



# The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 22 Issue 6

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September 2015

## September Meeting

*Association Golf Championship*

### Iron Valley Golf Club

*201 Iron Valley Drive  
Lebanon, PA 17042*

**Tuesday, September 29, 2015**

Speaker - 11:00 AM

Lunch - 12:00 Noon

Golf - 1:00 PM Shotgun

Appetizers/Cash Bar - following Golf

*There will be a CPGCSA Board of Directors Meeting  
at 9:00 AM.*

## Course Information

Iron Valley Golf Club opened in the spring of 2000 and lies on a large 352 acre tract of land that has historical significance dating back to the late 1700's. The golf course was designed by the world renowned architect, P.B. Dye, and offers natural terrain, expansive vistas, and extreme elevation changes providing a genuinely great test of golf.

Iron Valley Golf Club features 7,026 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 72. The course rating is 74.9 and it has a slope rating of 138.

Iron Valley was ranked the #8 best course you can play in Pennsylvania by Golf Magazine. A genuine P.B. Dye Masterpiece!



## From Sticks to Clubs

By the mid-15th century, the Scots were playing golf in its very basic form - take a club, swing it at a ball, move the ball from the starting point to the finishing hole in as few strokes as possible.

In fact, the earliest known reference to golf as we know it today comes from King James II of Scotland, who, in 1457, issued a ban on the playing of golf and football (soccer). Those games, James complained were keeping his archers from their practice. James III in 1471 and James IV in 1491 each re-issued the ban on golf.

Regardless of the bans, the game continued to develop in Scotland over the decades and centuries, until 1744 when the first-known rules of golf were put down in writing in Edinburgh.

But can it be said that the Scots "invented" golf? Not exactly. Evidence suggests that the Scots themselves were influenced by even earlier versions of games that were similar to their stick and ball game.

Here's what the USGA Museum says about the issue: "While many Scots firmly maintain that golf evolved from a family of a stick-and-ball games widely practiced throughout the British Isles during the Middle Ages, considerable evidence suggests that the game derived from stick-and-ball games that were played in France, Germany, and the Low Countries."

One piece of evidence supporting this claim is the etymology of the word "golf" itself. "Golf" derives from the Old Scots terms "golfe" or "goff", which themselves evolved from the medieval Dutch term "kolf".

The medieval Dutch term "kolf" meant "club". By at least the 14th century, the Dutch were playing games (mostly on ice) in which balls were struck by sticks that were curved at the bottom until they were moved from Point A to Point B. Sounds a lot like hockey, doesn't it? Except that it sort of sounds like golf, too (except for that ice part, of course).

The Dutch and Scots were trading partners, and the fact that the actual word "golf" came about after being transported by the Dutch to Scotland lends credence to the idea that the game itself may have been adapted by the Scots from the

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# From Sticks to Clubs

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earlier Dutch Game.

Something else that lends credence to that idea: although the Scots played their game on turf rather than ice, they (or least some of them) were using balls they acquired in trade from ...Holland.

And the Dutch game wasn't the only similar game of the Middle Ages. Going back even farther, the Romans brought their own stick-and-ball game into the British Isles.

So does that mean that the Dutch (or someone else other than the Scots) invented golf? Not necessarily. It does mean that golf is the amalgam of several similar games that were played in different parts of Europe.

This doesn't mean the Scots are denied their place in golf history. The Scots made a singular improvement to all the games that came before: They dug a hole in the ground, and made getting the ball into that hole the object of the game.

It can be said, then, that for golf as we know it, we definitely have the Scots to thank.



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## CPGCSA at Penn State - A fun (wet) day was had by all!!





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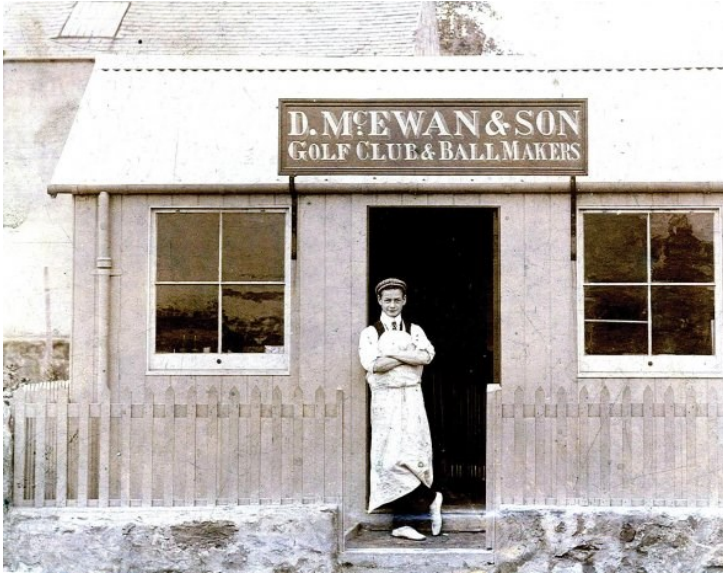
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## Golf in Harrisburg Has Century-Old Petigree

BY SCOTT CAMPBELL

*This article appeared in the [August 2015](#) issue of Harrisburg Magazine*



Reservoir Park has been a recreational destination for Harrisburg-area residents since 1889. The 90-acre plot of ground has seen many changes. Along Civil War Museum Drive, on the park's north side, one is able to discern four subtle mounds on the expansive lawn that seem to defy explanation. They are vestiges of greens and tee boxes on what was once a nine-hole public golf course, the organization for which originated in 1908.

So forgotten is this enterprise that, except for the ancient photograph that accompanies this article, there is only one brief reference to it in a Harrisburg Department of Parks and Recreation document. But private history sources have been able to provide anecdotal details that shed additional light on the subject.

On December 18, 1917, Stewart McEwan passed away at the age of 39. A Scot by birth, McEwan emigrated to the United States and arrived in Harrisburg in 1899. Four years later, he married Mary Harro. More important was McEwan's occupation. He was a golf professional and manned the Reservoir Park course clubhouse from about 1912 until his untimely demise.

Prior to that position, he had been the pro at the nascent Country Club of Harrisburg.

Contemporary obituaries praised McEwan as a clever player, of even temperament and an exemplary club maker. Also included in one account is a brief description of the park course.

"It was owing to his [McEwan's] efforts...that the course was so successfully laid out, notwithstanding the fact that, as a public course, it could not be as well protected as a private one, and that consideration had to be given to other citizens whose interest in the park was not from the point of golf, but as a place for recreation. In spite of these handicaps, to which may be added that no artificial hazards could be permitted, the links have been well-arranged and successfully protected, that for a number of years it was the best nine-hole course in the neighborhood, ranked among the best in the state."

McEwan was known as "Mac" and sometimes called "The Professor" as a consequence of his teaching skills, which benefitted hundreds of local players. "He was fearless and frank in criticism without wounding the feelings," stated one published tribute, "and could never be betrayed by enthusiasm or flattery into carelessness in advice or to letting down the bars as to the rules governing the club or the game."

McEwan made the first set of clubs for Pennsylvania Governor John Tener, who was also one of his pupils. When given a golf club for the first time, Tener, who had been a professional baseball player, took hold of it like a baseball bat. He was promptly disabused.

Until Waring's was built in the 1930s, Reservoir Park was the only public choice in Harrisburg for the game's early 20th Century enthusiasts. No records can be found that note the date of its closing. For others so disposed and able to meet membership requirements, the local golf alternatives were Colonial Country Club and the Country Club of Harrisburg. The latter began life not at its present location in the picturesque Fishing Creek Valley, but along North Front Street in Susquehanna Township. The year was 1896.

Ironically, it was one man's avid pursuit of tennis that furnished the impetus necessary to establish the club. David Fleming, Jr. decided that the makeshift courts that he and his friends were using at the corner of Front and Harris streets were woefully inadequate



and sought a better venue. The group enlisted support from some of the city's older, prominent men who had another sporting interest – golf. Thus, the idea for the club was hatched and, eventually, a six-acre tract between River Road (North Front Street) and North Sixth Street was purchased from Charles Greenawalt and the Greenawalt estate.

Additional land was leased from the Greenawalt farm for the construction of a six-hole course, and the new facility was opened for play on June 1, 1898. The game's popularity increased among the members and, in April 1900, 10 more acres were added to accommodate expansion. The course was increased to nine holes, playing to 2,462 yards. Only one of the par-four holes exceeded 300 yards in length. Number eight, a par five, was the longest test at 485 yards. James Stewart, from New York, was engaged as



the club's first "golf instructor." He gave lessons "on his own responsibility." In 1902, McEwan replaced him and was paid a monthly fee of \$35.

By 1913, golf was fully established at the club. Matches with Lancaster and York Country Clubs were arranged, and women golfers, for the first time, participated in competitions. But, two years later, all of it came to an abrupt halt.

On November 16, 1915, a fire destroyed the clubhouse. Suspected of helping to fuel it was a highly flammable varnish that had been applied to the bowling alleys in the structure's basement. The fire forced the club's board of governors to relocate. An 18-hole golf course was a priority. Accordingly, the Front Street property was sold and land acquired through members John W. and Helen Reily. Sympathetic to its plight, they agreed to sell to the club the former dairy farm and wooded land, totaling 100 acres, in the middle of their Fishing Creek Valley estate.

Financing and construction began forthwith. In 1916, one of the leading golf course architects of the time, William Flynn, was engaged. He is renowned for designing, among many others, Merion, Pine Valley, Shinnecock Hills and Whitemarsh.

The Country Club of Harrisburg reopened at its present location on October 20, 1917.

Less than two years later, still another conflagration gutted the new clubhouse – this one blamed on defective wiring. The membership would be required to start yet again and contribute another chapter to the club's history, and that of golf's origins in the Capital City.

*Acknowledgments: Sharon Doremus, Sally Gibson, Glenn Ebersole, Thomas and Barbara Harro.*

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## Directions to Iron Valley Golf Club

201 Iron Valley Drive  
Lebanon, PA 17042

### ***From Harrisburg and West:***

PA Turnpike East to Exit 266 • Route 72 North 1.6 Miles • Route 322 East(right) 2.7 Miles • Left at blue Iron Valley Golf Club sign • ¼ Mile- Right into Iron Valley

### ***From Lancaster & South:***

Fruitville Pike and/or Route 72 North • Route 322 East(right) 2.7 Miles • Left at blue Iron Valley Golf Club sign • ¼ Mile- Right into Iron Valley

### ***From Philadelphia & East:***

PA Turnpike West to Exit 266 • Route 72 North 1.6 Miles • Route 322 East(right) 2.7 Miles • Left at blue Iron Valley Golf Club sign • ¼ Mile- Right into Iron Valley

### ***From York, Baltimore & South:***

Route I-83 North • PA Turnpike East to Exit 266 • Route 72 North 1.6 Miles • Route 322 (right) East 2.7 Miles • Left at blue Iron Valley Golf Club sign • ¼ Mile- Right into Iron Valley


### ***From Allentown & North:***

Route I-78 West • Route 501 South • Route 322 West(right) 5.0 Miles • Right at signs to Cornwall and Iron Valley Golf Club • ¼ Mile- Right into Iron Valley

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## Sources of Mushroom Compost in Pennsylvania

Agriculture in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is famous for dairy cows, Hershey chocolate, potato chips, field and forage crops, and mushrooms. Last year, 953 million pounds of the “white button” mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*) was produced in the USA, with 63% of that total grown in Pennsylvania -- mostly Berks and Chester counties! The total value of the US mushroom crop is \$1.23 billion. A by-product of mushroom farming is mushroom compost, which can be used for replenishing organic matter and nutrients on Pennsylvania farmland, gardens, lawns and landscapes, and perennial planting beds around the golf course clubhouse and other areas.

A mushroom crop is grown in a “mushroom growing substrate”. This substrate is a mixture of plant and animal by-products: hay (timothy or other grasses), corn cobs, poultry manure, horse straw and manure, cottonseed meal, gypsum, cocoa hulls (from Pennsylvania’s chocolate industry), and other ingredients. The materials are combined and mixed with a tremendous amount of water, and eventually turned into a substrate that mushrooms grow in. About 250 cubic yards of this substrate is placed inside a mushroom production house (i.e., concrete structure the size of a big greenhouse with 8,000 sq ft of growing space) and steam pasteurized for several hours. The result is a sterilized substrate ‘bed’ (24 beds per production house; 4 across and stacked 6 high). The substrate is ‘seeded’ with spawn (typically millet grain infused with fungal mycelium), and a thin layer of peat moss is placed on top of each bed to promote the formation of fungal fruiting bodies (i.e., mushrooms). The environment inside the production house is manipulated to produce the crop. After mushrooms are harvested and the crop cycle is complete, the substrate inside the house is steam pasteurized again. Then the substrate is removed from the house. The result is mushroom compost – formerly referred to as spent mushroom substrate – that has basically a 1-1-1 N-P-K analysis. It is rich in organic matter and has many nutrients suitable for plant growth.

Types of mushroom compost:

- (1) Fresh; obtained directly from a mushroom production facility.
- (2) Aged – Passive; fresh mushroom compost is stockpiled and stored outdoors for several months.
- (3) Aged – Active; fresh mushroom compost is further processed and re-composted outdoors to produce a higher quality or finished compost.

On a wet weight basis, fresh mushroom compost typically is 43% solid, and 57% water. The 43% solid part is actually two components of 17% is mineral matter and 26% is organic matter (or 60% of the solid component is organic matter). On a wet volume basis, one cubic yard of fresh mushroom compost weighs about 575 lbs. The pH of fresh mushroom compost averages 6.6, and the C:N ratio is 12:1, indicating a good, stable, quality compost for plants.

Examples of local sources of mushroom compost (call ahead for cost and availability):

Giorgi Mushroom Co.

Temple, PA  
610.926.8811

*(Bring your dump truck and they’ll load it for you.)*

Silvestri & Son Mushroom Co.

Boothwyn, PA  
610.358.0330

*(...ask for Joe Fecondo ... tell him you know “Dr. Mike”. Joe is a very good golfer, so he may exchange a truckload of mushroom compost for a tee time.)*

Laurel Valley Soils

Avondale, PA  
<http://laurelvalleysoils.com>  
610.268.5555

*(Bring your own truck for loading, or they’ll deliver; they also have active and passive-aged mushroom compost available; check their website for more information).*

Other distributors of mushroom compost in Pennsylvania can be found at this website: [www.mushroomcompost.org](http://www.mushroomcompost.org).

Use fresh or aged mushroom compost in combination with mulch around trees and shrubs, or apply it thick and use it as a mulch substitute. Mixing 50% by volume fresh mushroom compost with 50% common bark mulch can significantly reduce mulch infestation by the dreaded artillery fungus.

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2015 CPGCSA Meeting Schedule

**September 29**  
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Iron Valley Golf Course

**October 13**  
Oktoberfest Open  
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