

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont'd from page 2)

On a more local note, the January meeting held at Arrowhead Country Club had 110 members in attendance, almost one-fourth of the total membership. We would encourage everyone to attend the March 16 meeting at Nordic Hills. Recreational activities are provided in the afternoon including bowling, racquetball, basketball, and hoisting a few beers. Dinner at Nordic Hills is always excellent and the education committee has a good lineup of speakers from the University of Illinois.

I will remind everyone that if your association dues are not paid by March 1, your name will be taken off the list of M.A.G.C.S., Inc. members and you will be forced to re-apply. After all dues are collected, and a complete membership list is compiled, we will be publishing and distributing a new membership directory.

By the time you receive this issue of the **Bull Sheet**, the Midwest Regional Turf Conference will probably be in session March 2-4 at Purdue University. The turf program which is part of the Agronomy Department at Purdue, has been highly regarded over the past thirty-five years under Dr. Bill Daniel. During the last two years, Dr. Clark Throssell has taken over the reigns and has done an admirable job. But right now, the turf program needs the support of members from the M.A.G.C.S. and the other regional associations in order to continue the tradition of excellent research programs in turfgrass. I hope to see many of you at Purdue.

Also, March 31 is the date that has been set for the Annual CDGA Green Seminar at Butterfield Country Club. Dr. Randy Kane and Dennis Davenport have a good roster of speakers lined up with the major theme being Putting Green Management. The mild winter weather may lead to another early spring and we could be out rolling and mowing greens by the end of March.

James E. Evans

Brian C. Chalifoux Biography



Brian C. Chalifoux has been a superintendent for six years. He has spent the last four of those years as the superintendent at Olympia Fields Country Club. This is Brian's first year on the Board of Directors. Brian and his wife Carol Ann have three children, Laurie age 7, Jennifer age 6, and Brian Jr. is 1.

Director's Column Bentgrass Turf

by **Brian C. Chalifoux**
Olympia Fields Country Club

With so many courses now considering or planning bentgrass conversions, I would like to share some of my observations since our conversion in the Fall of 1984.

1. Starting with putting greens, I find many factors affecting growing conditions;

A. **Bentgrass Variety:** Fortunately we chose Penncross for its aggressive growth habit. Under our heavy play situation it has adapted very well.

B. **Soil Types:** Sixteen of our greens were regrassed on existing mixes. This mix is classified as a sandy loam. The other two greens have a 70% sand, 30% organic mix. Establishment was superior on the old greens compared to the new high sand greens. This was attributed mainly to the abundant available nutrients that the old mix contained. Supplemental applications were necessary on the new greens to encourage development. I also noted that cultural practices such as verticutting and topdressing had to be reduced on these two greens. On the positive side of the high sand greens, was root development. I would say we had a much stronger root system based on density and depth of roots. Compaction problems associated with the new greens are far less severe as compared with old green mix.

C. **Green Location** — Perhaps the most important aspect of bentgrass turf is sunlight. We have found through failures that it is necessary to have sunlight the majority of the day. Green thinning, poor recuperative ability, algae buildup, and poor rooting were common in shaded conditions. Once these conditions started to appear it was impossible to bring these greens back to the high standards which the rest of the greens are maintained. Aeration, spiking, supplemental fertilization, hand watering, light topdressing, algae control, and additional fungicide applications did not solve the problem. Only after golfer traffic had stopped and soil temperatures already started with the high pruning of all trees affecting sunlight availability. We also had to remove certain trees that were keys to gaining sunlight. We were reluctant to do so, but quality turf was our priority.

D. **Height of Cut** — Under non stressful situations, we had no problem maintaining a cutting height of 9/64". This was not the case once August came along. With our penncross thinning out, root system declining, soil temperatures increasing and compaction peaking out from record number of rounds, it was not in our best interest to be cutting so short. The demand for fast greens has once again caused us to forget about quality and maintain for the precious few that are only concerned with speed. This will not be the case come Spring for we had already decided to raise our cutting height to an acceptable growing medium. Proper topdressing, verticutting and fertilizing should offset the cutting height and give us moderately fast greens.

2. **Tees** — Penncross was again used and proved to be most durable in this situation. Our biggest problem again appeared in shaded conditions. Areas receiving minimal amounts of sunlight simply will not tolerate this situation. Turf thinning, spike damage, and slow divot recovery were all apparent. After deciding it is not possible to grow penncross under these shaded conditions, we seeded to a ryegrass blend. This took place

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(Bentgrass Turf cont'd.)

in November and will be followed up this Spring with a ryegrass, fescue combination. If this doesn't work, we will convert back to an annual bluegrass situation which previously was holding up okay. The rest of our tees were holding up nicely with no problems other than normal wear and tear. This was attributed to daily divot repair, higher fertility, moderate watering and hand mowing.

3. Fairways — Penneagle was our choice here and I believe our selection was the right one. After a slow start the Penneagle now is starting to dominate the turf stand. After completing two eighteen hole fairway renovation programs (North and South Courses), I can positively say that timing is the key to a successful transition. Our South Course fairways were completed sixteen days ahead of North, August 27th. While the 1986 conversion of our South fairways appears to be more successful than North, I look for two equally manageable situations in 1987. Additions of quick coupling valves at every other head will aid in water management, twice a year aeration, four times a year verticutting, as needed fertility and supplements, growth regulator use, triplex mowing, and continued overseeding practices, all add up to excellent playing conditions for years to come.

In closing, I would say that all our bentgrass conversions were very beneficial with the exception of our predominantly shaded situations. Grass varieties are very limited and new varieties are badly needed.

GCSAA Media Relations Manager Picked

Bob Still has been named Media Relations Manager for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). In this position, Still is primarily responsible for development and implementation of promotional activities on behalf of the international association and its members.

John M. Schilling, GCSAA's Executive Director, said, "Bob's experience and background in public relations and the game of golf add great potential to developing a top-notch information center and will help the Association's effectiveness in improving the status of the nation's golf course superintendents."

Clay Loyd, GCSAA's Director of Communications, added, "Bob's outgoing personality and experience in promoting one of Kansas City's very successful charity golf events make him a strong asset to our Association."

A 1978 Communications graduate of Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, Still is an avid golfer and serves as Tournament Director for the LEN DAWSON CELEBRITY CLASSIC in Kansas City.

Still recently was named one of the Outstanding Businessmen in America. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Miss Greater Kansas City Pageant and enjoys working with The Dream Factory, a volunteer organization that grants wishes to terminally-and-chronically-ill children.

He and his wife Debbie, along with son Dustin, reside in Lenexa, Kansas.