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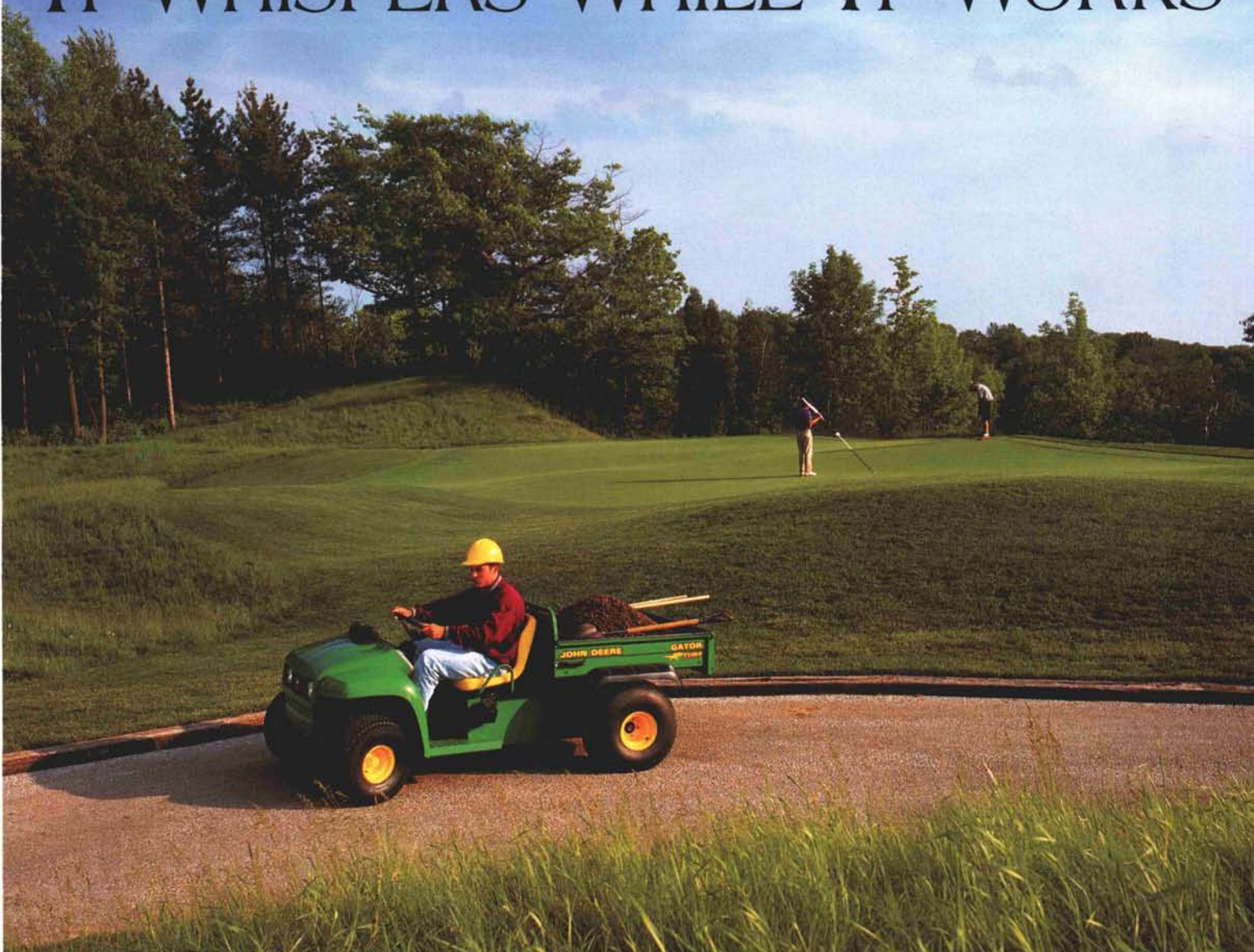
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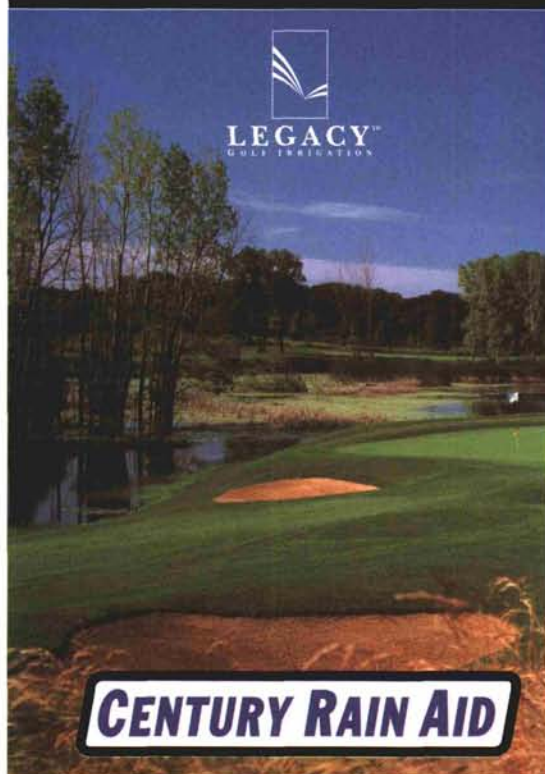
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*Kevin Czerkies, CGCS
Sportsman's C.C.*

Well, March Madness is once again upon us. Soon the snow will melt away, the ground will thaw out, and golfers will be invading our turf. If you're like me, you get cabin fever halfway through winter. I'm ready for another season. This month, I would like to share my views about the "madness" that is taking place in our industry.

This year, Sportsman's Country Club will become one of the growing number of courses that is banning metal spikes. This is something that I've been pushing for a couple of years. Our golf pro has been against it from the beginning, but he should see a difference in the quality of the greens soon enough. Matt Hurley of Standard Golf Products summed up the alternative spike madness best by saying, "Soft spikes are the first superintendent-friendly invention to be used by golfers in the modern day." How true that statement is. Nowadays, golf courses are expected to constantly be in top-notch condition. Banning metal spikes will certainly help superintendents provide better greens for golfers. I've always felt that the golfing public wouldn't

accept alternative spikes until the touring pros began wearing them. Well, some of them are now doing just that, and it's helping our cause. Now, if we could just get golfers to repair ball marks, replace divots, and stop using golf carts, all we'd have to worry about is the weather.

It seems the madness of getting rid of geese has become rather expensive. My club jumped on the bandwagon and bought a Border collie. Although the dog is owned by the Northbrook Park District, he goes home with me. The dog was purchased to get rid of geese at Sportsman's and the various parks throughout Northbrook. It took my wife and kids about two minutes to fall in love with this dog. Now, if I decide, or my bosses decide for me, that my welcome at Sportsman's has run out, I'm going to have a real problem. I can't see myself forking over \$3,200 to keep this dog. Then it's heartbreak city for my family.

Ed Braunsky has been on me about my president's messages not being long enough, so I thought I'd reminisce a little. March Madness will forever mean one thing to me: the state high school basketball tournament. This month, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the greatest high school basketball team ever: the 1978 Lockport Porters. Among the many wins during their undefeated state championship season, the mighty Porters handily beat Ed's high school Aurora West and then the St. Joseph team, lead by Isiah Thomas, in the state championship game. Not only did the varsity team finish 33-0, but the sophomore and freshman teams finished undefeated as well. The entire Lockport basketball program finished 78-0 in 1978. My wife, who was the captain of the

cheerleading team, and I were seniors that year. That was an experience neither of us will ever forget.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate the following MAGCS members that won 1998 Environmental Steward Awards. Winning a national award was Peter Leuzinger, Ivanhoe Club; winning regional awards were Dan Dinelli, North Shore Country Club, and Tom Morgensen, Countryside Golf Courses; and winning merit awards were Luke Cella, Pottawatomie Golf Course, and Scott Witte, Cantigny Golf Club. Congratulations, guys, we're proud of your accomplishments!

Congratulations are also extended to the golfers who represented the MAGCS in the GCSAA golf tournament in Anaheim. Al Pondel, Deerfield G.C., won the Championship Flight by shooting a 3 under par 69 at Tustin Ranch. Tim Scott, Stoney Creek G.C., and Tom Robinson, Ravinia Green C.C., both shot a 71 to earn the runner-up position. On top of that, the MAGCS team won the chapter team gross championship. The team consisted of Al Pondel, Deerfield G.C., Tom Robinson, Ravinia Green C.C., Randy Wahler, Knollwood C.C., and Bob Kronn, LaGrange C.C.

*Kevin Czerkies, CGCS
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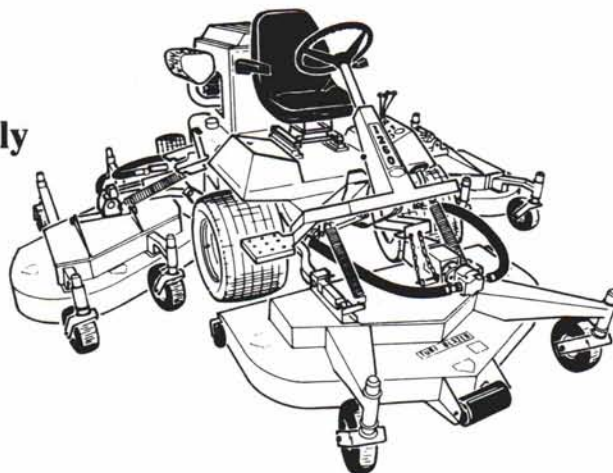
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*Brian A. Bossert, CGCS
Bryn Mawr C.C.*

I am putting this column together a few day prior to the annual GCSAA Conference. I hope everyone enjoyed our industry's enormous educational opportunity. I am beginning my fourth year as a member of the MAGCS Board of Directors, and looking back, the responsibilities seem to have steadily increased. I really enjoy my increased level of involvement in our association and appreciate the support of the other board members and the membership as a whole.

President Czerkies handed me the reins on the Golf Committee this year. Actually, he wrapped the reins around my neck long before he was even president. When that Starr fellow is finished investigating the Lewinsky/Clin-ton affair, I think I'll have him look into this. I'm not sure Kevin can hand out assignments six months before his presidency starts. The committee consists of several veterans and a few new volunteers. To date, we have met once, and I hope we can continue doing the great job that Luke's committees have made a standard the past two seasons.

The biggest favor the Golf Committee will ask the membership for is to sign up as early as possible for our monthly meet-

ings. Remember, registration is on a first-signed-up, first-paid basis. As a reminder, you can register via fax with a credit card and, who knows, maybe through the Internet soon. Your early registration allows us to be much more organized on our end and, consequently, increases the chances of you having an enjoyable day at the course. Sorry, we can't do anything about that lousy slice!

We have no major changes planned for the golf events; no sense messing with success. You'll see a few new prize ideas and one or two new wrinkles regarding the event formats. The committee had some interesting ideas, and we'll see how you like them. As a token suggestion, consider signing up solo at a golf meeting this year and risk playing with someone you don't know. It might give you the opportunity to make a newer

member feel more welcome or might introduce you to that person who carries that product you've been looking for. Or perhaps you won't get anything out of the day except a new friend. Most of all, sign up early, play often and enjoy yourself!

By the time you read this, the GCSAA Conference and the annual hospitality room will be history. I've been busy putting the details together; and, hopefully, the event will be on par with the previous year's effort in Las Vegas. The support from our commercial members was again outstanding. We could not put this together without their financial encouragement. That goes for the monthly golf meetings as well!

Lastly, we are looking into the possibility of the MAGCS having their own web site. The

(continued on page 24)

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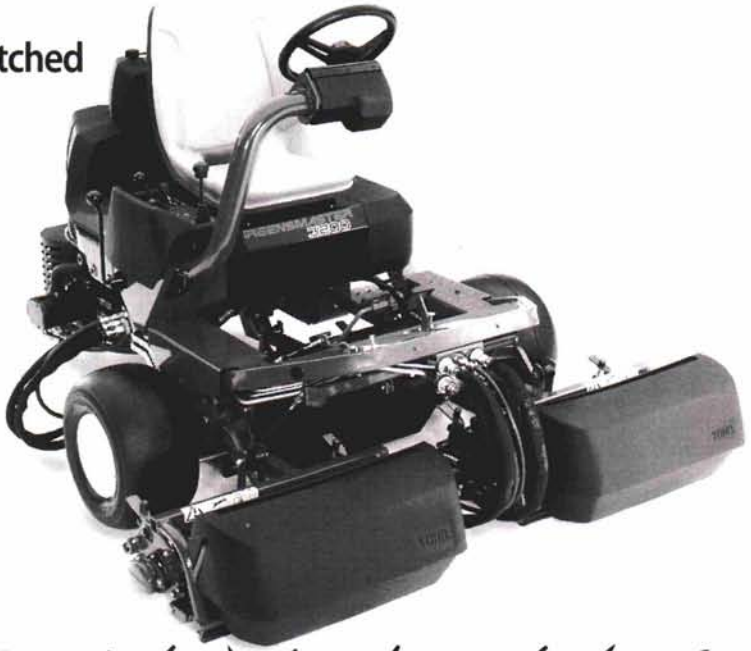
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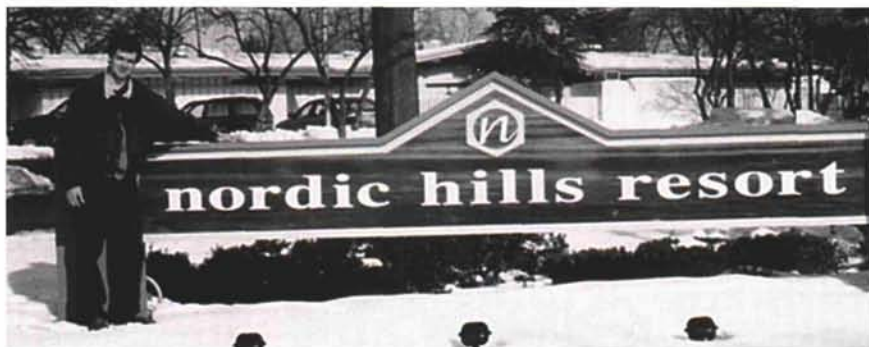
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Vince Dodge -N- Nordic Hills Resort



*Dan Anderson
Fox Valley G.C.*

Spring is in the air! I can't think of a better way to get motivated for the 1998 season than attending the March MAGCS meeting at Nordic Hills Resort with our host Vince Dodge. If you haven't been to Nordic Hills in awhile, then you'll be in for a nice surprise; the place looks great.

The course was built in 1926 by eight Norwegians (hence the name "Nordic Hills") with the resort added on in the early '70s. It's a beautiful course built on gently rolling hills with thick stands of hardwoods lining many of the fairways. The hardwoods are mostly Burr Oaks, especially on the front side. The course measures barely 6,000 yards from the tips but plays longer if you can't hit it straight; a common problem for myself.

This will be Vince's second full season at Nordic, and he is feeling much more comfortable at the helm than last year. Vince feels that probably his biggest challenge in his career was last year's greatly increased budget and the high expectations that come with that kind of additional spending. A close second, however, was working with Dave at Naperville C.C. (more on that later).

Vince started working in golf at the tender age of 16 at Aurora C.C. for Hans Hopphan. Then came a three-year stint at Naperville as Dave Blomquist's assistant. He took his first superintendent's position at Naperbrook G.C. in 1993 and remained there until accepting his present position at Nordic Hills in the fall of 1996. He is currently a member of the MAGCS, GCSAA and CAGCS.

Vince has two 2-year degrees: one in Business Management and one in Turf (Penn State '91). He has gotten some excellent training and education to help him handle the rigors of our profession. Vince credits his time at Naperville C.C., where Dave Blomquist is developing a reputation of producing good young superintendents, for fine-tuning his ideas. From that Vince has a

(continued on page 35)



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