Blindsided! That's how I felt coming out of last winter. With high hopes for minimal damage my grand anticipation was shattered by much more turf mortality than I had expected. Unlike three years prior, I thought the course hadn't suffered anywhere near the winter weather fluctuations I felt necessary to sound the alarm. On my snow shoe forays onto the course there was no telltale smell of death. And besides, with excelsior mats upon my historically worst greens the damage would be limited.

\section{Right!} Spring came with a rush the second week of March. High temperatures and a rapid snowmelt left obvious the trail of damage to be witnessed by those who ventured about the soggy track. Unfortunately for me I missed the return of the red-winged blackbird, the great blue heron and the aromatic odor of fermented dead plant cells as my week was spent assisting my closest aunt through hospice followed by a funeral service and all of the deeds accomplished by an executor. Nuts, death is never convenient and this unfortunate circumstance caused me to miss the signs of significant damage, and the ability to forewarn my players of the injury they could expect.

\section{Mortality!} Besides the fact that excelsior covers only protected strong biotypes of annual bluegrass leaving many dead splotches, the next greatest surprise of the spring was the unexpected generalized injury to my 17th green. This my one and only putting surface to not suffer a single blemish the winter of 2005, a spring that necessitated the over seeding of all of the other greens. Why the winter was so harsh to this surface I will never know, but my expectations of eventual and unassisted recovery did prolong my restoration efforts, much to my chagrin.

\section{Conclusion!} Did I do everything I possibly could to provide my members with a fantastic golf course sooner than later? Maybe, maybe not. At the time the remedial plan implemented made sense. But considering the expectation of a ‘normal’ spring, or maybe even a hint of warmth, my hopes for a quick recovery were dashed. One thing I do know for certain, regardless of weather anomalies, human errors, player wear and tear or over-management, in the wise words of Dr. Don White, “Grass grows in spite of what we do.”