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**President's Message**

I hope everyone had an enjoyable stay in Phoenix at the 58th International Golf Course Conference and Show. Attendance was again record-breaking. The Chicago area and the state of Illinois was well represented in the educational sessions, with at least twelve people presenting talks on various programs. I thought the trade show presented some new companies with innovative products and ideas for the upcoming season. Our congratulations to the people at G.C.S.A.A. for another conference well done.

As many of you are well aware, Len Berg did not get elected to the G.C.S.A.A. board of directors. Many of the voting delegates from the southern states cast their association votes for Randy Nichols from Georgia. Also re-elected to the board were Steve Cadenelli from New Jersey and Dennis Lyon from Colorado. These are all qualified individuals that will do a good job while serving G.C.S.A.A. However, what bothers me is the regional division that occurs when it becomes time to vote. Obviously, many people felt that the Midwest already had two good representatives from this region, Jerry Faubel from Michigan and Bill Roberts from Wisconsin. Therefore, the other board positions should be filled by superintendents representing other geographical regions of the country. This rational hurt Len's chance to get elected, but should not remove us from the fact that he is experienced, elected, and highly qualified to serve on the G.C.S.A.A. board. If not in 1987, maybe in future years at a more opportune time. I'm sure Len will continue to serve G.C.S.A.A. in the same diligent manner as in past years. The association thanks you, Len, for all the hard work and energy you have expended for us. I would also like to thank Al Fierst and Bruce Williams our voting delegates, Roger Stewart and everyone who took part in Len's campaign.

While in Phoenix, M.A.G.C.S., Inc. donated and presented a check to G.C.S.A.A. Scholarship and Research Fund in the amount of \$2,000.00. This money has been earmarked toward funding local and regional research efforts that will benefit all of us.

The Midwest hospitality suite held in the Phoenix Hilton was well received by our members. The association must commend Turf Products, Ltd., Chicago Turf and Irrigation, Illinois Lawn Equip., Inc., and Arthur Clesen, Inc., for sponsoring the room one night each during our stay in Phoenix. A special thanks to Bruce Williams, arrangements chairman, and Dave Meyer who helped with coordinating the food, beverages, and housing.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont'd from page 2)

On a more local note, the January meeting held at Arrowhead Country Club had 110 members in attendance, almost one-fourth of the total membership. We would encourage everyone to attend the March 16 meeting at Nordic Hills. Recreational activities are provided in the afternoon including bowling, racquetball, basketball, and hoisting a few beers. Dinner at Nordic Hills is always excellent and the education committee has a good lineup of speakers from the University of Illinois.

I will remind everyone that if your association dues are not paid by March 1, your name will be taken off the list of M.A.G.C.S., Inc. members and you will be forced to re-apply. After all dues are collected, and a complete membership list is compiled, we will be publishing and distributing a new membership directory.

By the time you receive this issue of the **Bull Sheet**, the Midwest Regional Turf Conference will probably be in session March 2-4 at Purdue University. The turf program which is part of the Agronomy Department at Purdue, has been highly regarded over the past thirty-five years under Dr. Bill Daniel. During the last two years, Dr. Clark Throssell has taken over the reigns and has done an admirable job. But right now, the turf program needs the support of members from the M.A.G.C.S. and the other regional associations in order to continue the tradition of excellent research programs in turfgrass. I hope to see many of you at Purdue.

Also, March 31 is the date that has been set for the Annual CDGA Green Seminar at Butterfield Country Club. Dr. Randy Kane and Dennis Davenport have a good roster of speakers lined up with the major theme being Putting Green Management. The mild winter weather may lead to another early spring and we could be out rolling and mowing greens by the end of March.

James E. Evans

## Brian C. Chalifoux Biography



Brian C. Chalifoux has been a superintendent for six years. He has spent the last four of those years as the superintendent at Olympia Fields Country Club. This is Brian's first year on the Board of Directors. Brian and his wife Carol Ann have three children, Laurie age 7, Jennifer age 6, and Brian Jr. is 1.

## Director's Column Bentgrass Turf

by Brian C. Chalifoux  
Olympia Fields Country Club

With so many courses now considering or planning bentgrass conversions, I would like to share some of my observations since our conversion in the Fall of 1984.

1. Starting with putting greens, I find many factors affecting growing conditions;

A. Bentgrass Variety: Fortunately we chose Pennncross for its aggressive growth habit. Under our heavy play situation it has adapted very well.

B. Soil Types: Sixteen of our greens were regrassed on existing mixes. This mix is classified as a sandy loam. The other two greens have a 70% sand, 30% organic mix. Establishment was superior on the old greens compared to the new high sand greens. This was attributed mainly to the abundant available nutrients that the old mix contained. Supplemental applications were necessary on the new greens to encourage development. I also noted that cultural practices such as verticutting and topdressing had to be reduced on these two greens. On the positive side of the high sand greens, was root development. I would say we had a much stronger root system based on density and depth of roots. Compaction problems associated with the new greens are far less severe as compared with old green mix.

C. Green Location — Perhaps the most important aspect of bentgrass turf is sunlight. We have found through failures that it is necessary to have sunlight the majority of the day. Green thinning, poor recuperative ability, algae buildup, and poor rooting were common in shaded conditions. Once these conditions started to appear it was impossible to bring these greens back to the high standards which the rest of the greens are maintained. Aerification, spiking, supplemental fertilization, hand watering, light topdressing, algae control, and additional fungicide applications did not solve the problem. Only after golfer traffic had stopped and soil temperatures already started with the high pruning of all trees affecting sunlight availability. We also had to remove certain trees that were keys to gaining sunlight. We were reluctant to do so, but quality turf was our priority.

D. Height of Cut — Under non stressful situations, we had no problem maintaining a cutting height of 9/64". This was not the case once August came along. With our pennncross thinning out, root system declining, soil temperatures increasing and compaction peaking out from record number of rounds, it was not in our best interest to be cutting so short. The demand for fast greens has once again caused us to forget about quality and maintain for the precious few that are only concerned with speed. This will not be the case come Spring for we had already decided to raise our cutting height to an acceptable growing medium. Proper topdressing, verticutting and fertilizing should offset the cutting height and give us moderately fast greens.

2. Tees — Pennncross was again used and proved to be most durable in this situation. Our biggest problem again appeared in shaded conditions. Areas receiving minimal amounts of sunlight simply will not tolerate this situation. Turf thinning, spike damage, and slow divot recovery were all apparent. After deciding it is not possible to grow pennncross under these shaded conditions, we seeded to a ryegrass blend. This took place

(cont'd. on page 4)

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(Bentgrass Turf cont'd.)

in November and will be followed up this Spring with a ryegrass, fescue combination. If this doesn't work, we will convert back to an annual bluegrass situation which previously was holding up okay. The rest of our tees were holding up nicely with no problems other than normal wear and tear. This was attributed to daily divot repair, higher fertility, moderate watering and hand mowing.

3. Fairways — Penneagle was our choice here and I believe our selection was the right one. After a slow start the Penneagle now is starting to dominate the turf stand. After completing two eighteen hole fairway renovation programs (North and South Courses), I can positively say that timing is the key to a successful transition. Our South Course fairways were completed sixteen days ahead of North, August 27th. While the 1986 conversion of our South fairways appears to be more successful than North, I look for two equally manageable situations in 1987. Additions of quick coupling valves at every other head will aid in water management, twice a year aerification, four times a year verticutting, as needed fertility and supplements, growth regulator use, triplex mowing, and continued overseeding practices, all add up to excellent playing conditions for years to come.

In closing, I would say that all our bentgrass conversions were very beneficial with the exception of our predominantly shaded situations. Grass varieties are very limited and new varieties are badly needed.

### GCSAA Media Relations Manager Picked

Bob Still has been named Media Relations Manager for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). In this position, Still is primarily responsible for development and implementation of promotional activities on behalf of the international association and its members.

John M. Schilling, GCSAA's Executive Director, said, "Bob's experience and background in public relations and the game of golf add great potential to developing a top-notch information center and will help the Association's effectiveness in improving the status of the nation's golf course superintendents."

Clay Loyd, GCSAA's Director of Communications, added, "Bob's outgoing personality and experience in promoting one of Kansas City's very successful charity golf events make him a strong asset to our Association."

A 1978 Communications graduate of Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, Still is an avid golfer and serves as Tournament Director for the LEN DAWSON CELEBRITY CLASSIC in Kansas City.

Still recently was named one of the Outstanding Businessmen in America. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Miss Greater Kansas City Pageant and enjoys working with The Dream Factory, a volunteer organization that grants wishes to terminally-and-chronically-ill children.

He and his wife Debbie, along with son Dustin, reside in Lenexa, Kansas.

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## In Your Garden Mild Winter Good for People, Not Plants

Midwesterners, accustomed to harsh winters are breathing a sigh of relief because of the unusually mild weather so far this year. Each day means spring is that much closer and the chance of extended foul weather diminished.

Yet according to James A. Fizzell, University of Illinois Horticulturist in Cook County, the mild weather could spell trouble for plantings. Fizzell says the cold weather in November and more recent cold nights have been enough to satisfy the low-temperature needs of many kinds of plants. Since plants are vernalized, warm days make them think spring has arrived. Buds of some lilacs and pussy willows have begun to swell. If you cut some of these branches, you can force them into bloom indoors, Fizzell adds.

The problems arise, warns Fizzell, when temperatures suddenly drop to much below normal. This could happen any day. Those of us who know Chicago weather learn to expect the worst. Should this happen, semi-dormant buds will be killed and tender twigs and trunks will be sensitized to invasion by cankering organisms. The result will be lack of flowers, late leafing out, and die-back of twigs and branches next summer.

Fizzell thinks turfgrass and perennials are safe so far, because soils are not frozen and are moist enough to keep plants from drying out. There has been little frost heaving. But, it is much safer to have the 4 to 6 inch blanket of snow protecting these plants if severe weather is in the offering.

Take advantage of any nice weather by inspecting your plantings and making any repairs you can. Firm heaved plants, water if needed, and re-apply rabbit repellent.

Fizzell reports that the cold snap in November severely damaged his rose plantings which were in full leaf and bloom. If this has happened to you, get a rose plant order in now. Should the damage be widespread as it was last year, roses might be in short supply in spring.

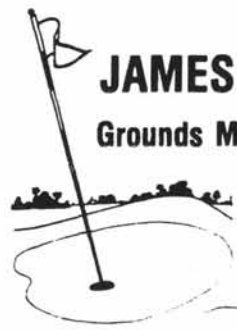
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## "A Rebuttal"

Dear Mr. Carney:

As President of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents of the Greater Chicago Metropolitan Area, I have been elected by our membership (totaling 470) to write you a letter. This letter is in rebuttal to your recent article that appeared in the January 1987 issue of **Golf Digest** entitled, "MY SHOT — A case for banning temporary greens." Let's say that Robert Carney is granted one wish: All superintendents are going to ban temporary winter greens. In so doing, you remove one of the superintendents alternatives for winter golf play, and leaves him with just two choices: 1.) The golf course, including the greens, would be open and played the same in winter as in summer and, 2.) the golf course would be closed during the winter and reopened only when the greens were fit to play.

In **some** cases, the superintendent has no choice, the powers to be force him to keep the greens open at all times. This is the type of golf course you need to locate, join, and become a life-time member, because they cater to people like you. They are concerned mainly with optimizing revenues, and have little regard for course conditions. In **most** cases, the superintendent will decide when people can or cannot play greens in the winter. This decision should be made by the expert, the one who knows the golf course and it's conditions better than anyone, and that person is the golf course superintendent.

Your lack of knowledge about golf-green construction and maintenance is quite obvious. I'll guarantee you there are no two golf greens alike anywhere. How can you possibly compare one course to another with the numerous variables involved? Remember, putting greens consist of millions of small turf-grass plants that are living tissue, anchored and growing in a living soil medium. These plants continue to live throughout the year. In this region of the country, bentgrass becomes dormant during late November and breaks dormancy in mid-April. When mechanical or physiological damage occurs to the plant during dormancy, no recovery can occur until late April or May when temperatures are favorable for regrowth. Most of the damage is superficial, but when the crown or growing point of the plant is damaged, recovery will be slow or non-existent. The damaged areas provide a place for weak annual weed grasses, such as **Poa annua**, to germinate and develop, thus reducing turfgrass quality.

It's not that we don't want to be bothered with winter golfers, the turfgrass plants and the putting surface cannot afford to be damaged by winter golfers. The price for restoring the greens to tournament quality is prohibitive when considering the small number of people who cause the damage and benefit from winter play. If everyone had 45 holes similar to Gordon Witteveen, or even 27 holes, you would see a few superintendents allow winter play on 9 holes. However, this is not the norm, it is an exceptionally rare case. How can you possibly take one example and make a case for everyone to ban temporary winter greens? Each club has different policies and procedures. The superintendents are striving to do what is best for the good of the club, the golf course, and the great majority of it's members by providing temporary greens. If you ban temporary winter greens, then we basically have just one choice, and that is to close the putting greens and the golf course until further notice.

**James E. Evans, President, MAGCS**



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