



*Kevin Czerkies, CGCS
Sportsman's C.C.*

Well, March Madness is once again upon us. Soon the snow will melt away, the ground will thaw out, and golfers will be invading our turf. If you're like me, you get cabin fever halfway through winter. I'm ready for another season. This month, I would like to share my views about the "madness" that is taking place in our industry.

This year, Sportsman's Country Club will become one of the growing number of courses that is banning metal spikes. This is something that I've been pushing for a couple of years. Our golf pro has been against it from the beginning, but he should see a difference in the quality of the greens soon enough. Matt Hurley of Standard Golf Products summed up the alternative spike madness best by saying, "Soft spikes are the first superintendent-friendly invention to be used by golfers in the modern day." How true that statement is. Nowadays, golf courses are expected to constantly be in top-notch condition. Banning metal spikes will certainly help superintendents provide better greens for golfers. I've always felt that the golfing public wouldn't

accept alternative spikes until the touring pros began wearing them. Well, some of them are now doing just that, and it's helping our cause. Now, if we could just get golfers to repair ball marks, replace divots, and stop using golf carts, all we'd have to worry about is the weather.

It seems the madness of getting rid of geese has become rather expensive. My club jumped on the bandwagon and bought a Border collie. Although the dog is owned by the Northbrook Park District, he goes home with me. The dog was purchased to get rid of geese at Sportsman's and the various parks throughout Northbrook. It took my wife and kids about two minutes to fall in love with this dog. Now, if I decide, or my bosses decide for me, that my welcome at Sportsman's has run out, I'm going to have a real problem. I can't see myself forking over \$3,200 to keep this dog. Then it's heartbreak city for my family.

Ed Braunsky has been on me about my president's messages not being long enough, so I thought I'd reminisce a little. March Madness will forever mean one thing to me: the state high school basketball tournament. This month, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the greatest high school basketball team ever: the 1978 Lockport Porters. Among the many wins during their undefeated state championship season, the mighty Porters handily beat Ed's high school Aurora West and then the St. Joseph team, lead by Isiah Thomas, in the state championship game. Not only did the varsity team finish 33-0, but the sophomore and freshman teams finished undefeated as well. The entire Lockport basketball program finished 78-0 in 1978. My wife, who was the captain of the

cheerleading team, and I were seniors that year. That was an experience neither of us will ever forget.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate the following MAGCS members that won 1998 Environmental Steward Awards. Winning a national award was Peter Leuzinger, Ivanhoe Club; winning regional awards were Dan Dinelli, North Shore Country Club, and Tom Morgensen, Countryside Golf Courses; and winning merit awards were Luke Cella, Pottawatomie Golf Course, and Scott Witte, Cantigny Golf Club. Congratulations, guys, we're proud of your accomplishments!

Congratulations are also extended to the golfers who represented the MAGCS in the GCSAA golf tournament in Anaheim. Al Pondel, Deerfield G.C., won the Championship Flight by shooting a 3 under par 69 at Tustin Ranch. Tim Scott, Stoney Creek G.C., and Tom Robinson, Ravinia Green C.C., both shot a 71 to earn the runner-up position. On top of that, the MAGCS team won the chapter team gross championship. The team consisted of Al Pondel, Deerfield G.C., Tom Robinson, Ravinia Green C.C., Randy Wahler, Knollwood C.C., and Bob Kronn, LaGrange C.C.

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