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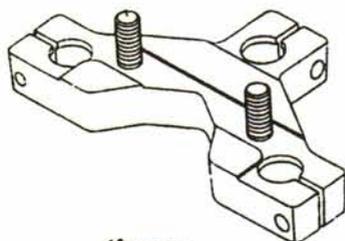


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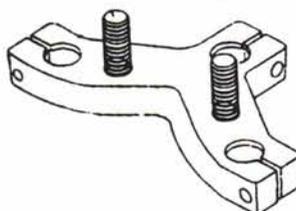
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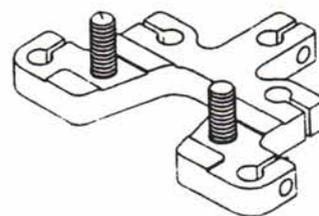
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PHOTOGRAPHY

Raymond Schmitz

TURFGRASS ADVISOR

Dr. Randy T. Kane

University of Illinois & CDGA
630-954-2753

EDITOR: **Fred D. Opperman**

810 Greenwood Avenue
Carpentersville, IL 60110

Phone & Fax 847-428-5009 or email: magcsoc@aol.com

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FEATURES

Front Cover

An oil painting done by Peter Leuzinger, CGCS of the Ivanhoe Club, named "Christmas Breakfast." This is the second painting that Peter has painted for the cover of *On Course*, the first being a year ago, December 1996.

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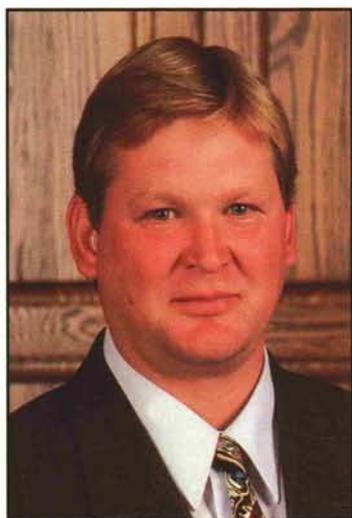
Fred Opperman

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The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS) is a professional organization founded in 1927 whose goals include preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge pertaining to golf turf maintenance.

We endeavor to increase efficiency and economic performance while improving and enhancing the individual and collective prestige of the members.

The MAGCS member is also an environmental steward. We strive to uphold and enhance our surroundings by promoting flora and fauna in every facet in a manner that is beneficial to the general public now and in the future.



Kevin Czerkies, CGCS Sportsman's C.C.

It seems like yesterday that I was a know-it-all high school kid looking for a summer job. Being a golf lover, it only seemed natural that I should try to find a job that would allow me to play free golf. I figured there was no better place than Cog Hill—72 holes! I owe a great deal of thanks to Ken Lapp, superintendent at Cog Hill, for giving me the chance, teaching me the business, and helping me succeed.

Six years ago, I was elected to serve on the MAGCS Board; now you've entrusted me to serve as president for the next year. I appreciate this opportunity and will put forth every effort to maintain the high standards that have made the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents the best GCSAA chapter.

The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents offers its members many privileges. To get the most out of this association, be an active member. Serve on one of the many

committees, attend education seminars, or participate in golf events. What I find most gratifying about the MAGCS are the members. There are a lot of good people in this association, and I enjoy being around them, both professionally and socially.

I would like to encourage each and every member to communicate with the MAGCS Board if you have any problems or concerns. Also, don't hesitate to give the board a pat on the back every once in awhile; the directors volunteer a lot of their time to this association for the benefit of us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Czerkies". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kevin Czerkies, CGCS President, MAGCS

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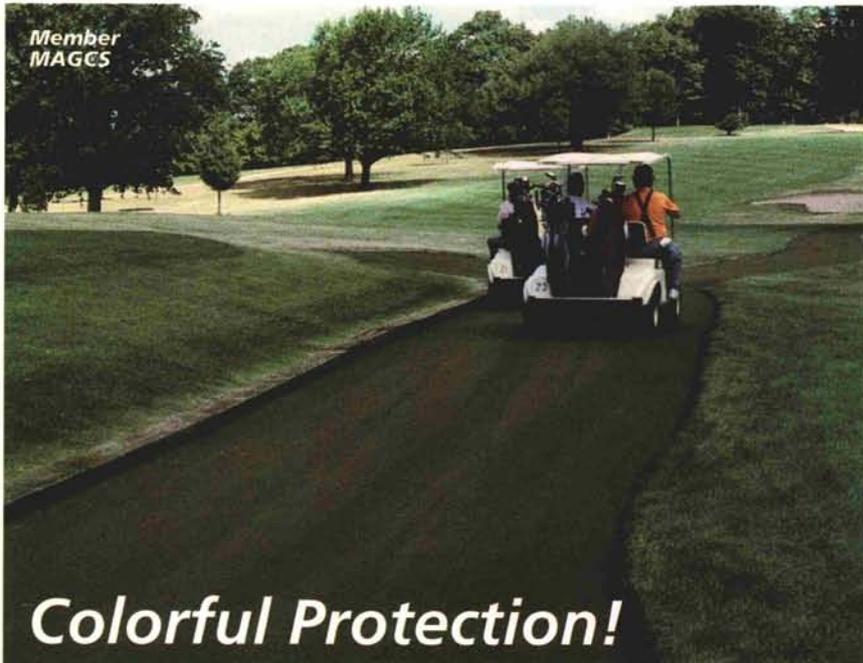
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*John Meyer
Cannon Turf Supply, Inc.*

As I sit here this early November day, it is snowing outside, which makes it easier to write a column for the December issue of *On Course*. Each "columnist" I know wants to make their article "timely." I hope I can do the same. Today I am writing you with not only a recap of where the

Commercial Member Advisory Committee has been but also "my" vision of the future.

This past year, the committee took a large leap forward in trying something new, something that had never been done before in our organization, a Vendor's Day Golf Outing. A mini "trade show," if you wish. The golf day was a sell-out as were all of the booths. However, the trade show was not the sellout that the vendors would have wished. In other words, it was not well attended by the superintendents. Hats off to all those that did attend; and we, the vendors, certainly do appreciate your taking the time and effort to go through the show. Many thanks to the Board of Directors for letting us try something new in an effort to raise dollars for research.

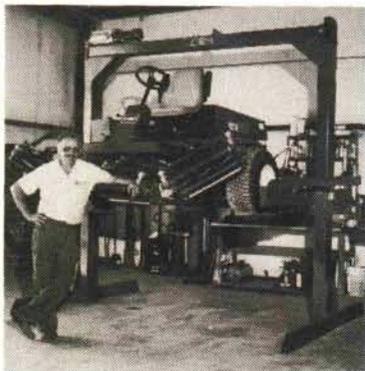
Although attendance was not the best, the day WAS a success.

We raised \$5,000 for the research green at Cantigny. If there is a future in Vendor's Day '98, we need to find away to increase the participation by the superintendents or the day will fail. From the survey we sent out after the show, most vendors would not participate under the same format.

Which brings me to the future of the committee. Is Vendor's Day a good thing? I think so. I believe it can be an excellent tool in raising funds for a needy cause. That needy cause need not be the research green at Cantigny. That needy cause could be the American Cancer Society or the Leukemia Foundation or Mothers Against Drunk Drivers or you name it. The needy cause could be an annual scholarship fund given to a MAGCS member's child for college. Or we could do both.

(continued on page 28)

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Fairways of the Future

Topdressing fairways is gaining popularity in different regions of the country as a means of producing drier, firmer playing conditions on courses with heavy soils.

*Paul Vermeulen
Director, Mid-Continent Region,
USGA Green Section*

In our fast-paced society, the spirit of competition exerts a constant force on both personal achievement and product development. In the game of golf, one can simply look at the stunning performance of Tiger Woods at The Masters and the ever-increasing size of the driver head for two examples of how the competitive human spirit has once again raised the public's expectations for performance.

In the arena of golf course management, the expectations held by golfers are also creeping upwards as individual courses continue to upgrade their maintenance programs. Nowhere is

this ratcheting up of maintenance standards more evident than in the care of the fairways. The most recent improvements in fairway care include the regular use of growth regulators, the routine application of sand topdressing, improved lightweight mowing equipment, and expanded irrigation coverage.

Having switched over to lightweight fairway mowing equipment, most courses maintaining creeping bentgrass fairways came face-to-face with the dilemma of clipping disposal. Some courses elected to collect the clippings and either compost them or dispose of them off-site, while others chose to spread them out in rough areas with large manure spreaders. Short-handed maintenance crews that

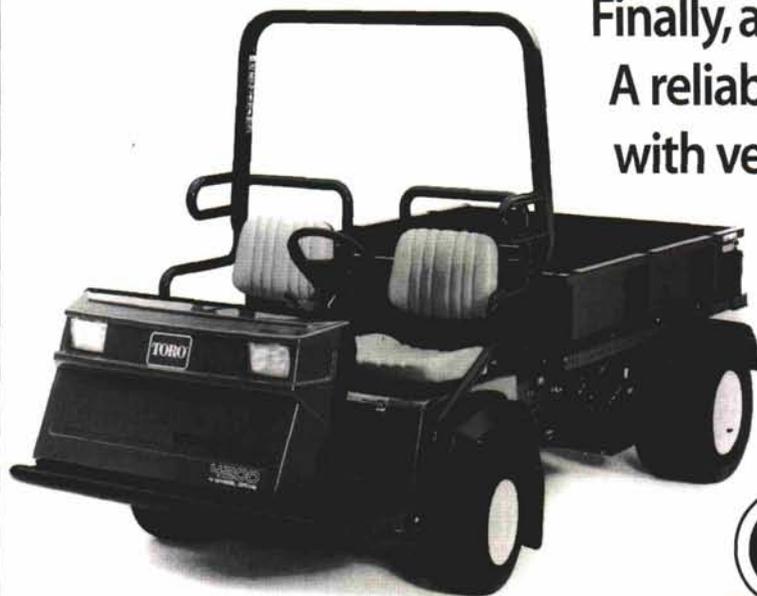
were incapable of collecting clippings had little choice but to leave the debris lying on the fairways.

In response to the clipping dilemma, many courses are now applying a growth regulator on a regimented schedule commencing after the threat of frost has passed in the spring and continuing up until three to four weeks before the first threat of frost in the fall. In addition to reducing clipping production by as much as 50 to 70 percent, the use of growth regulators has also decreased the mowing frequency and made it possible for some to mow during the afternoons when both the turf and soil are relatively dry. Looking forward, the use of growth regulators on the

(continued on page 8)

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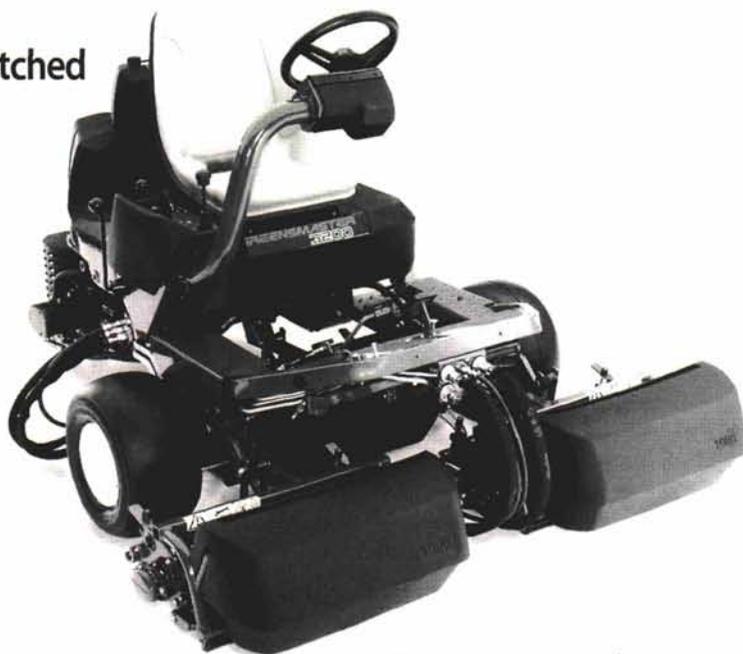
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Fairways of the Future

(continued from page 6)

fairways will, for many, become standard operating procedure now that product chemistry is such that side effects, such as yellowing and delayed divot recovery, are no longer an issue.

Looking toward the future, it is also likely that the practice of applying sand topdressing on the fairways will begin to gain popularity in the Chicagoland area by the turn of the next century. While presently viewed as extravagant or even unnecessary by some, this practice has become popular in the Pacific Northwest. Having accumulated one to two inches of sand topdressing on the fairways, Oregonians and Washingtonians now enjoy drier, firmer playing conditions when Mother Nature steps in to take over the irrigation of their courses. These results are very similar to those that were achieved on putting greens across the country when sand topdressing became popular in the 1970s.

In regard to the nuts and bolts of fairway topdressing, the goal (similar for putting greens) is to accumulate a layer of sand that protects heavy soils from compaction and prevents the thatch from developing an unhealthy, sponge-like characteristic. To achieve this goal, sand topdressing is best applied several times during the growing season at a rate light enough to prevent the destruction of mowing equipment. This, undoubtedly, requires the purchase of a large capacity topdresser that can spread sand evenly at a very efficient pace.

To prevent soil layering caused by breaking up aeration cores on top of the accumulating sand layer, courses will also have to adjust their aeration programs. For example,



To accommodate fairway topdressing, courses may have to start removing aeration cores so that the soil brought to the surface does not contaminate the accumulating sand layer.

Looking toward the future, it is also likely that the practice of applying sand topdressing on the fairways will begin to gain popularity in the Chicagoland area by the turn of the next century.

a course may elect to rely on solid tine aeration or to continue with traditional hollow tine aeration but remove the cores rather than break them up over the surface of the fairways.

Continuing on in our discussion to the practice of fairway mowing, most superintendents know that the turfgrass industry

reached a new height in 1997 when Congressional Country Club elected to use walk-behind mowers in preparation for the U.S. Open. While using walk-behind mowers is certainly out of the question for everyday maintenance, it is clear that courses are still searching for the ultimate fairway mower. Generally speaking, courses with creeping bentgrass fairways are looking for mowers with larger tires, lighter cutting heads, less abrasive rollers, and vertical mowing attachments in an effort to do a better job of cutting the grass and minimizing physical wear 'n' tear on the perimeter cleanup pass.

Whether tomorrow's lightweight fairway mower has three, five or seven cutting heads, two-wheel or four-wheel drive, or seven- or eleven-bladed reels seems unclear. What is clear is that the ultimate mowing machine has not yet been designed simply because the temptation to mow with walk-behind mowers in front of a

(continued on page 10)

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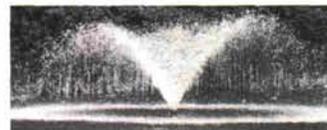
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Fairways of the Future

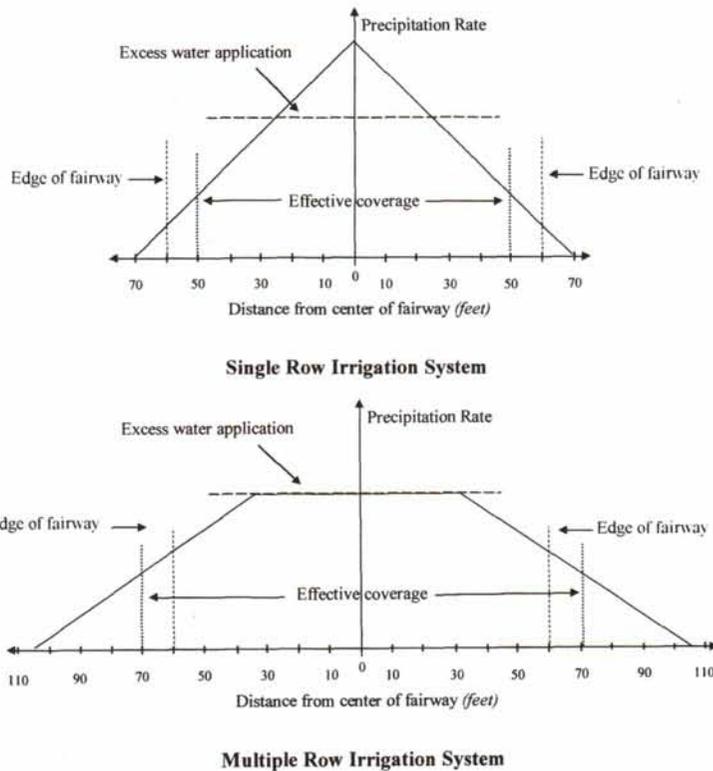
(continued from page 8)

national audience is too great to ignore.

Continuing on the topic of technology, once man's ability to control water from the sky becomes a reality, courses will no longer have to rely on irrigation systems to maintain perfect fairways. Until this day arrives, however, the simple truth about fairway irrigation is that multiple rows of sprinkler heads are far better than a single row. For this reason alone, course after course is installing a new irrigation system to keep up with the golfers' demands for perfection from tree line to tree line.

In Illustration 1, the water distribution between a single row irrigation system and a multiple row irrigation system shows how multiple rows provide a more

(continued on page 28)

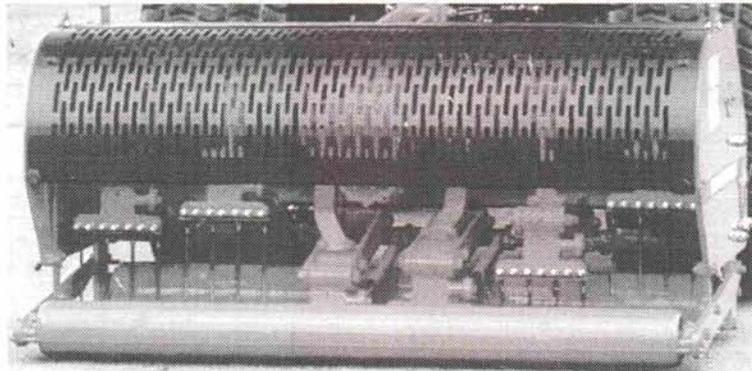


*Illustration 1:
Comparative water distribution between a single row irrigation system and multiple row irrigation system.*

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