

# Donating Time for Juniors is Rewarding and Enjoyable

By THOMAS SCHMIDT

Superintendent, Hillcrest Golf Club of St. Paul

In the winter of 2000, Hillcrest Golf Club of St. Paul was not only hiring me as its superintendent, but its membership was also transforming from an older, more traditional membership to a family-oriented club. As you can imagine, the "traditional" ways of the older membership now needed to be changed or renewed to include a family-based foundation.

With this change, programs were added that featured activities to include families, women, and juniors. Getting more juniors involved in the game of golf became a goal that Hillcrest eagerly set out to accomplish. The idea was to start a junior clinic where juniors could learn the proper mechanics on chipping, putting, bunker play, and their long game. Hillcrest, under the direction of PGA member Brent Heit, began holding two one-week camps each summer. These camps have grown to include 60-80 juniors ranging in age from five to 12.



After my first year helping with the junior program, I set a plan in motion to develop a junior course that would have the appropriate yardages for juniors to play on. From there, then-Assistant Pro David Branstad and myself measured the appropriate yardages that I already planned out, placed the in-ground tee markers in the fairways, and designed a score card to be used when playing the course. The short course measures 4,400

yards, while the par 3s are set up from the forward tee markers already on the course.

The course became beneficial not only to the junior camp, but would also play an important role in everyday play for the junior membership. Before the short course was created, juniors playing with their parents would get discouraged because they would hit the ball seven times before they would reach their parents' drive. With the short course, they now had a

chance of getting pars and bogeys, enabling to stay close to their parents. The end result is a family who can enjoy golf together.

The camp has continued to be a success. The current program divides juniors into age groups where they move from station to station learning about topics such as course etiquette, replacing divots,

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## Musing the Minutes

By RICK TRAVER, CGCS  
Monticello Country Club

I know it often seems like all we talk about is the weather, but yesterday another storm blew through and my daughter of eight years asked me if this was like being in a hurricane. While I was telling her it was like a hurricane except that hurricanes last for days, the realization of what an actual hurricane is like started to set in. All over our news programs the aftermath of a half-hour storm. We lost a few homes in the metro and while this is devastating to the people it happened to, the mess that the people affected by Katrina and now Rita must just be unbelievable. How blessed we are to live in the great state of Minnesota! Yeah, we have a tornado once and again or some snow and an occasional flood, but it is all much more manageable than so many of these natural disasters that seem to be on an ever increasing level in other parts of the country.

**Well, you didn't read this to get my editorial on weather,** so here is the latest from your MGCSA Board of Directors. We met on September 15 at the University of Minnesota. Thanks to Dr. Horgan, Dr. Watkins and Larry Vetter for the accommodations, I always enjoy visiting one of my old campuses.

Scott Turtinen reported from the business office that the MGCSA website is generating between 140 & 200 hits a day. We asked that he see if he could get some more specific numbers about time spent on the site and the pages that were hit to give a more accurate picture of who might be hitting on our web site. Scott also researched the cost of having *Hole Notes* be a 100% color publication and the increase in costs would be more than offset by the color advertising so we elected to go to a full color publication.

**Turtinen mentioned that the MGCSA office has received several phosphorus coupons** that were published in *Hole*

*Notes*. If you are not aware, the only obligation you have to renew your phosphorus training is to read the article in the September issue of *Hole Notes* and send in the Phosphorus Fertilizer re-training coupon. This will satisfy our requirement with the state.

Paul Eckholm, CGCS, reporting on the state legislature, stated that the U of M is trying to get the governor to call a special session to address a new stadium. Our hope is that if this does come to pass that the governor will have the foresight to

limit the session to one topic and not allow our legislators to tack on any extra issues and fees like the last special session.

**Dr. Brian Horgan reported on the University of Minnesota.** It appears we may have a building for Turf Research. If

you are familiar with the U of M St. Paul Campus. We will be getting the old Head and Green houses. This facility is no longer being used for the Ag students and the Capital Oversight Committee seems to be on board since we will be remodeling an existing building. Great News! Dr. Horgan gave us a tour and it looks like it will be a super fit to the program. We will need to generate some funds for the remodel, so if you know of an alumnus that loves golf, have we got a project for him or her.

**Rob Panuska presented a letter** that will be sent to the members regarding the hiring of a pathology person at the U of M. We have had a difficult time getting the U of M to replace Jon Powell after he left and it appears that an Extension/Pathologist is a possibility in the future. We need to create a groundswell among our members to send letters to the appropriate people at the U pushing for this position to have a turf focus. Keep an eye out for the e-mail, which will have addresses, contacts, etc...

Have a great month!!! - Rick

## Par for the Course –

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the effects of predator guards and pesticides on golf courses; since there is little opportunity for comparison (most golf courses have pesticides and predator guards).

Before nest-box monitors hit the links with a cart full of nest boxes in tow, they should familiarize themselves with the golf course superintendent, who is interested foremost in providing the best experience possible for golfers. Golf course superintendents need to know the benefits of having nest boxes on the course, such as an increase in the number of insect-eating birds. Other practical aspects of golf course trails also need to be considered, such as placement of boxes and devising a monitoring schedule that minimizes interference with golfers. Although our preliminary results suggest that golf courses do provide suitable habitat for cavity-nesting birds, there are still many consequences that we are unable to examine. For instance, we do not know whether fledglings from golf courses have higher survivorship than those in other habitats or whether disturbance from golfers has any effect on nesting success.

As urbanization continues to expand into once-natural areas, wildlife will by necessity have to make use of managed areas such as golf course. For some species, golf courses may be the best available habitat to nest. The Birdhouse Network will continue to explore how habitats affect nesting success. We ask that nest-box monitors continue to enter data about pesticide use into The Birdhouse Network's database. (Editor's Note: Tina Phillips is project leader of the Birdhouse Network. Caren B. Cooper is a research associate in the Lab's Bird Population Studies program.)

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and repairing ball marks. They are also taught the finer points of golf including putting, chipping, bunker play, long irons and woods. The final day is fun-filled, including a four-hole mini-tournament, pizza party and prizes.

Over the last eight years, I have donated my time toward the junior clinics. It has been rewarding and enjoyable. Hopefully, the sport will continue to grow with all the juniors playing and learning from the PGA pros and superintendents.