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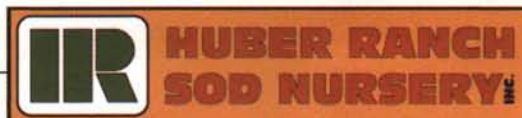
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# AUGUST 2005

Volume 59 No. 3

### FRONT COVER

No. 11 green at Water's Edge Golf Club.  
(Photo courtesy KemperSports Management)

### ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT

- 3 **Making the Most of the "Dog Days"**  
Phil Zeinert

### DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

- 5 **Show Your Support**  
Paul Bastron

- 7 **MIDWEST BREEZES**  
Coordinated by Bradley Anderson

### SUPER -N- SITE

- 11 **Jason Lemanski -N-  
Water's Edge Golf Club**  
Brian Baker

### FEATURE PICTORIAL

- 14 **Bunker Overhaul the Cornerstone of  
Award-Winning Renovation Project**  
Dan Dinelli

### EXTREME WEATHER COVERAGE

#### FEATURE ARTICLE

- 21 **The Drought of 2005**  
Coordinated by Cathy Miles Ralston

### EXTREME WEATHER COVERAGE

#### TURF UPDATE

- 29 **Will Summer 2005 Finish Drier, and Hotter,  
Than 1988? Stay Tuned . . .**  
Randy Kane, Ph.D.

### EXTREME WEATHER COVERAGE

#### THE WAY WE WERE

- 31 **Weather Extremes Plague Turf  
Again in 1988**

- 34 **THE BULL SHEET**  
John Gurke

### MAGCS EVENT

- 39 **Cougars Lose, But MAGCS Family Night  
at the Ballpark Is a Winner**  
Luke Cella

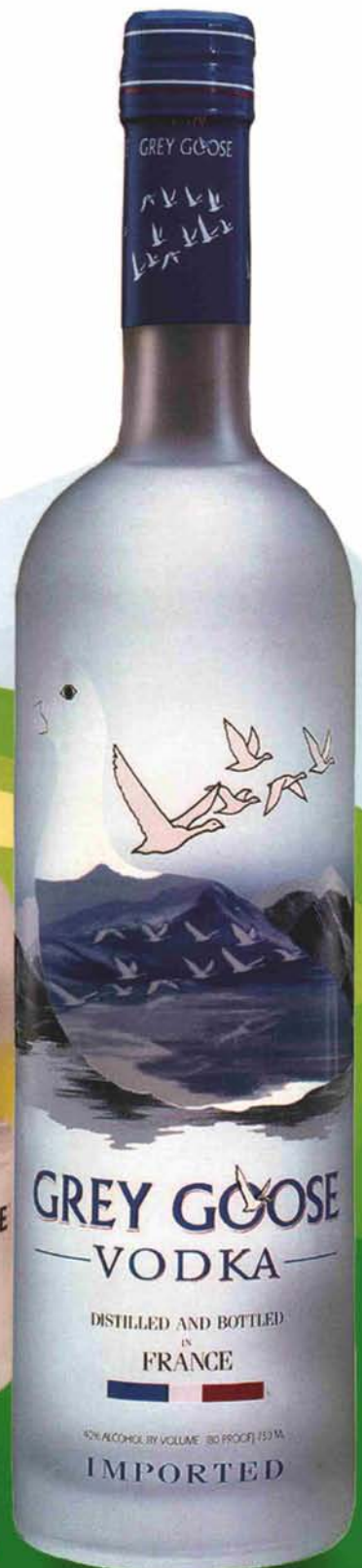
The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS), founded December 24, 1926, is a professional organization whose goals include preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge pertaining to golf turf maintenance.

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.

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## ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Phil Zeinert, CGCS Elgin Country Club

# Making the Most of the “Dog Days”

*August is my most trying month as a golf course superintendent. The turf is under stress, the prolonged summer heat also has taken its toll on the crew, and the members seem to be little edgy during the dog days of summer. Certain familiar aromas, sounds, sights and feelings all signal August to me.*

*The August air  
is thick, musty  
and stagnant,  
and it doesn't  
seem to matter  
if the wind blows  
because the new air  
is just as stagnant,  
musty and thick.*

Unlike early April's aroma of freshly mown grass that literally uplifts one's spirits to the onset of another golfing season, the aroma emitted during August more resembles a stuffy and stagnant locker. August is always in need of an air freshener. And as I pass a flowerbed with Nicotiana, the air nearby is a little more tolerable.

Most of our season, the morning air is usually filled with birds chirping and singing. Then, during August, it's only a chirp here and there and then the loud, obnoxious locusts and cicadas echo loudly why August is my least favorite month. After all those years underground, the poor cicada emerges during the doldrums of summer—August.

The August air is thick, musty and stagnant, and it doesn't seem to matter if the wind blows because the new air is just as stagnant, musty and thick. The haziness just nags on the human spirit. The once-lush green landscape goes dormant as if it were the dead of winter.

There is a feeling of edginess to August. And during my 19 years' experience as a superintendent, I have not quite been able to put my finger on it. But I think I'm closer to figuring it out. During the previous months, we are busy topdressing, aerifying, verticutting, grooming, double-cutting and rolling greens to manipulate a measurable improvement in playability. During August, however, doing less is better. Instead of promoting the turf to respond, doing less will help the turf survive. It's hard to just take it easy.

August is, however, a perfect juncture to spend time with the crew during a cookout or half-day function away from the golf course. The employees at Elgin Country Club look forward to the employee appreciation day held each August. The children are exhausted after a day filled with games and food. Numerous members can't wait to show their gratitude by serving the employees. The effects of this single day are long-lasting.

August is also a perfect time to analyze past performance and make notes that would be useful come budget time when the snow starts falling. And if fall projects are on the horizon, timelines and budgets can be double-checked. I guess there's plenty reason to frown upon the many shortcomings of August, but there is much to be gained. Opportunities present themselves: employee-appreciation functions, budgeting and project planning, allowing the turf to survive, to name a few. I hope all of you can find ways to make my least favorite month a productive one.



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# Show Your Support

*Many of us would consider 2005 to be a difficult season. For some, the season started with comprehensive winter injury and for nearly all of us it continues with hot, dry conditions. While focusing on the extreme conditions and challenges that face us, it becomes easy to lose sight of what really matters. For me, that is family, friends and the good health I too often abuse.*

*It has always been my experience that folks in the Midwest help out when they are asked.*

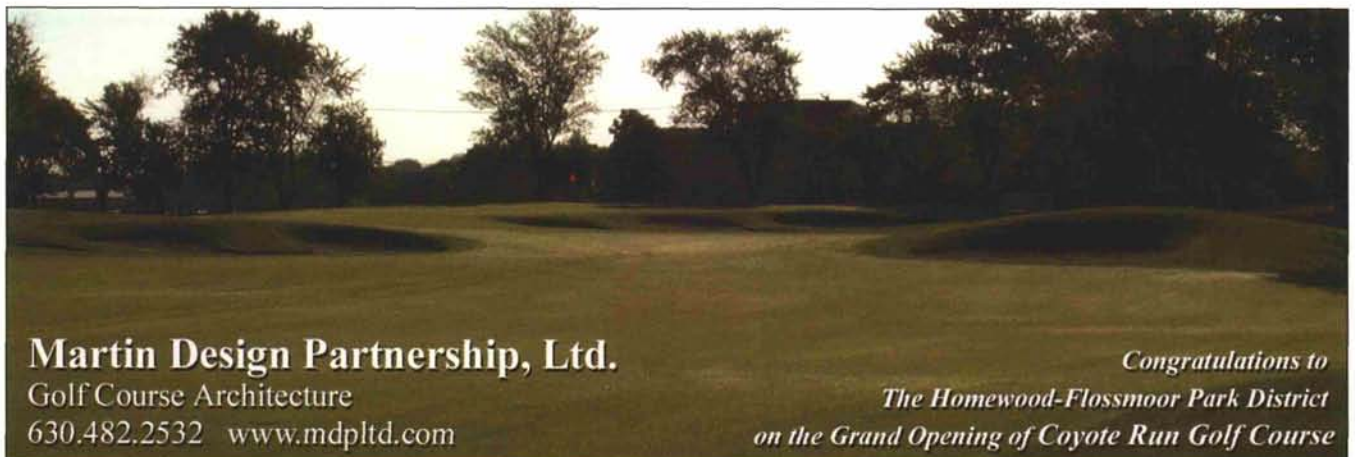
As members of the MAGCS, we are truly fortunate to have at our disposal (free of charge) the most competent consultants in our industry. Look around, they don't come any better than your neighbors, your friends and many of your suppliers—the same people you have been networking with since you entered the industry. After all, the only consultant I would consider accountable is one I would call a friend. So if you have a little turf heading south, call a friendly neighbor, pick up a six-pack and ride around looking at what ails you. You may or may not solve your turf issues, but I guarantee you'll feel better. It has always been my experience that folks in the Midwest help out when they are asked.

Speaking of supporting our friends and neighbors: by now, most of you are probably familiar with the Wee One Foundation. Recently, you should have received a letter requesting your financial support through membership in the foundation. Please take the time to send in your \$50 membership fee. I can think of no better way to show support to those in our industry who need it the most.

## **Upcoming Fundraising Events for the Wee One Foundation**

Monday, August 8: Outing at the Golf Club of Illinois to benefit our friend and colleague Dan Nielsen and his family. If you have not received a registration form, you may register online through the MAGCS Web site.

Monday, September 26: Annual Wee One Golf Outing at Pine Hills Country Club in Sheboygan, WI. Details will follow.



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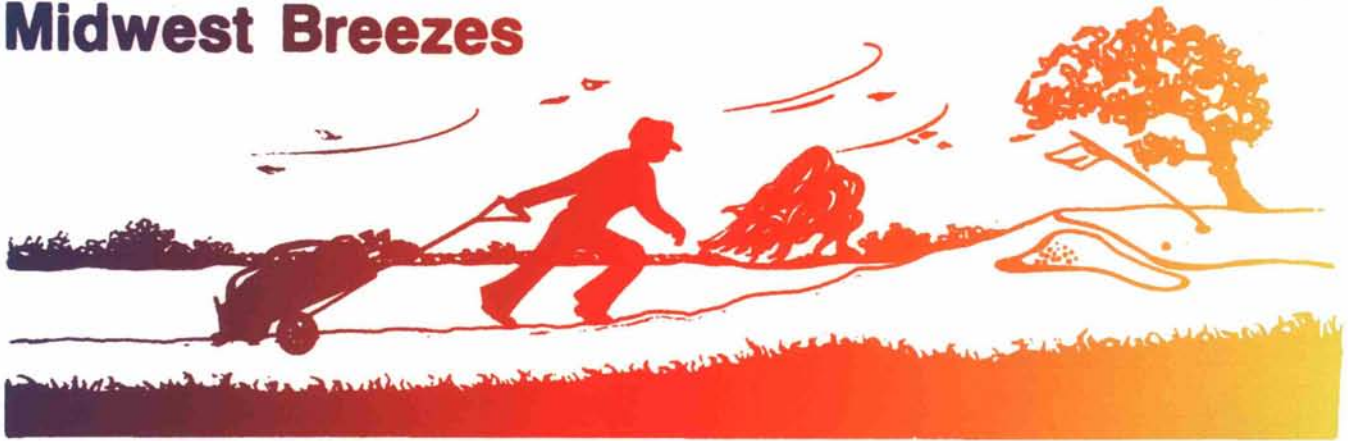
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# Midwest Breezes



## Preventing Bunker Washouts at Indian Lakes' Blackhawk Trace

Indian Lakes Resort is a 36-hole facility consisting of the 18-hole Blackhawk Trace and the 18-hole East Trail. Blackhawk Trace was recently renovated with the first nine holes reopening in 2002 and the second nine holes in 2003. Part of the renovation included rebuilding all of the bunkers.

The new style of bunkering features a combination of both grass-facing and sand-flashing at slopes as severe as 5:2. To help reduce potential washouts on these severe slopes, Sand Trapper bunker matting was installed along all of the bunker faces during the construction. The matting is a porous material that is secured to the bunker floor before filling the bunker with sand. It works to prevent washouts by allowing rainfall to pass through the porous matting while holding the bunker sand above in place. The matting was installed on all bunker faces from the top edge of the face all the way down to the flats of the bunkers. Securing took place with 6" sod staples at 8" spacings before hauling in any sand. Results thus far have been very good.

Superintendent Chuck Ardell reports that the bunker matting has performed outstandingly over the past three years. In fact, he has yet to see a single bunker washout, even after heavy rainstorms. The worst result he has encountered has been some very minor channeling on his most severe bunker face.

Chuck emphasizes that the key to long-term successful performance of bunker matting is meticulously maintaining adequate sand depth. If the sand becomes too shallow, the matting easily can be pulled up or torn by a mechanical rake or even by hand-raking, which is how the majority of Indian Lakes' bunkers are managed. Chuck maintains the flat areas of his bunkers at 4" and the faces at 2". The 2" depth on the faces helps balls roll off of the severe slopes and down into the flat areas. He finds that those depths provide the best playability while minimizing the chances of damaging the bunker matting. While Chuck admits that the time devoted to maintaining proper sand depths can be great, it far outweighs the labor hours and headaches associated with repairing bunker washouts.

—Brian Mores  
Inverness Golf Club



*Bunkers before renovation.*



*Sand Trapper bunker matting was installed along all bunker faces during construction.*



*Bunkers after renovation.*

*(continued on page 9)*

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## Using Bunker Linings at Cantigny Golf

With every bunker rebuild, the ability to prevent both sand contamination and sand erosion is a very important factor. It seems like the flashes are getting higher and the soil from below just won't stay put. One choice in this situation is a bunker liner, but which one? I can't make that decision for you, but I do have a personal preference in regards to installation based upon what I have seen and worked with. Recently I have worked hands-on with liners from Sand Dam, Bunker Net and Sand Trapper 2. Surprisingly, I found that these products are very different from one another.

From what I have experienced this past year with multiple bunker rebuilds, all products—to date—have performed very well once installed and buried with sand. The difference between them became apparent during the installation process. The Sand Dam-brand liner is engineered as a directional product, therefore it has to be laid down with a certain side up to ensure proper sand retention. Unfortunately, this means you have to roll out the entire roll, and then flip it over to position it correctly. When trying to determine how to use the roll most efficiently, try to use as big of pieces as possible to cut down on the number of liner seams. This way, you eliminate more areas that have the potential to cause problems later. When it comes to cutting the liners, it is recommended by the manufacturer of Sand Dam to use a propane torch to

burn a line of cut. This is made possible by an added fire-retardant built right into the fabric. However, liners from Bunker Net and Sand Trapper DO NOT have the fire-retardant and will flame up rapidly near any fire. These liners can be cut fairly well with a sharp utility knife. Watch out for that! I have found that rolling the liners out into place, then stapling the edges before cutting, works the best. This way you can set up your crew to have a designated "cutter" who works all the way around the bunker cutting out the edge. One thing I've noticed with securing the liners is that Bunker Net requires a lot more staples than Sand Dam. For example, a utility vehicle fully loaded with sand driving over a lined bunker will stretch Bunker Net and cause ripples and waves, while Sand Dam won't move an inch—very frustrating discrepancies if you're not aware of it.

All in all, the liners used have really made a noticeable difference in our new and redesigned bunkers throughout the course. Some have their advantages and some have their disadvantages. In my opinion, given my experience and knowledge of these liners, Sand Dam-brand bunker liner stands out above the rest. The properties that Sand Dam possesses ease installation and provide a direct fit to our application.

—Josh Murray  
Cantigny Golf

## L-93 Versus Penneagle: Black Sheep Golf Club's Fairway Experience

The 80 acres of fairways at Black Sheep Golf Club were seeded in 2001 to an L-93 and SR1119 blend. I have heard so many positive remarks about these fairways that I called David Beiry, golf course superintendent at Black Sheep, and asked him to compare the management of his L-93 blended fairways with Penneagle.

During the grow-in phase, the L-93 blend establishes rapidly from seed; however, care must be taken to not overgrow L-93 in the beginning or it will become puffy and thatchy. During establishment it is critical to drop the height of cut as soon as possible, and to use moderate rates of fertilizer compared to what one might use in establishing the older bents like Penneagle.

True to its reputation, L-93 is slow to begin growing in the spring, even on fairways. And in the fall the growth rate is also quite slow. But as soon as the temperatures warm up it becomes very aggressive. The divots heal much faster than for Penneagle; it is a darker green than Penneagle; David is fairly certain that it has superior heat tolerance and disease resistance compared to Penneagle.

The most significant difference between an L-93 blend and Penneagle is density. L-93 has at least twice the density, making it a tighter playing surface, and subsequently a much thicker and more difficult canopy for *Poa annua* to invade.

The aggressiveness and density of an L-93 blend on fairway turf requires a more intense cultural program. David core-aerifies all 80 acres of his fairways each spring. On the approaches, he removes the plugs and topdresses the holes with sand. He also vertical-mows the fairways two directions, three times per year.

When asked if he would use L-93 in fairway turf for a new fairway, David indicated that he would. He is very pleased with the playability and the durability of his L-93 blend in his fairway turf, but he hastens to add that this grass requires a more intense cultural management program than Penneagle or the older bentgrasses.

—Brad Anderson, CGCS  
Midlane Country Club

## One Approach to Nuisance-Bird Eviction, from Cantigny Golf

What do you do when nuisance birds insist on nesting right where you don't want them? Over the past 10 years, I have experienced some problems with birds that have nested in my maintenance facility. This is a significant problem due to the motion detectors on our security system. The most recent incident was just last month. A pair of mourning doves decided they were going to live inside my building. After several days of nest removal, the doves were still building and rebuilding. I started to get a bit frustrated. Just then, a friend stopped by and noticed I

was preoccupied with this situation. She suggested filling a small cup with ammonia and placing it right next to where the birds wanted to build. I did so immediately, and within 20 minutes the birds were gone!

—Scott A. Witte, CGCS  
Cantigny Golf





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