



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Beat Goes On...

By Paul Diegnau, CGCS

The battle continues as I write this column in the fourth week of June. No consistent warmth or sunshine is keeping seedling vigor suppressed. I am sure many of you are as frustrated as I am. I have talked to several colleagues with damaged playing surfaces that are being raked over the coals by golfers/members at their respective clubs. But what to do?

Did you happen to read the article by Bob Vavrek in one of the latest USGA Green Section updates on tips for growing in damaged greens? His main point on attaining a successful re-grass of damaged putting surfaces was to raise your cutting heights to .170 - .200 inches! While I understand the advantages of establishing grass plants under higher heights of cut, I believe my golfers would vehemently oppose putting surfaces rolling five or six feet. And therein lays the problem. In the current world of golf there is a void between reality and acceptability. As the saying goes, golfers want their cake and to eat it too. Combine unreasonable golfer expectations, the current intense economic pressures in the golf market and the bizarre weather patterns and you have the makings of the perfect storm. The pressure is weighing heavily on some. I have talked to several Superintendents who would prefer to immediately fast forward to the 2012 season. I can relate. It's no fun when your golf course has a black eye for all to see.

As the 'Keeper of the Green,' our only real option is to attempt to communicate the specifics of the situation. Because of our direct involvement and proximity to these golf course management issues, our explanations tend to lose their effectiveness rather quickly. I know I am preaching to the choir, but there really needs to be a national campaign designed to temper the expectations of today's golfer. The USGA is probably the most respected, well-known golf organization in the U.S. and probably in the best position to change the expectations of today's golfer. They seem to be taking baby steps in that direction as reflected in some of their course conditioning setup for several recent events. I for one would like to see the educational process accelerated and intensified. Maybe my wishes are unrealistic. It could just be my frustrations talking.

The MGCSA Championship is drawing near. Please make plans to attend this August 15 event hosted by Superintendent Joe Wollner at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge in Deerwood. Our attendance at this year's Scholarship Scramble was way below average so it would be nice to see a healthy rebound for this event. Remember, the MGCSA exists for its members and it is the membership that keeps the organization socially and financially viable.

Luke Dant, our Syngenta regional representative and vendor representative on the MGCSA BOD is leaving Minnesota this fall. Luke has taken a new position within Syngenta and will be relocating to the Carolinas. He will be in charge of coordinating in-house and university turfgrass research trials for the southeastern region of the United States. I know he is excited to be moving back into the turfgrass research arena. We can only hope his research brings him back to Minnesota to visit. Congratulations, Luke and good luck in the future!

For all you gun-lovers out there, MGCSA is sponsoring a gun raffle with all proceeds going to turfgrass research at the TROE Center. The lucky winner will take home a Smith and Wesson M&P AR-15 -.223 Remington/5.56 NATO or \$400 in cash. The drawing will be held at the Fall Mixer held at the Minnesota Horse and Hunt Club on October 17. Winner need not be present to win. Tickets are \$5 each or three for \$10. More information is coming soon. I'm in for \$10 (probably more) – how about you? (See Page 6 for a raffle ticket and more information.)

*Until Next Month,
Paul Diegnau, CGCS*

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Editor

Jack MacKenzie, CGCS
jmackenzie426@msn.com

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MGCSA OFFICE AND HOLE NOTES OFFICE

Executive Director
Scott Turtinen
P. O. Box 617
Wayzata, MN 55391
952-473-2582, Fax: 952-473-2586
Toll Free: 1-800-642-7227
scott@mgcsa.org