



## Tweaking the Turf

Winter is a great time to look back and reflect on the previous growing season successes and failures of our turf maintenance practices. We are always trying to figure out how to “tweak” agronomic programs and “dial in” the tactics to try to get a little more high performance out of our golf course turf.

Superintendents like to attend some of the outstanding local and national education offerings for updated research and the introduction of new products that may be presented. We like to reach out into our networks and rub elbows with our peers and share information about what we learned from the previous season.

It’s all about “how are we going to get better.”

So I asked some of the superintendents who I bumped into during my winter travels, “What are you going to do different this year to improve the performance of your golf course turf?”

**Bob Kohlstedt**, Fox Bend Golf Course: “I’m excited. We are purchasing some new mowing equipment. We are getting Toro 3300 Riding Flex Mowers for the greens. 2 new Jacobsen fairway mowers and a Procore 648. We have also removed (20) 40 year-old willow trees from the course.”

**Scott Witte** CGCS, Cantigny Golf Club: “We had good success with the use of pigments on our greens last year. I plan on expanding the use of the pigments onto our fairways. We will use the moisture sensor more and establish thresholds to tighten up our water use on greens and tees. We will also be looking to get better organic management with the use of sugars on our greens.”

**Andy Dauksas**, Glen Oak Country Club: “I’m looking at using some of the new product chemistry for use on our greens.”

**Justin VanLanduit**, Briarwood Country Club: We have new greens so we will eliminate core removal to minimize Poa annua encroachment. I plan on using dry-ject applications as needed.”

**John Gurke**, CGCS Aurora Country Club: “I will be going to all contact fungicide applications for our fairways, all season long.”

**Steve Van Aker**, CGCS Crystal Lake Country Club: “We’re going to make an effort to cut back on water use. We are also going to try to reduce the number of plant protectant

applications.”

**Brian Bossert**, CGCS, Bryn Mawr Country Club: “We are planning to increase the use of Turfscreen for our greens. I liked the results we had in 2012. We will also increase our fertility in the rough.”

**Charles Anfield**, CGCS, Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club: “We have our biggest problem with thatch on our approaches. I believe this is because we restrict cart traffic there and we are mowing with light weight units. I plan on mowing these areas with fairway units and allowing more cart access. We’re also going back to core aerifying our greens twice a year.”

**Tim Scott**, Stony Creek Golf Course: “We are going to increase our cultural inputs to our greens. We will increase vertical mowing frequency and incorporate a monthly solid tine venting treatment. We are also drilling a new well to try to reduce our water bill.”

**Dan Tully**, Kemper Lakes Golf Club: “We are going to monitor our water use more by utilizing soil moisture sensors. We will be switching back to using Embark for seed head suppression. We have seen great success with water infiltration on our greens with our spring core aerification using one inch tines and we will continue with that process.”

**Steven Biehl**, Naperville Country Club: “We are going to try some different fertilizer products on our greens. We plan on doing more vertical mowing on fairways to manage thatch accumulations and we are adding in a spring core aerification.”

What are you going to do? Have an idea for a Breeze?  
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