

The Daily Journal

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Today the temperatures reached 50 degrees and with the past few days reaching the upper 70s we bit the bullet for our inaugural mow. The season is now upon us as the fuzz is off the greens and they actually look like greens again. The first mow was at .156 inches, a bit higher than mid season's .115 inches. Looking at the extended forecast a large amount of rain is heading right towards us and while the ground is firm, we might as well mow fairways too. At the end of the day, all but four fairways were mowed due to their moisture levels being too high. Over the next week temperatures plummeted and we received over two inches of rain.

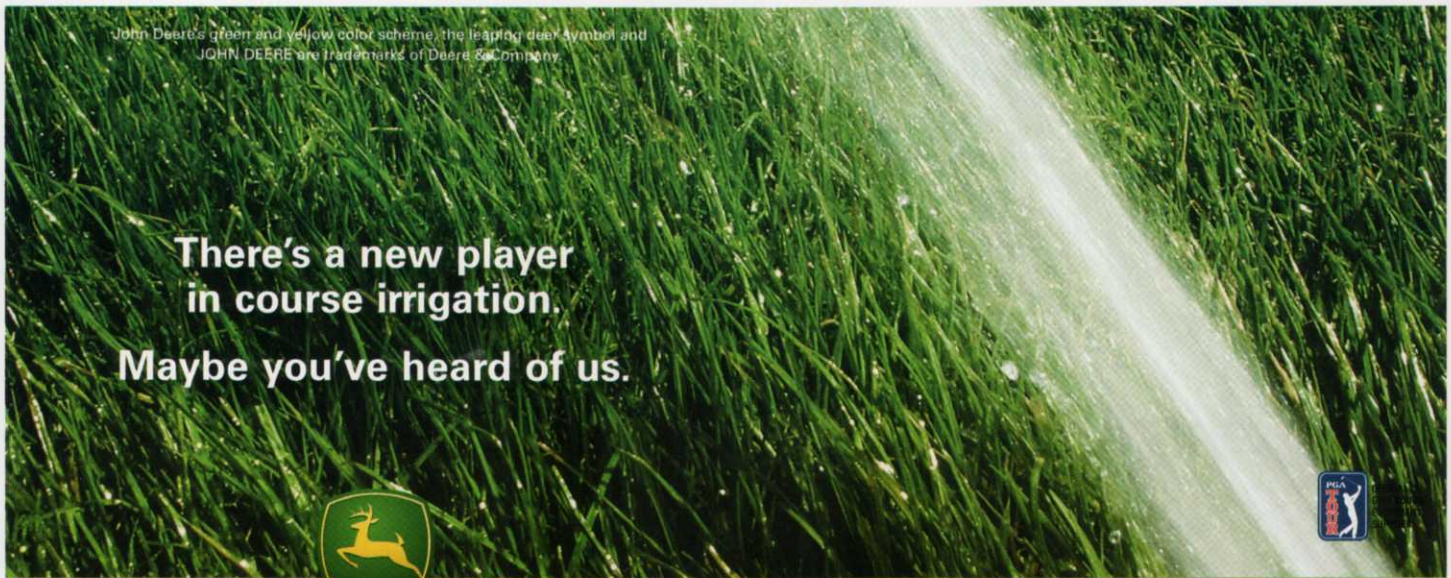
This is a typical entry to my journal

that I keep for future references. It's a great way to look back and see what we accomplished, when it was and the weather for any given opening week. Having my own averages of maintenance practices from years of personal experiences helps me make better decisions for the golf course. I used to say, "I will remember next year," and I'll be honest, if I don't write it down I'll forget. I have a very good memory but when it comes down to numerous details day after day, many of them get left out.

I started keeping a journal in college, not for work but for my running. I ran cross country and track at the University of Wisconsin and to keep track of my mileage I had a running journal. Daily, I would add an entry to it for what I ran

that day along with any other special activities I did like lifting, abdominal work, icing and any soreness I had. I also kept track of the weather when it was snowing, windy or raining out. It is amazing; when I look back and read what I wrote on the days it was unpleasant out, I remember the day like it was yesterday because I wrote down all the details in my journal. I associate some of my running days to what the weather was like outside. Most of them were days we did interval training on the track and not so much days we went out and did a distance run. I remember one day how tough it was to do 10 times a 400 meters on the track with a minute rest at 58 seconds when it was 42 degrees out and raining. It sticks in my

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mind like it was yesterday, just like I remember it being 90 degrees out and spraying for the bearded beast (pythium). I was wearing the wrong spray suit and I had to stop because of heat exhaustion. The suit was cooking me on the inside.

Details of large events stick out in everyone's mind but it is the smaller ones that we have trouble recalling. Six years ago, we linear aerified our greens at Nakoma Golf Club and I remember physically doing it and some of the challenges we faced but I don't remember how deep we went or how much topdressing we put on them. These finer details would've been nice to have when I was at Dellwood Hills and we decided to do the same process to their greens. The good news, I was only a phone call away from answers to all our questions with the help of my old boss at Nakoma. He had everything written down in his own journal and he sent those pages off for us to use as a guideline. This was the first time I thought it was a good idea to keep my

own personal journal but I never acted on it. Three years later, I am at a different golf course and facing similar challenges that I've faced before. I'm fortunate to have my own record of maintenance practices to look back upon and help assist our operations here at the Bridges. I only have a couple years of data but it is a start to a long career of helpful knowledge.

While working at Dellwood Hills, we kept a daily journal of basic maintenance practices and small projects accomplished. It was a prefabricated entry system where we had all the duties typed out that typically happened in one days work. All we had to do is fill this sheet of paper out with the names of the employees who completed the task on that day. It was an easy way to have proof of completion for our basic maintenance standards set forth by the golf committee. Having a paper trail comes in handy when questions arise from members about certain tasks on the golf course. Eric Peterson, the Superintendent, always kept a separate and more detailed journal with all other projects we undertook.

Recently, I started coaching track at Winona High School. I coached for three

years in Burnsville when I lived in the cities but I took last year off when we were unsure of our timeline for being relocated. Starting out coaching again is like riding a bike, getting up is alright but things might be a little shaky until you get going. I have all these ideas running through my head of what I want to do but I was having trouble organizing my thoughts and scheduling them on paper for the best results from the athletes. I again returned to my old running journals and my journals from coaching to help me out with what to do. I never expected to be coaching this year but in my heart I always had a passion for it so I kept everything from prior years because you never know what may happen. I feel I have more success from reading my running journals because I have been keeping them since 1997 compared to my golf course journals where they are only of the last couple years. For the past 15 years I've been working on a golf course and gained a vast amount of knowledge. Now, I am transposing my knowledge to paper for many more years to come to help not only myself out but others who may ask.

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