

on 12/2014

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BULL SHEET



Your Impact on  
Handicap




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Some of the golf course features that are figured into the Course Rating and Slope you can't change like elevation changes as found on this approach shot on the first hole at Orchard Lake Country Club, MI.

PHOTO: Luke Cella

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FEATURE

## Your Impact on Handicap

Luke Cella



Do you set up a difficult golf course every weekend? What impact may it have to those golfers who experience it? How does it affect their handicap and how does that translate when they play a different golf course? Page 4.

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## DATES

### 2014-15 MIDWEST EVENTS

- 2/5/2015 Midwest January Meeting and Wee One Fundraiser,  
Seven Bridges Golf Club.
- 2/25/15 Midwest Hospitality Reception, San Antonio, TX
- 3/10/15 Midwest March Meeting, Midwest Golf House, Lemont

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# Doing the Most Good



Chuck Barber  
St. Charles Country Club

Where does the time go? Someone once told me that life is a lot like a roll of toilet paper: The closer you get to the end the faster it goes. I'm 38 years old and each subsequent year seems to go faster and faster.

I am further reminded of the passage of time by my family. The days are long but the years are short. On November 22nd we celebrated my daughter Molly's birthday. Her 4th birthday! Those four years went by quickly.

Working a full-time job (in the golf industry or otherwise) is much different than it was even 10 or 15 years ago. There is constant interconnectivity in our jobs and with one another making 'work time' and 'away from work time' largely indistinguishable. For those of us in golf course management, industry support and research the time constraints are magnified and the demarcation lines are even blurrier. I haven't made plans for Memorial Day, Fourth of July or Labor Day for many years. We celebrate these dates as a family, yes. Where and how we choose to celebrate them is largely done a few hours in advance.

For those of us with families time becomes more precious. The line between work and away from work requires greater clarity. It requires greater discipline in how time is valued. Further, somewhere in the midst of work and family we have to identify time for ourselves as individuals. I often wonder if I am a husband first, or perhaps a father, or a son, or if my vocation is the first thing I am? The answer is as simple as it is complicated: I am all of those things first depending on where I am in my life. Where does time for 'me' fit in? If I spent more time thinking about where the time goes I could easily think myself into a stupor trying to differentiate all the things I needed to be. I've come to the conclusion that wondering where the time goes uses up more of it than it's worth.

I will try to spare you the details about my life and career as much as possible. For one, it's not that interesting. Second, the time it would take to read it would be better used elsewhere. Finally, it's the least important component of this column. What is the best use of our time is what The Midwest was, what it is, and what it wants to be.

THIS SIMPLE, ELEGANT  
STATEMENT SAYS EVERY-  
THING IT NEEDS TO SAY  
AND NOTHING IT DOESN'T.

The Midwest was founded in 1926 to "advance the rights and sciences attendant upon pertinent of related to the occupation of green keeping." This simple, elegant statement says everything it needs to say and nothing it doesn't. The Midwest has changed, grown, evolved and transformed into an organization representing hundreds of golf courses, professionals, individuals, and companies. What does The Midwest want to be?

This is a question only The Midwest's membership can answer. Each year our Board of Directors engages in a strategic planning meeting. The topics we discuss, the ideas we share and the changes that we might implement come from you, the membership. I believe the simplest, best answer to the question of "What does The Midwest want to be" is this: Whatever you want it to be. It is our job as The Board of Directors to provide you with the association you want in an ethical, fiscally responsible, culturally aware, and efficient manner. In short we should be utilitarian, doing the most good for the most people.

*Continued on page 15*



# Your Impact on Handicap

Luke Cella, MAGCS

Superintendents are no strangers to the purpose of the handicapping system for golfers and golf courses. The a golfer's handicap allows them to play others fairly, no matter the skill level.

The slope and rating of a golf course is used to compare golf courses to one another, but more importantly are used as the basis for the golfer's individual handicap index. Each golf course is far from alike. Some marathon courses are not eligible for World record consideration because of downhill slopes and prevailing tailwinds that could give runners an unfair advantage over other courses. Specific criteria must be measured and met for a marathon course for a running performance to qualify for World Record time. A governing body, in this case, the International Association of Athletics Federations, sets the criteria and ratifies runs that break World Record times. The slope and rating system developed by the USGA provides a fairly objective method to qualify golf courses so individual scores have a value when compared to other golfer's scores from different courses.

If golfers always compete against each other on the same course, under the same conditions, there is not much need for a course to have a slope and rating at all. A time ago, I had a



Bogey golfers play a significant role in figuring out the Slope Rating of a golf course, but are not always taken into consideration during course set up.

permanent tee time and played with the same group each week. Each of us had established handicaps (they ranged from a scratch golfer to a 20) but over several years those numbers did not matter as we defined the game we'd play on the first tee. We knew each other's game well, we knew how many strokes we'd give or take from one another to make the day a fair competition giving anyone a chance to win. We all experienced the same course and the same conditions each round. In fact, the only reason we kept official handicaps was so we could play in the course's annual Fall Handicap Classic or the occasional invite to play another golf course.

I quickly discovered that when I went to play other golf courses, my handicap index didn't help me at all. In many cases, my handicap hurt me. I was not that good of a player on golf courses that I didn't know. I was conditioned to playing the same course each week and this trimmed a few strokes off my score each time I played. This is called local knowledge – sometimes it helps (when playing someone who has no experience) and sometimes it can hurt – when you're the one who has built a handicap index that is strongly based on rounds of golf where local knowledge is always used. Recently, I thought about this and transitioned into the thought of how golf course superintendents can impact the course rating – and how the impact can compound if you are setting up the golf course the same way each week for the same players.

At the heart of the USGA Handicap System is the USGA Course Rating. That system is the "USGA's mark that indicated the evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course for a scratch golfer under normal conditions based on yardage and other obstacles that affect scoring ability. A Slope Rating is a measurement of the relative difficulty of a course from players who are not scratch golfers."

The definitions go on to state, "Each course is rated from each set of tees for both the scratch golfer and the bogey golfer. The USGA Course Rating and Slope Rating together reflect the difficulty of the course for a player who is not a scratch golfer. The greater the difference between the scores of the scratch and bogey golfers on a certain course, the higher the Slope Rating will be and the more strokes players will receive. Conversely, the less the difference, the slower the Slope Rating will be and



*The easiest way to impact how a course plays is to change its yardage by setting tee markers back or forward. This superintendent is getting ready to put in more native plantings off the front edge of the forward tee, perhaps impacting the psychological aspect of the hole.*

fewer the fewer strokes players will receive." Conversely, the less the difference, the lower the slope rating will be and the fewer strokes the players will receive.

When a rating committee comes to establish a USGA Course Rating it is doing so under normal course and weather conditions. Upon completion, the Course Rating "is expressed as strokes taken to one decimal place, and is based on yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of the scratch golfer." Most are aware that yardage is the single most impactful measurement that affects a course rating. However, the other items, deemed obstacles, also play a role in the rating of a course – and some of these obstacles, golf course superintendents can control.

Think of Course Rating as an average of difficulty of a course. Raters do not play the golf course from the "tips" as most like to think, but an average set up that the course presents. Conversely, the less the difference, the slower the slope rating will be and the fewer strokes the players will receive. Each day. Most experienced superintendents employ some type of system that is divisible by six for an 18-hole course or three for a nine hole course. Six easy, six medium and six difficult, when it comes to cup locations and hole length for 18 holes, or three, three and three for a 9-hole track. This keeps the course playing to an average. But what if, like some you start to "save" certain areas for weekend play, for the "better golfers" who really "like the course to play tough" or "make it challenging".

What is the impact a superintendent could have on Course

Rating? I wanted to see and looked at the factors accounted in the Course Rating system that a superintendent can control. The most objective and weighted measurement on a golf course rating scale is length. This number is believed to be a fixed number, however it can be tweaked during course set up. The effective playing length of each hole is measured during a course-rating visit.

Five factors that may impact length are:

**Roll:** Under normal conditions 20 yards of roll is considered normal for a drive

**Elevation:** Uphill plays longer than downhill and vice versa.

**Dogleg or Forced Lay Up:** A bend in the fairway or a hazard that forces a player to hold back on a tee shot usually adds artificial length.

**Prevailing Wind:** Impactful on seaside courses or true links courses, not a common factor in our area.

**Altitude Above Sea Level:** Think mountains.

The other factors a course rating teams collects data on are not as objective as length, nor are they as easy to measure their true impact. These items fall under the category of "obstacles" that each hole presents. As you will see from the list, some of them are subjective and a more complex equation is used to determine their weight when applied to the overall Course Rating. Specifically the obstacles are:

**Topography:** the difficulty of stance in the fairway landing areas and any elevation change from landing areas to green. Can you see the flagstick from the fairway or are you too far below the green?

**Fairway:** the *effective width* of the landing area. We played a course this year that had the narrowest fairways I had ever seen.

**Green Target:** the size, *firmness*, and shape of a green in relation to the length of the approach shot. Greens that are designed to accept a long approach shot are tilted toward the fairway.



*Is there adequate sand in your bunkers so players can at least get the club under the ball?*

**Recoverability and Rough:** the *existence of rough* and together penalizing factors in the proximity of the landing area and around the green.

**Bunkers:** the existence of bunkers in the proximity of the landing areas and around the green. Raters measure bunker depth and distance from the putting green.



**Out of Bounds / Extreme Rough:** the existence of out of bounds in the proximity of the landing areas and around the green, or the *existence of extreme unmown rough* that is similar in effect to out of bounds.

**Water Hazards:** the existence of water hazards, particularly in the *proximity of the landing areas* and around the green.

**Trees:** the strategic location, size, height, and density of trees – along with *the probability of recovering* from the trees.

**Green Surface:** the contour and normal *speed of the putting surface*.



*Fesuce areas too close to a fairway can not only slow play down as golfers search for their balls, but can make the course tougher too.*

**Psychological:** the mental effect on play created by the presence of a combination of difficult obstacles. How well did the architect “get in your head” when standing on the tee.

I wanted to see how much a superintendent could impact a course’s rating. I pushed these obstacles and length away from the normal, not to unrealistic realms, but weekend or member-guest day dimensions. I then took educated guesses with a seasoned course rater to show the potential impact.

Out of all the factors, effective playing length can be changed most readily and easily through course set up. If your course has flexibility to move every set of tees back ten yards, over 18 holes that equates to 180 yards and on the Course Rating scale, 0.8 and Slope Rating 2 points. Now soften the landing areas through irrigation, and take the roll out of the equation, and add an additional 0.2 to the Course Rating and another 1 point to the Slope Rating.

The obstacle factors are not that easy to figure out. However superintendents still have the potential to impact some of them through their course management.

If greens are firmed up and don’t readily hold shots as originally as rated, the Course Rating could go up by 0.2 and the Slope Rating could increase by 1.0. If over time, you don’t control green creep and the effective size of the green decreases, and this makes the course harder.

If the rough is normally mown between 2.5 to 3.5” and you let it go for the weekend and it grows into + 3.5” category, potential damage to the Course Rating could be 0.7 and 5.0 points on the Slope Scale. Long rough really impacts bogey golfers, think of who you hear the complaints from when the rough gets long.



Maybe you’ve converted some space to native plants and part of them are still in the normal line of play (less than 39 yards from the center of the fairway), the potential impact could be 0.5 on Course Rating and 3.0 to Slope.

*Consistently tucking pin locations on the same day each week could make your course play considerably tougher, impacting the same players.*

Do you cut and roll for weekend play more times than on Tuesdays? Changing the green speed by 1-2 feet could add another 0.4 of difficulty to your course rating and raise the Slope Rating by another 2 points.

How about your cupping areas on greens? Do you save spots that are a little less accessible from the fairway for weekend play? Maybe you’re more apt to use hole locations that are a little closer to the edge of the green or just over that false front one needs to carry? If so, add: 0.2 to Rating, 1.0 to Slope.



*Do you ever take the wind forecast into account when setting up the course for the day? The course might play different during the breezy part of the afternoon when compared to the stillness found in the morning hours.*

*Feature continued on page 14*



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# # BullSheet



December 2014

## Dates to Remember

**December 3** – CAGCS Annual Meeting at Oak Park Country Club, Al Fierst host.

**December 3-4** – The 49th Annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium at the American Club in Kohler, WI.

**December 11** – Annual West Side Superintendents Holiday Party at Seven Bridges Golf Club in Woodridge, IL, Don Ferreri and Dave Gelino hosts.

**December 18** – North Side Superintendent Holiday Party at Twin Peaks, Wheeling, IL.

**January 13-14** – ITF TURF Conference at Bolingbrook, IL, Jeff Gerdes host.

**February 5** – 6th Annual MAGCS Meeting/Wee One Fundraiser at Seven Bridges Golf Club.

**February 21-23** – GCSAA Golf Championships at TPC San Antonio (Tom Lively, CGCS), Cordillera Ranch, The Palmer Course, and The Quarry.

**February 23-26** – GCSAA Education Conference in San Antonio, TX.

**February 25** – MAGCS Hospitality Reception at the Rio Plaza Grand Vista Ballroom from 7 to 11 PM.

Congratulations to **Justin Olmstead**, formerly at Glen Flora Country Club who is the new Turf Product Manager for Precision Laboratories in Waukegan, IL.



*Justin Olmstead*

25-year MAGCS member **John Meyer** of Koch Agronomic Services, LLC will be leaving the chill of Minnesota for warmer environs. With Koch's acquisition of Agrium Products (Polyon, XCU, Nutralene, Nitroform and Duration) this past July, John gladly volunteered to be the new West Coast representative, and he and his wife Jules will be moving to San Tan, Arizona by the end of this year. The best of luck to John in his big move.

This year's John Deere Classic at TPC Deere Run raised a total of \$6.33 million for 471 local and regional Quad Cities charities, which is an increase over last year, and the third consecutive year it has raised over \$6 million. It is the #1 PGA Tour event in per-capita charitable giving, and consistently ranks in the top five on Tour in total charitable giving. That's pretty awesome.

Our condolences go out to the Mirkes family on the passing of **Peter A. Mirkes, Jr.**, one of our longest-standing members of over 44 years.

Some people just have too much time on their hands. To wit, a man named Michael Furrh has recently broken the record for the world's longest golf club with his 20-foot-8-inch driver (with which he managed to hit a ball a whopping 63 yards). Even goofier is that the previous two records were set in September (14'5") and then October (18'5"). As if that isn't enough, some guys at Plum Quick



Racing in Fort Mill, South Carolina (of course) have built what is now the world's fastest golf cart, with a top speed of 118.76 mph. Two truly practical endeavors.

Have you jumped on the “Big Cup Bandwagon” yet? It looks to be gaining in popularity across the country, with golf facilities citing various reasons for trying them. One course, Saddle Creek in Nashville, Tennessee, is using 8-inch cups for the days following greens aerification to counter the possibility of bumpy conditions ticking off golfers. The Northwest Herald reported that locally, **Bob Kronn, Jr.** and Boone Creek Golf Club installed 15-inch cups in the backs of his greens on 9 of the 27 holes in August as part of a pilot program subsidized by TaylorMade-Adidas Golf to attract younger people and to make golf more fun. They were one of more than 100 golf courses across the country to test out the larger holes and gather feedback. The Herald also reported that **Eric Radkowsky** at neighboring Bull Valley Golf Club held a Big Cup event this year which was very well-received. It sure couldn’t hurt MY putting.

Our condolences also go out to **Ed Braunsky CGCS** and his wife Sue on news of the passing of Al Birkeneder, Sue’s father. Al worked in the pro shop at Settler’s Hill and at Deer Valley for many years and as Ed says, “He was my favorite father-in-law, and will be missed by many.”

**Patrick Maksymiu** is a man of many talents. Golf guy. Financial guy. Hockey guy. But just recently, it was pointed out that he has one other talent that he’s kept secret—that of obnoxious sports talk guy. They even DRESS the same!

## MIDWEST Doppelgänger



*Pat Maksymiu or Jim Rome - you be the judge!*

Sympathies and prayers for the family of **Tony Frandria** (Glen View Club) on the sudden passing of his father last month. Please keep Tony’s family in your thoughts during this difficult time.

Q: What movie did Keenan Ivory Wayans shoot at **Alan Hoogstraat’s** course?  
A: A Ravisloe Down Dirty Shame.

Some big changes are now in place with the USGA Green Section. First, Darin Bevard has been named Director, Championship Agronomy, making him



the lead agronomist for the U.S. Open, U.S. Women’s Open, U.S. Senior Open, U.S. Amateur and U.S. Women’s Amateur. Second, Chris Hartwiger is now the Director, Course Consulting Service (CCS), overseeing agronomists like our own **Bob Vavrek** in their duties as course consultants. Lastly, effective the first of this month, the Green Section regions have been realigned, reducing the former eight regions into four. For our area, the North-Central and Mid-Continent Regions are now the Central Region, encompassing the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin, with Regional Director Keith Happ joining John Daniels and Bob Vavrek as agronomists.

Congratulations to **Brian Thomson, CGCS** (Biltmore CC) on his



recent recertification through GCSAA.

The Big Show is coming soon to San Antonio, Texas on February 21 through the 26th. A couple notables: Paul Carter, CGCS at Bear Trace at Harrison Bay, TN will be presented the 2015 President’s Award for Environmental Stewardship at the Opening Session on the 25th. Also, Past President Melvin B. Lucas Jr. and Cal Roth, Senior Vice President of Agronomy for the PGA Tour will receive the 2015 Col. John Morley Distinguished Service Award



But wait—there’s more! Dan Jenkins, a World Golf Hall of Fame writer will be presented with the Old Tom Morris Award. And finally, to send us home on a high note, David Feherty, the funny-sounding **Ed Nangle**-channeling golf guy from CBS and Golf Channel will entertain at the Closing



Lucas and Roth, DSA Winners in 2015

Celebration on the 26th.

*Bull Sheet continued on page 12*





# TRUESET™

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Just a quick reminder on those editorial awards we hand out every year and why they are named what they are. Ray Gerber was a past president of MAGCS as well as GCSAA, the long-time superintendent of Glen Oak Country Club (1936-1970), an Illinois Golf Hall of Fame inductee, and was a contributing editor of the first-ever issue of Bull Sheet (the precursor to this publication), which debuted in January of 1948. Ray was the editor of Bull Sheet from 1972 to 1983 when he passed away, and it was his assistant Fred Opperman who took the reins from him, serving as editor of Bull Sheet, and then On Course in 1995, until his retirement in 1999.



Fred Opperman, editor of this publication for 16 years.



Matt Harstad, MAGCS Editorial Chairman hands off the Ray Gerber Award to a well-deserved author, Chuck Barber.

Thus the naming of the Ray Gerber Editorial Award for the best superintendent-written article and the Fred Opperman Editorial Award for the best non-superintendent-written article. Now Ray, as I mentioned, is deceased, so there really isn't any new news from him other than he is still deceased.

Not true for Fred, however, who is alive and well and living the dream in Bozeman, Montana. Retirement is busier than his working days, according to Fred, as he helps out with Habitat for Humanity (working on his 53<sup>rd</sup> home now), Eagle Mount—a charity that helps children with handicaps (14 years with their ice skating program), managing his church property (17 acres with 10 landscaped), the local soup kitchen, not to mention his hiking group on Tuesdays, hunting with his son, fishing, canoeing, and anything else he can get his hands on. I'm tired just writing about it!

The usual suspects (and one or two UNusual ones) were spied in the trade mags recently. Golf Course Industry featured articles by **Bruce Williams** ("Look and Act the Part" about professional appearance) and **Bob Lohman** ("Setting the Standard" about setting design and maintenance guidelines at your course), along with an article about the impending commercial launch of PoaCure in the U.S. featuring **Dan Dinelli**, CGCS and his experimental use of the product. Who'da thunk with that hair that Dan is 54 years old? And why would they tell us that in an article about an herbicide? Anyhow, I digress.

In Superintendent magazine, **John Nelson** of Merit Club was cited in an article titled "Fuel for Thought" about the possibility of propane-powered equipment becoming a viable choice for the future of golf course maintenance.

If you haven't read the cover story in the October issue of Golfdom, I highly recommend you do. In Seth Jones' article "True Romance," the story about how Northwest Illinois GCSA member Matt Henkel, the superintendent at PrairieView Golf Club in Byron survived brain cancer is told. During Matt's treatments, the Wee One Foundation and **Chad Ball**, CGCS stepped in and provided financial assistance at a time of need. This past August, Matt decided to give something back to the Foundation by hosting the first NWIGCSA Wee One Fundraiser tournament at his course, raising \$6,000 (at which another of our esteemed members was spotted) I'm not going to spoil it and divulge how the story ends, but suffice it to say it's worth a read.



And our usual bloggers, **Erwin McKone** and **Steve Cook**, CGCS, MG were published in TurfNet's Blog Aggregator, both talking about winterizing the golf course. Speaking of Steve Cook, he has recently made a commitment to the Make A Wish Foundation to raise funds and himself by climbing a 22,500 foot mountain. To make a pledge and help Steve and the some kids, check out: [www.makeawishclimb.blogspot](http://www.makeawishclimb.blogspot)



Cook started training this week to climb a mountain for charity.

The 62<sup>nd</sup> Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting was held on a frigid November 12<sup>th</sup> at Medinah Country Club, home of host superintendent **Curtis Tyrrell**, CGCS, MG and of custom-fitted burlap boxwood blankets. The day began with **Tony Kalina's** all-encompassing invocation and **Jan Jarvis'** booming National Anthem, followed by President **Dave Kohley's** efficient running of the Annual Meeting. Education was next on the docket, and Moderator **William Meyer** of Park Ridge CC brought on the day's first presenter, **Chuck Barber** to share his experiences with fairway rolling. Dr. Paul Koch from the University of Wisconsin was next to discuss all things snow mold before the elections and lunch. Everybody who ran for office was elected, so your new Board looks like this: President **Chuck Barber**; Vice-President **Matt Kregel**; Secretary/Treasurer **Matt Harstad**; Directors **Jeff Hoste**, **Justin**





Two of the largest smiles seen at the Midwest Annual Meeting, the incoming President Chuck Barber and the outgoing President, Dave Kohley.

Kirtland, Kris Kvelland, Jim Pedersen and Justin VanLanduit. Dave Kohley is now the immediate Past President and Dave Groelle is done and gone. The after-lunch portion began



Len Vanden Bos addressed the afternoon attendees and talked about perseverance.

with the presenting of the Editorial Awards, with the Ray Gerber Award going to Chuck Barber (he went home with a lot of hardware) for his "Now is the Winter of Our Discontent" article from the April 2014 issue, and the Fred Opperman Award presented to (well not really presented to since he left early) Darrick Robbins for his "The Underground Connection" article in the June issue. Greg Martin took the podium next with his views on the state of the golf business, especially as it relates to architecture—a very provocative presentation. Dr. Kevin Frank from Michigan State University then spoke about winter kill and how to prep for survival, and the keynote address was given by Chicago Bears

chaplain Len Vanden Bos (who vehemently denies any rumors of having administered the Last Rites to the team). To wind things up, Past President Kohley passed the gavel to the new guy who declared that the meeting was adjourned and the bar was open. Thanks for the great day to our host Curtis and the staff at Medinah, to the day's presenters and facilitators, and to the generous sponsors Arthur Clesen, Inc., Burris Equipment



Justing Kirtland (l), the newest MAGCS Board Member started his orientation right after lunch, led by MAGCS and GC-SAA Past President, Michael Bavier.

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Arch-rivals and Arch-itects Mike Benkusky and Rick Jacobson.



Charlie Brugler and Kerry Anderson share a laugh.



Jake Vollbeer, Al Pondel and John Gurke



Ed Braunsky (center) tries to keep the peace between these two Architects, Benkusky and Greg Martin.



Henry Michna, CGCS and Rob Foster take a moment to catch up during a break.

.....Your Impact on Handicap from page 6.

How do the trees impact play? Are they trimmed up so recovery from a poor shot is possible? I don't want to go out on a limb, so I'll leave this one out of it.

The psychological impact of a hole, I feel, has a lot to do with design and impact the golf course architect puts in front of the golfer as they prepare to play their next shot. Sometimes mowing patterns make it difficult to line up shots, or find the middle of the fairway or edges of greens.

With all these stars aligned, a superintendent could potentially increase a golf course's Course Rating by 3.0 points and the Slope Rating by 14 from the original normal rating. I think most would agree this can be done without too much thought. Look at the US Open: grow the rough, dry things down, speed things up and you end up with hard golf for the best players in the World. Do this every weekend for the same groups of players and what is the impact? It is hard to say, but they're posting scores to a course with a different rating. It may not be that impactful if they only play the same course in their same groups each weekend, but take them out of that routine and see if their handicap is a true measure of their game.

Length / Obstacle	Course Rating	Slope Rating	Notes
Length	0.8	2	180 yards added
Topography	0.2	1	Softened landing areas (no roll)
Fairway	0.2	1	Firm up greens
Green Target	0.2	1	Tucking cup locations
Recoverability & Rough	0.7	5	Rough + 3.75"
OB / Extreme Rough	0.5	3	Native areas in play
Green Surface	0.4	1	Increase green speed
<b>Potential Rating Impact</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>14</b>	

*If all these factors were pushed to the upper end of their limit, the superintendent could cause a significant impact to the Course Rating and Slope Rating.*

If the course they play has a USGA Course Rating of 70.1 and a Slope Rating of 120 and those measurements are effectively 73.0 and 134 how true is their index if they're posting scores to the normal rating? What is the impact if this is done week after week? In essence they are playing a more difficult golf course and posting scores to one that has been measured easier. Their own index might be lower that what the computer spits out every revision period, not giving them an accurate measure of their ability, disrupting the purpose of the USGA Handicap System "to make the game of golf more enjoyable by enabling players of differing abilities to compete on an equitable basis." In essence they're probably a few strokes better than their index, which could work in their favor – unless of course the club they are going to play does the very same thing to their competitors each weekend. @

Works Cited: USGA Handicap System 2014-2015



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In closing I would like to thank all the people in my life and in our industry that I owe so much to. Without your support, criticism, effort, knowledge and understanding I would not be where I am today. Further, I would like to thank my fellow Board members who have allowed me to be a part of The Midwest. Starting this Board term as President is a truly humbling, wonderful I know I will enjoy. Where does the time go? I don't believe it matters where the time goes as long as it's used wisely along the way. @

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