News

Summer turns into a washout

BY MATT ROCHELEAU FOR THE SUN CHRONICLE Saturday, August 16, 2008 1:37 AM EDT

Local golfers have faced extra challenges this summer beyond the inherent difficulty of the game.

First it was coyotes, and now it is wet weather as those spending time outdoors have witnessed just three days without precipitation so far in August, according to Attleboro Water Department water record keeper Steve Brasier.

"Our play is definitely down," said Manager Nancy Vieira of Stone-E-Lea Golf Course in Attleboro.

Many golfers, especially in leagues, have played through the rain at Stone-E-Lea because it has rained so often. This despite the course's offer of refunds should it rain, depending on the number of holes they have played, said Vieira.

The same has been common elsewhere. "It does scare some people off, but most who are already out there play through," except during thunder storms, said PGA Professional Drew Chapman of Highland Country Club in Attleboro

However, at times, the rain has been beneficial for some.

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Vieira described the consistent rainfall as a double-edged sword, since the precipitation can keep some patrons away, but also means less watering is needed.

"Stone-E-Lea is greener right now than we've ever been this time of year." said Vieira.

Unlike some other courses, Locust Valley Country Club in Attleboro does not use irrigation other than on the greens and tees, said country club manager Arthur Anderson.

"The rain actually helps us because it keeps the course in better shape," said Anderson who felt most patrons would just reschedule for a sunnier day if the forecast does not look promising.

In rare cases, stormy weather can bring in more golfers.

Torrential rainstorms early Friday morning hit Chemawa Golf Course in North Attleboro which meant carts were not allowed on the course temporarily.

Yet, about four miles away, Stone-E-Lea was dry and took in 24 golfers who originally planned to play at Chemawa.

Those same storms caused for a one-hour delay as some golfers were called off the course during the Attleboro Area Golf Association Tournament at Highland Country Club, said Chapman. Since July, Attleboro has had 7.34 inches of rainfall, which is 2.15 more inches than last year's 5.19 inches.

From May 1 through August 15, the city has had 55 days of precipitation which is 15 more than in 2007.

Since the start of the year Attleboro has had its 28th highest 8-month precipitation total out of 108 years.

Return to Previous Page

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brewmeister wrote on Aug 16, 2008 1:59 PM:
" Indeed, Stone-E-Lea is in the best late summer condition I have seen in years. The tees and greens are superb and the fairway conditions, despite the lack of an irrigation system, are very good.
It seems strange to me, however, that there is so little play on weekends, particularly Saturday. I play there early in a foursome and finish in under 4 hours, walking! And the best part, it is still one of the best bargains in this area. Well worth giving it a try if you haven't done so. (PS, I don't work there nor have any financial interest other than the greens fees I pay each week). "

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