



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Growing the Game of Golf One Player at a Time

By Richard A. (Rick) Traver, CGCS

During a presentation by Pat Jones recently, many of us learned that the annual number of rounds played by golfers averages around 510 million rounds, and has not increased significantly over the past five years. Pat also emphasized the fact that promoting golf isn't just an issue for the General Manager or Golf Pro anymore, we as Superintendents also have a responsibility to ensure the future of the game. In the article "Just One" on Page 26 of this issue of *Hole Notes*, the concept of inviting someone to the game of golf is addressed. I have to admit when I was a competitive golfer – at least in my mind, if not in my ability – I was less likely to play golf with someone who was just learning. I also understand why beginners have such a hard time playing golf with someone who has been playing for a while. It can be a complicated sport with its rules, as well as a little difficult to pick up on the subtleties of how to twist your body to get the most distance, especially if your midsection has started to grow in midlife. Now that my game has deteriorated and my competitive nature with it, it has been easier to invite people who are "golf challenged" to join me for a round of golf. I have found it to be a very rewarding experience and have developed many friendships. Even if you don't golf or don't have the opportunity to invite others to play the game, copy the article from *Hole Notes* and post it in your locker rooms or a conspicuous spot at your club, maybe your patrons will help start growing the game with "Just One."

Talk about growing the game we can also talk about growing the association. We can do that by inviting "Just One" non-member superintendent to participate in some of our events. A great opportunity would be one of our golf events or a social get together like the MGCSA social gathering we had in Orlando. I don't know if it was the weather, the food, the camaraderie, or the combination of all three, but in any case it was a wonderful evening. Thank you to the Industrial Relations committee as well as all the sponsors involved in making this event so enjoyable. After attending an event like that, you would think everyone would want to become a member of our great organization.

Congratulations to the MGCSA golf team at the GCSAA annual golf tournament. They finished ninth out of 80 teams in the net division of that event. If any of you haven't had the opportunity to play in the annual GCSAA golf tournament I would highly recommend it. It is a lot of fun and a very well run event.

I would also like to congratulate the U of M Turf Bowl Team for their efforts down at the GIS. They had three teams participating and their top team finished 13th out of over 90 teams. Great Job!!!

The annual directory edition of the Minnesota Golfer just came across my desk and I noticed there was a section called Turf Talk. The interviewee was Jack MacKenzie, CGCS and I would like to thank him for his input in that publication. He did an excellent job of representing our industry to the golfing public. While I have his name in this column, I would also like to congratulate Jack on his election as President of the MTGF. Jack will do an excellent job of promoting the foundation and our industry as the MTGF President.

Staying with that same theme and actually bragging a bit, you may have also noticed in the *Minnesota Golfer*, that Clayton Rask is the MGA player of the year. Clayton plays out of the Monticello Country Club and is a fantastic young man. He will also do an excellent job as ambassador for our industry and the game of golf.

There is little information to report on the Mendota Heights Par Three. We made a verbal proposal to the city administration, which in turn, passed our proposal on to the city council. The council has decided to start running the course this year until more discussions have taken place and they are comfortable with our goals and position. So we will continue conversations with the City of Mendota Heights, and should those conversations move in the right direction we could possibly take over later in the summer or in 2009.

Sorry I have been so long winded this month. Have a great month! - Rick

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