**Superintendents offer advice on reducing hurricane damage**

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feted mightily.

So we asked several superintendents who feared slightly better to do some Monday morning quarterbacking. What did they do right in preparation for the most violent hurricane of the century and what do they wish they'd done differently.

Here is just a sampling of their answers.

Fred Granger, Miami Lakes County Club, Miami, Fla.: Although north of the main storm track, Granger's course still lost 400 trees, 200 shrubs and many broken limbs that were pulled up throughout the course, he said. Satellite boxes suffered some minor damage. Knowing the storm was on its way, Granger's crew spent the hours before its arrival pruning dead branches near homes and cutting dead trees. He raised computers off the floor, moved them away from windows, covered them in plastic and took all his records.

"We only got five inches of rain," he reported. "But our maintenance building is in a low area. If we had gotten more, it would have flooded and the computers would have been underwater.

"There was one tree next to the maintenance building that we should have cut down. It got knocked over and put a big dent in the building. It was the one tree that could have reached the building, and it did." 

Nick Naccarato, Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club, Naples, Fla. — Naples Beach was a major test site for tree damage, 200 down and 200 still that will eventually come down, Naccarato said. The hotel and course have a standing hurricane plan followed whenever a warning occurs. Loose materials are stored, nursery plants brought inside, and golf cars moved from their beach-side storage home to higher ground. When the tide swelled during Hurricane Donna in the early 1960s, one golf car ended up three blocks away.

"We know what to expect and prepare for the worst," Naccarato said.

However, Naccarato said he had topped off more of his trees, particularly the eucalyptus, well before the storm hit. Many were too heavy and more were susceptible to the 100-mph winds.

"They are shallow-rooted and will fall over very easily if they aren't cut back," he said. "We'll do a lot more tree work, well before any storm hits this time."

Jack Leitch, Oakbourne Country Club, Laterrite, La.: Lawrence had his crew take in everything loose on the course — bags, benches, trash receptacles, tee signs — and shove them all under a hard fescue. A 100-mph winds knocked over a giant water oak that crushed the maintenance building. Approximately 75 ornamental trees were destroyed along with several pieces of maintenance equipment. Lawrence calculated the damage at $80,000 to $100,000. The course re-opened four days after the storm. This is his third hurricane in 20 years at Oakbourne.

"I didn’t do just about everything we could as far as taking the loose stuff in," Lawrence said. "We wouldn’t have lost as many ornamental trees if we had staked them all down. But I don’t think I would do that even if I knew another storm was coming. The man-hours to do them all would have been too great. I would definitely recommend cutting down water oaks near any building, though.

They have very shallow root systems and will go over in a big wind. I’ve seen hundreds of them down the last few weeks."

Just before press time, Hurricane Iniki struck the Hawaiian island of Kauai. Information was sketchy regarding the worst-hit courses since phone lines were down in many areas. Golfers are being directed to Barbara G. Nalbandian, who has an office in Honolulu and has directed many courses on the islands, offered these thoughts on hurricane preparation.

An ongoing tree program that thins out these trees and shapes their growth is the best policy, he said. The shallow-rooted kiawe tree dominates many Hawaiian courses. Supplementing them with deeper-rooted varieties, such as banyans, and encouraging the roots to burrow deeper with root collars will help minimize tree loss, he added.

Coconut trees are another good option because they can usually be propped back and will grow again following a storm. Getting storm drains free of obstructions can stop water from backing up and flooding a course, Wright said.

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**Do you know your fescues?**

There are two major types of fescue grasses — fine and tall — and five varieties of fine fescues. The fine fescues are:

- strong creeping fescue, which spreads and fills in well;
- slender creeping fescue, which creeps but not nearly as much as strong creeping;
- Chewings fescue, which has more bunch-type growth;
- hard fescue, also with a bunch-type growth habit; and
- sheeps fescue, which is bluish-green.

Hard and sheep fescues are more tolerant to heat, so they perform better in the transition zone.

Sheep fescue is more finer textured than tall fescue. They also tend to live long in heavy shade and have a more natural look.

Tall fescues are quite different. They are less attractive, they nevertheless work best in transition areas and the South, performing well in the shade. Their main attribute is tolerance of heat and summer stress.

On the down side, it tends to have more top growth and thus needs to be mowed.

**Fescues more popular today**

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Ken Wright, superintendent at Devil’s Pulpit and Devil’s Paintbrush in Caledon, Ontario, high above Toronto, said fescues have grown in very well at both courses. Devil’s Paintbrush in Caledon, Ontario, high above Toronto, said fescues have grown in very well at both courses. Devil’s Paintbrush in Caledon, Ontario, high above Toronto, said fescues have grown in very well at both courses.

While only the extreme rough at Pulpit is fescues, the links-style Paintbrush has fescue tees, fairways and roughs.

Wright said Paintbrush Fairways and tees sport creeping red and chewings fine fescues, and its extreme rough has hard fescues.

Noting that he heavily overseeded with chewings fescues on fairways and tees, Wright said: "It’s only been seeded for a year, and it’s taking quite Guthrie to get a dense turf. We expected that it’s looking like two or three years to get dense enough. It will never be dense like bentgrass. But it is 100-per cent better now (September) than two months

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