

PEER-TO-PEER: BETTER TURF THROUGH NETWORKING

MGCSA Superintendents were asked: The winter of '08-'09 was hard on many golf courses across our state: What were your successes for quick recovery? How did you communicate with your players? What will you do differently to prepare for the next winter?

At **Minocqua Country Club**, one of the things we did, which I feel helped a lot, was to split the application of our snow mold protection products. We went with two half rate sprays. The first spray was when we started to feel the time was right. As you know, you can never predict what the weather so we didn't want our full application laying out when we could potentially be a month from snow cover. We applied the second half app when the sky went black and snow clouds were moving in. A strong positive of this is that you eliminate unprotected skips or places where the pumps lost prime, etc. Everything will have *at least* a half rate.

Photo: You can definitely see that the treatment worked.

- Bill Stein
Minocqua Country Club

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Peer-to-Peer -

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At **New Richmond**, we lost some turf from water sitting in low spots in fairways. We aerified, spiked and seeded those areas but they were slow to recover. On a few tees we cut seed in with a slit seeder. When the weather warmed up the seed grew. We lost some bentgrass on a small area on a green because the collar acted like a dam so water draining off the surface backed up. This year we will cut the sod off of that part of the collar to let the water drain.

- Tom Johnson
New Richmond Golf Club

The winter of 08-09 was pretty simple: If the greens were covered, no damage. If they weren't - damage to some degree. Solution: Buy more covers (ugh!).

- Dave Kazmierczak, CGCS,
Prestwick Golf Club

At **Bunker Hills** we had extensive damage to our poa. We started spiking early April and kept spiking weekly, on fairways, greens and tees. The fertilizer we used early had very little success, we also seeded a few areas with minimal success. We found spiking to work the best. This winter I am going to use green paint, and Early green up sand from Plaisteds on some areas to see if that helps. Then hope for snow cover and deal with it next spring.

- Brad Hable
Bunker Hills Golf Course
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MGCSA members helped out with the early morning mowing at Hazeltine National Golf Club during the 2009 PGA Championship.



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At **Oneida Golf and Country Club** in Green Bay, my bad year was '04 and '05. Because of an extremely slow recovery, I figured I didn't want to do that ever again. So after much conversation with peers, professors, board and green committee members, I created a GMP (Grounds Maintenance Plan) that encompassed everything I do culturally and totally based it on what was best for the greens, tees and fairways all year long. I even included my capital equipment wish list to this plan and related it all to help preventing this from happening again. My green committee approved it and we have been living by it ever since with really good results, but not perfect.

The two main issues were preventing future ice damage and figuring out what was the best recovery practice.

Every winter we cover our green complexes with impermeable plastic which takes away the ice factor for us, but I made sure to tell my membership that, like everything else in the world, this wasn't perfect and it hasn't been. But it is definitely


better than the alternative. For recovery, our best option was to sod any damage as fast as and as soon as we could. We built a 30,000 square foot greens nursery, a 15,000 square foot tee nursery and a 35,000 square foot fairway nursery using plugs from aerification. We would have gone larger but didn't have the room at the time.

Since then we have used our sod on small sections on two greens. I cut the sod off the green slightly lower than what I cut it off the nursery. This allows me to pour the sand to the sod at extremely heavy rates and it really levels out the sod, even more than the vibratory roller I rent to flatten it out immediately after we lay it. Even though this is an extremely labor intensive process, I am able to mow this sod at my lowest setting of 0.095 by July 1st and it has been very well received by my members. Some don't even know we did anything. Sorry for the long response but I actually had to leave a lot out.

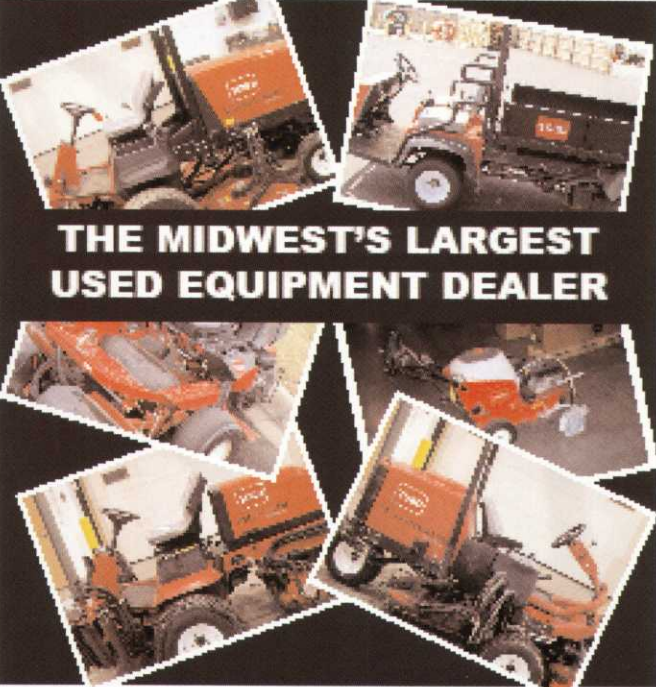
"After much conversation with peers, professors, board and green committee members, I created a GMP (Grounds Maintenance Plan) that encompassed everything I do culturally and totally based it on what was best for the greens, tees and fairways all year long."

Hope all have a better spring next year.

- Mark Storby
Oneida Golf and Country Club



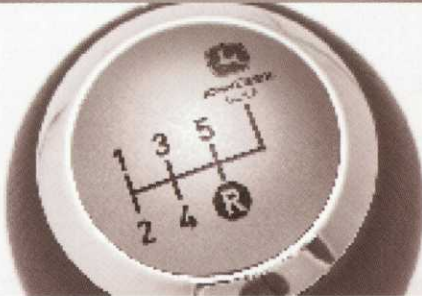
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