



## More Than You Ever Wanted to Know About Our Monthly Golf Events

*The dawn of a new millennium (I promise, that's the last time I use the word 'millennium') brings on new challenges to us all. For me, as a director of this fine Association, I have been handed the dubious honor of chairing the Arrangements Committee for the year 2000. If memory serves me, I believe the appointment went something like this, and I quote, "Kevin, I am appointing you as chairman of the Arrangements Committee for the upcoming year 2000." To that, my response could only be, "In that case, Mr. President, I volunteer." Democracy, you gotta love it.*

*If you have never hosted a meeting or golf event, or have not hosted in a long while, do it. Having done it myself, I can attest to no more meaningful fulfillment in my career as a golf course superintendent. To have your peers witness the fruits of your labor and compliment you on your efforts . . . WOW, I wish I could bottle that stuff.*

So, as newly "volunteered" chairman to the Arrangements Committee, I have elected to sail through some fairly uncharted waters here and share with the membership a few of the duties and responsibilities of my new position. Granted, having coordinated only two golf events thus far, I am the first to say, "Young grasshopper, has much to learn." But having accomplished the organization of the April and June golf events somewhat successfully, I have learned one important lesson. And that is: As much as the MAGCS Board of Directors tries, we will never please all the people all the time. I know that is a bit harsh, but it is also very realistic. To this truism, I can only think to respond in the infamous words from Spock (the Vulcan, not the doctor), and I quote, "The needs of the many, outweigh the needs of the few." (Okay, so I'm a Trekkie.) With this said, I will begin with a little background information.

To assure meeting affordability to all of our membership, it has been the policy of the MAGCS, carried out by the Board of Directors, to simply "break even" at our monthly golf events. For all those who assume our Association is making a killing on these monthly meetings, I am here to tell you that at present, it is a false and inaccurate assumption. That is not to suggest that in the future this break-even policy may have to change. However, with the Association continually trying to provide additional services to our membership (the MAGCS Web page, MAGCS scholarships, turf-grass research donations, etc.), it is easy to explain the added expenses that accompany increased services. Someday, we may need to look at our monthly golf events as an additional revenue source. That is for the membership to decide. But for now, our policy for monthly golf events remains: Don't make any money . . . but, don't lose any, either. That is where the Arrangements Committee comes in.

It is rather early in my tenure as chairman of the Arrangements Committee, but near as I can tell, my title should be changed to "Head Plea Beggar." The main duties and responsibilities of the committee I oversee are threefold:

*(continued on page 12)*

- Plead with fellow superintendents to host a meeting for the upcoming season or the season thereafter.
- Beg the host course to give our Association a professional courtesy break.
- Plead and beg our commercial membership to sponsor one or more golf events for the season.

First (without playing my harp), I just want to say one thing. If you have never hosted a meeting or golf event, or have not hosted in a long while, do it. Having done it myself, I can attest to no more meaningful fulfillment in my career as a golf course superintendent than when I hosted a golf event. To have your peers witness the fruits of your labor and compliment you on your efforts . . . WOW, I wish I could bottle that stuff.

Second, in this day and age, golf like everything else has become big business. Today we face private country clubs opening their doors for Monday outings at a premium price. We see public, daily-fee golf courses with greens fees in the \$75-100 range as almost the norm. And yet, we as an Association continue to ask these courses to give us a break for the day. And as a professional courtesies, they try to oblige us the best they can. But with the price of poker going up, I am seeing a trend in the not-too-distant future that says it will be very difficult to keep golf and a cart in the \$50/player range. Then, add in the cost of a continental breakfast (\$2-5/person), box lunch (\$5-7), dinner (\$15-25), cold beverages (\$2-5), golf prizes (\$7-10), scoring and pro shop amenities

(\$2-5), and membership meeting announcement mailing (\$2-5). Lo and behold, the cost of the day just skyrocketed to the neighborhood of \$85-110/player—something our Association is trying desperately to avoid.

Which brings me to my third, and last, point. The MAGCS is very lucky to have full support from our commercial members. We rely on them heavily to lessen the burden of our monthly meeting costs, as well as for other sponsorship fees. For their generosity, we owe them a

great deal of gratitude and thanks. And more important, we owe them our business. Early this spring, we sent a letter to our commercial members asking

for their sponsorship support at any one of our monthly meetings for the 2000 season. To date, a total of 12 commercial members have responded and \$10,850 has been raised from their generosity. These commercial members are as follows:

- Chicago Turf & Irrigation, Inc. (6 sponsored meetings)
- Palatine Oil Company, Inc. (5)
- Nadler Golf Cart Sales, Inc. (5)
- Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc. (3)
- J.W. Turf, Inc. (3)
- Turf Partners, Inc. (2)
- Zeneca (2)
- Waupaca Sand and Solutions (2)
- Arthur Clesen, Inc. (1)
- Northfield Block Company (1)
- Nugent Golf Associates (1)
- BOJO Turf Supply, Inc. (1)

To translate this general information into specific circumstances, the April meeting hosted by Elgin Country Club cost our membership a total of \$70/player

(continued on page 32)



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On the topic of e-mail, two types of e-mail are in the offing these days. One is the usual type, where you download and upload your mail from a server. The server holds the mail only until you retrieve it. Then you have the only copy of it. It is erased from the server's memory. The other e-mail is called Web-based e-mail. This type holds the e-mail in a remote server and you access it from your PC. The advantage of this type of e-mail is significant—you can access it from anywhere and from any PC. Let's say you use your computer at home and at work. If you use a traditional e-mail server, when you download your mail while you're at work, it is written to your hard drive and is erased from the server. If you want to access that e-mail from your home

computer, you can't. It is not on the server anymore. It's on your hard drive in your office. Also, Web based e-mail does not require you to have any special software to read it, like Microsoft Outlook or Netscape's e-mail attachment to Netscape Navigator.

So, how can you investigate these free ISPs and find out if it might work for you? The next time you're online, go to one of these Web sites: [www.netzero.com](http://www.netzero.com), [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com), [www.freeweb.com](http://www.freeweb.com), [www.bluelight.com](http://www.bluelight.com). Follow the instructions on how to download software and how to get online. It can't hurt to try them, and you might just decide to dump the fee you are currently paying. If you have any questions or want any tips, e-mail me at [nickh27@hotmail.com](mailto:nickh27@hotmail.com). Happy surfing!



for the day. We happened to have six commercial sponsors that month for a total of \$2,100. Without that sponsorship money, the meeting would have cost each of the 148 players who played that day nearly \$15 more.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has responded favorably to the services and amenities that we as an Association are trying to provide. We learn as we grow. It is thanks to the never-ending participation and cooperation of our membership that we have become so successful. Speaking of which, we still need host sites for our 2001 meetings. There goes that harp again!



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