



## TECHNICALLY SPEAKING WITH TETA

Ted Soenksen *Wilmette Golf Club*

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** **A New Alliance**

Greetings and welcome to a new addition to *On Course* magazine. This segment marks a new beginning for the Turf Equipment Technicians Association. I am proud to announce that the membership has been invited to join the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. This gives us many opportunities to grow in the golf and turf industry. Over the past 20 years, TETA has been striving to grow as an association in membership and to promote the image, stature, reputation and skills of the professional turf industry equipment technician.

Since starting in the realm of golf and turf equipment back in 1994, I have enjoyed a broad range of experiences. The people are as different as the equipment. This has been a great time in my life to make new friends and learn from their experiences. Fortunate to have been hired by the Wilmette Park District and then given the opportunity to join TETA, I've since grown in knowledge and expertise on the complex equipment we deal with on the golf course day to day. Now, after 10 rewarding years, I feel fortunate to have been given the chance to give something back, first by being on the board of directors and now serving as president of TETA.

Our association has built a strong support network including many sources of information for educational seminars as well as direct contacts to manufacturers who are willing to help us in our unique situations. We have to educate ourselves to better maintain the complex equipment we deal with at our courses. TETA has built a reputation nationally as an organization of professionals and we have become who we are by doing for ourselves.

We are all volunteers in this association, devoting our own time willingly because we enjoy our careers. The acceptance and positive feedback we get from the superintendent is much appreciated and necessary for the technician to excel in his or her position. However, while there are a great many golf courses in the Chicago area, the proportion of technicians in our association remains lean. I wish to extend an invitation to join to all that do not know the benefits that TETA can bring to your golf course technician and your course. I welcome inquiries, questions and comments.

Consider this. Once a piece of equipment is purchased and delivered to a customer (golf course, park district, etc.), it no longer is the dealer's concern. The technician becomes responsible for that \$35,000+ fairway mower or spray rig. While under warranty or beyond, the equipment requires the technician to fill the manufacturer's shoes. In future issues, you will read of experiences the turf equipment technician has been challenged with and succeeded in. In this section of *On Course*, you will also see service tips offered by member technicians. Through our association, the Turf Equipment Technicians Association, we will find better ways to maintain, adjust and repair our equipment. Did I say "our equipment?" Yes, I did, and I'm sorry if this offends anyone's sensibilities, but this is the way I feel in my shop. Although I do not own the equipment, they are mine in a certain way and there are many others who have the same mindset and are proud of it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be a part of MACGS. I am excited for the opportunity, as I know this alliance is a first in the industry.

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