness and enhancing wildlife habitat through proper golf course management. The program began in 1990, and it wasn't long before the USGA offered to provide funding, staff and technical publications. This combined effort is impacting the golfing community in a very positive way with more and more people inquiring about the program.

To become a certified member of the program, there are a wide variety of projects which a golf course can undertake. Putting out bird nesting boxes is a relatively simple one. Another common project is to allow naturalized tall grasses and native shrubs to grow in areas between tees, greens and landing areas as well as out-of-play areas. These unmowed, natural areas provide cover and nesting sites for a variety of wildlife. They also decrease the amount of watering and cutting required to maintain the golf course. Still other projects include cutting back on chemicals and pesticides. For courses

located near oceans, ponds and wetlands, there are projects which can help to enhance aquatic environments. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

There are currently only two courses in Rhode Island participating in the program — Rhode Island Country Club and Sakonnet Golf Club. Mal Wendell, greens superintendent at Rhode Island, became involved because he is an avid bird watcher. "I've put out some blue bird boxes" Mal said recently. "This spring I'm hoping to put up an osprey nest." Sakonnet superintendent, Kirk Whiting, got his club involved because of his interest in the environment and wildlife. "This spring we're going to put up a map in the pro shop," relates Kirk. "When members identify wildlife on the course, they'll fill out a card and drop it in the box alongside." Kirk is also involved with water conservation efforts.

Speaking of superintendents, the Audubon Cooperative recently received an award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). The President's Award for Environmental Leadership was presented to the ACSP "because of the significant contributions it has made to golf and because it helps to depict golf course superintendents as stewards of the land."

With thousands of acres of open space, golf courses should be considered important areas for wildlife and environmental conservation. The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program wants to encourage and recognize courses who take a leadership role in conservation projects. To become involved in the program, a golf course must first register with the Audubon Society of New York. Next, the superintendent or greens committee representative fills out a resource inventory handbook answering specific questions about the course property. Based on that information, the ACSP provides a detailed report with an outline of suggested programs and enhancement projects. No restrictions are placed on the golf course property as a condition of participation in the program. All decisions regarding the Audubon's suggestions rest solely with the course superintendent and course officials.

The RIGA supports the combined efforts of the ACSP and the USGA and encourages all member clubs to join. Let's face it, golf courses often receive bad publicity. Anything which can enhance their public image and, at the same time, help the environment has to be considered something positive. As a matter of fact, the Honors Course, in Ooltewah, Tennessee has received more recognition with the Audubon Cooperative than for playing host to the 1991 U.S. Amateur. The Honors Course was the first course to be recognized by the ACSP for its conservation and preservation efforts.

Any superintendent or club official interested in more information can contact the RIGA at (401) 272-1350. The USGA has put out a 12 minute video describing the ACSP which is available for loan from the RIGA to any superintendent or club official. You may also contact Ronald Dodson, President of the Audubon Society of New York, at (518) 767-9051 or Nancy Sadlon, Ecologist with the USGA, at (908) 234-2300.

## RULES CORNER



With some cold weather still in front of us, now is the perfect time to brush up on the Rules of Golf. You don't need the bulky *Decisions on the Rules of Golf*. You don't even need the big, glossy *Rules of Golf Explained* by Tom Watson. All you really need is the simple booklet version, *The Rules of Golf*, which many of you probably have buried in your golf bag beneath the sweater and windbreaker. Dig it out and read it. You'll be surprised how much you can learn in just a few minutes.

Before you even get to page one, there is a section inside the front cover called "How to Use the Rules Book". Reading this will help you identify Rules questions more quickly and allow you to turn to the appropriate section without any "undue delay".

The booklet is divided into three main sections: Etiquette, Definitions and The Rules of Play. If you like, you can save The Rules of Play section until it warms up but you should

read the sections on Etiquette and Definitions. They are barely more than eleven pages combined.

Many of us assume we know proper golf etiquette but do we always put it into practice? Being considerate of your fellow player, tapping down spike marks after you finish putting out — it's all there. And taking care of the golf course itself should be a priority whether you're shooting 69 or 109.

Next, the Definitions section. You will understand the Rules better if you know the Definitions. Do you know what constitutes a ball in play? If out-of-bounds is marked by a line on the ground, is the line itself O.B.? Do you know under which conditions you may play a provisional ball? You may know the answers already but, if you don't, reading the definitions will solve the problem.

It won't cure your swing woes. It won't get you into the U.S. Open. But reading the Definitions of the Rules of Golf will help you to better understand the game itself.

RIGA  
FLASHBACK



Remember when?: Ninth hole at Warwick Country Club pictured here circa 1955. Warwick will play host to the 1993 Fourball Championship, June 15-16.

A NOTE FROM  
JOE SPRAGUE,  
Executive Director



Start getting into shape. The '93 golf season is just around the corner, and you'll want to be ready. Remember all those New Year's promises; it's still not too late to start.

We're extremely pleased with the continued growth in our membership and we're hoping for more of the same in '93.

At present we're busy making preparations for the start of a new season. With the excellent cooperation of our member clubs, we feel we have put together a great schedule for everyone's enjoyment, and we're working on making things even better.

After reviewing some of our golf courses in '92, Tony Ventetuolo, our Course Rating Chairman, does not foresee any changes for the coming season.

Jules Cohen, our GHIN consultant, will be contacting all club handicap personnel with information regarding the new Equitable Stroke Control for '93 as well as other pertinent information. And Snoopy will be passing out his latest information sheet to all our '93 members.

If you have any thoughts or ideas which you'd like considered, drop me a line or give a call. We're always willing to listen or try something new if we feel it will improve things.

Let's hope we all get through the winter in good shape, and have a healthy and enjoyable year in '93.



RIGA NEWS

Newsletter of the Rhode Island Golf Association

RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER...



Before the Thaw: A mid-winter view from behind the 17th green at Metacomet Country Club, site of the 1993 RIGA Stroke Play Championship.

Winter golf. Those two words don't seem to go together in New England. But, alas, there are plenty of brave souls willing to don their hats, pull on their mittens and zip up their Gortex — all for a little golf on their tundra of choice.

It's certainly a different game in mid-February compared to mid-June. Hit a worm-burner off the tee and your ball just might end up 300 frozen yards away. Hit one in the pond. No problem. Surlyn bounces on ice. On the other side of the coin, however, try throwing a wedge at the stick and making it spin back. I don't think so. Not even if you're Greg Norman.

All this talk of cold weather golf assumes, of course, that there's no snow on the ground — which certainly hasn't been the case in Rhode Island this winter. Orange ball or no orange ball, when there's a blanket of the white stuff on the ground the only putts you'll be making are the ten-footers on your living room rug.

All is not lost, though. Surely, plenty of you out there have headed south for a few rounds. For those not so fortunate, there's always the TV screen on the weekend. With every new year comes a new season of televised golf from balmy places like Honolulu, Tucson, Phoenix, Palm Springs... You get the idea. Watching the world's finest on TV is often the perfect tonic on those afternoons when the temperature outside is only fit for penguins.

As the snow falls and the wind chill dips into the single digits, (or lower), the RIGA has been putting the final touches onto

the 1993 golf schedule. There will only be a few changes from '92, reflected mainly in the playing dates. A few of the major tournaments have shifted time slots; the Fourball has been moved from late July to mid-June and the Mixed Foursomes, from early August to early July. The Stroke Play, usually played early in the season, will be held in August this year. This will probably bring the RIGA Player of the Year race a little closer to the wire than previous years.

Many of you, no doubt, are gearing up for the first Weekly Invitational. For the record, play begins at Pawtucket Country Club on April 19th. To say the "Weeklies" are popular would be a bit of an understatement. Almost every week we're booked solid. Because of our size, Rhode Island is one of the few Associations anywhere able to offer its members weekly tournaments at both private and public clubs. We'd like to impress upon you, however, that it's only through the cooperation of our member clubs that we can make the "Weeklies" a reality. If you play in one this year, please keep that in mind. We are only guests of that club for the day.

The golf gods will soon grace us with their annual thaw. With the new golf season comes the promise of career rounds, holes-in-one and impossible 70-footers that somehow drop; but most of all, it's the promise of another season of fun. In the mean time, keep working on those ten-footers in front of the television.

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U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 807  
PROVIDENCE, RI

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