



Ted Soenksen,  
President TETA

## TECHNICALLY SPEAKING WITH

Ted Soenksen Wilmette Golf Club

# The Opportunity to Become One with the Machines for a Day

*Some weeks back, due to lack of key personnel, I was cordially invited to partake in operating various equipment. The weather could not have been better....watching the sun come up over the fairways is truly magnificent. Being out of practice and squinting through the bright orange ball of fire made keeping a straight line a challenge during my first couple attempts. As clipping flew by, I began to get into the rhythm of mowing.*

### TECH TIP

#### Measuring the Outside Diameter of a Reel

Need a fast fairly accurate way to measure the outside diameter of a reel? If you have a bench mounted vise that is fairly tight you can place a reel horizontally in vise and gently draw in jaws to just touch the reel blades . . . then when reel is removed you can just measure the jaw opening with caliper.

To simple to take serious?

Not at all. This method will give you a reading  $\pm 0.005"$ . If you need to think about that .005", then it's time to replace the reel anyhow. Remember this method is only going to give you an idea what the reel dimension is at the center of the cylinder. If you need to figure out if a cone taper exists, repeat the process take several measurements along the axis of the reel. Just don't drop the reel on your foot!

Ted Soenksen  
Wilmette Golf Club  
Wilmette IL.

Soon, I started paying attention to what was actually happening to the fairway mower. I started to add it all up; fairway after fairway, hour after hour, day after day, week after week, I thought. It is truly amazing what each machine goes through, throughout its life. The amount of time that is spent cleaning, greasing, inspecting and adjusting is minimal by comparison to the time the machine is actually in use. I couldn't help but think about my maintenance program. I have always had a strong Preventative Maintenance (PM) program and after operating for a few days I will continue to do so. In fact, I will now move up maintenance schedules on all older equipment. Recently, most of us have been forced to keep machines longer than anticipated and these are the machines that can surprise you at any time with a break down.

Shortly after this season began, a fairway unit developed a lift cylinder leak. While, no one can anticipate when an original component will fail, my experience mowing this spring made me more aware of parts that are continually in motion. When a machine reaches six or seven years in age, a cylinder such as this, has cycled hundreds of thousands of times. It is no wonder this part is a source of wear. While operating the machine for three hours straight, I began making mental notes to check out certain point on each of the three fairway machines later back at the shop. Soon my mind was swelling and I found myself calling my own voicemail from my cell phone. I didn't want to forget any possible problem areas.

Later that morning, I operated one of our rough mowers for three hours on the driving range. The range has many undulations, banks and inclines. I never realized the severity of stress that is put on this machine until I sat upon it with my oversized girth and ventured up and down and around all those angled hills. I don't even want to mention the missed-picked range balls that went banging around under the deck and chassis destroying my precision sharpened blades. Typically, I only see this rough-mower once a week and I now realize how well built and durable it is. The little time I used it only represented a tenth of what it endures every week. Maybe it has a little guardian angel on board.

After seeing the equipment from the operator side, I plan to make time to run other equipment for extended amounts of time, rather than just the usual test run out in the maintenance lot.

If you get the opportunity to operate a machine or two, take it. You'll be surprised at the point of view you will take away. Being one with the machine from time to time will benefit both of you.

For now, keep them running straight and true.





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# Protecting Your Toolbox



Frank Gasperini in  
the Nation's Capital.

*RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)<sup>™</sup> is a national not-for-profit trade association representing producers and suppliers of specialty pesticides and fertilizers. Established in 1991, RISE serves as a resource and advocate on pesticides and fertilizers and provides current and accurate information on issues and research affecting the industry. The association also monitors legislative and regulatory issues in Washington, D.C., and in the states. GCSAA is a charter associate member of RISE and the two associations continue to work closely together to defend and preserve the right to use specialty pesticides and fertilizers.*

RISE is currently searching for a Grassroots Manager who will be available to help golf course superintendents and other industry partners address local political issues regarding specialty pesticide and fertilizer products. Future articles will discuss state and local political issues and what you can do about them in more detail.

As you start the 2006 season, you may be thinking about the array of “tools” you have available to do your job to produce the best golf experience, using the most sustainable agronomic programs possible with the most positive environmental impact. For most of you, those “tools” include an array of pesticide and fertilizer products, along with the more “traditional” irrigation, rakes, shovels, mowers, power equipment, vehicles, and labor. You know that the appropriate use of inputs, including pesticides and fertilizer, on well-maintained turf not only produces green space that is pleasing to the eye, but that it actually protects and enhances soil and water resources and the overall environment. We have seen the results on well-maintained golf courses; university research across the country confirms that well-maintained turf grown with appropriate use of inputs results in cleaner water. Unfortunately, there is a substantial activist community that is working every day to “educate” the American public, and your elected officials, to the contrary. In Washington, D.C., where I work, I recently overheard a conversation between two officers of a large international conservation association. One of them said that “golf courses should not be allowed to count as green space in county growth planning, because we all know that they are nothing but mono cultures of unnatural, non-native grass plants that do nothing but pollute the ground and surface water with huge doses of fertilizers and pesticides!” This is what the public is being told, what our elected officials are hearing, and what our children are being taught in school. Of course it is wrong, but every time this misinformation is repeated, it hurts us all, like a thousand small cuts.

Over the years, we in the “Green” industry have tended to take the “tools” or inputs we need for granted. We are very serious about our profession

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and devote most of our time to perfecting agronomic, technical, and people skills. We have little time to worry about the politics and activism directed against our industry. The activist community however, has plenty of time to spread misinformation against your use of inputs and propose legislation and regulation to limit your choices. For many of them, it is their full-time job.

Increasingly, golf course superintendents and other green industry managers have replaced scarce labor with gas/diesel-powered equipment, precisely controlled irrigation, controlled-release fertilizers, improved plants, and precision use of pesticides. When a "tool" was lost to regulatory action or obsolescence, we replaced it with the next new innovation from the suppliers. Even though the "new tools" often cost more, they typically brought increased efficiency or effectiveness. We forgot about the "old tool" and considered it the responsibility of the "supplier" to offer new tools as needed and defend the continued availability of all the "tools" required to do the job. But where would we be if we lost all the tools?

With patent expiration, industry consolidation, and a global economy increasingly moving away from the agricultural life-sciences, where our agronomic innovations come from, we may find that we are losing "tools" faster than they are replaced. As it becomes more expensive and difficult to register and re-register pesticide products, we may see fewer and fewer choices. We continue to hear discussions on limiting the use of fertilizer, pesticide, energy, and water on turf grass.

We now hear the activist community, and some elected officials, refer to turf and landscape plants as "cosmetic uses that provide no benefit or value." These arguments have been carried to state legislatures across the U.S., with limited but growing success. Too many people believe the argument against golf courses and green lawns that I overheard in Washington. We need only look to our neighbors in Canada to see the results of this kind of activism.

While most of the current "bans" on turf pesticide use in Canada exempt golf courses, I attended a

meeting in Ottawa last fall where the mayor of a town in Quebec said that "I know our golf courses can stop using poison, too, and we will bring them into the bylaw next year." I wonder how those superintendents will cope.

As of March 2006, there are nearly 100 federal or state bills proposed that would limit the availability and/or use of some of the "tools" you rely on every day. Trade and professional associations, such as RISE and GCSAA, continue to work together to defend the industry, and we expect to defeat most of these bills again this year, but they are rewritten and proposed again year after year.

The activists understand the difficulty of passing federal and state legislation and increasingly turn to local government to take away your "tools". While most states preempt local pesticide regulation, the activists see growing success in limiting/regulating your access to fertilizers and other critical inputs. The activists always want more, so we are seeing rapidly increasing attempts to pass local regulations limiting your choices by requiring local bonding and certification, "use of pesticides only after other methods have failed" rules, or imposing unworkable storage requirements and confusing notification rules. Even though local

regulations are illegal in most states, activists promote them, towns and counties propose and enact them, and state legislatures and regulators are pressured to accept them. For those of you on municipal owned/operated courses, your town or county can adopt "no use" rules at will, and some have.

Because of the growing trend toward local activism, RISE, GCSAA, and other associations are working even closer together to help you defend your business/industry in your towns and counties when your "toolbox" is attacked locally. Unlike federal and state politics, things happen fast locally, and an outside "lobbyist" cannot manage the situation. Local issues require local response. If you are called on to defend your business locally, we want to help you prepare. Future articles will give you more details.

Frank Gasperini is Director of State Issues for RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment)TM. Frank came to the Green Industry in 1980 as a pesticide industry sales representative in the Upper Midwest based in the Chicago area. He currently lives in the Washington, D.C., area and manages government issues in all 50 states.



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## Cantigny Golf Hosts 2006 Western Junior Amateur Championship July 17 thru 21

*Cantigny Golf is located on the estate of Robert R. McCormick, former publisher of the Chicago Tribune. McCormick was a colonel in the First Division during WWI. He named the estate after Cantigny, a small village in France which was the scene of fighting during World War I where First Division fought for a time. The facility is owned and operated by the non-profit Cantigny Foundation. The course was built to honor a pledge in Colonel McCormick's will. He deemed that his estate would serve as a source of recreation, education, and welfare for the people of the state of Illinois.*

In the heart of Cantigny's 500 acres, are the McCormick Mansion and the First Division Museum. Using realistic, interactive exhibits, the museum portrays history from the vantage point of those who served with The Big Red One. Both museums are surrounded by formal gardens, picnic groves, hiking paths and park settings. Designed by Roger Packard, construction of the course was completed by the Wadsworth Construction Company in 1988. The golf course opened for play in the spring of 1989.

Cantigny is composed of three nine-hole courses: Woodside, Lakeside and Hillside. Each can be combined with another to create three separate 18-hole tracks. Lakeside is home to the signature hole nine, a medium length par

*(continued on page 36)*



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4 with a sand bunker in the shape of Dick Tracy and water surrounding the fairway and green. Tees, greens and fairways are bentgrass accompanied by twelve lakes, two creeks, over eighty sand bunkers, more than 100,000 flowers and thousands of oak, ash and other hardwood trees. The 27-hole layout is a challenging yet a fair test of golf that can be enjoyed by golfers of all abilities.

Newest of the Cantigny courses is the Cantigny Youth Links. Designed by Roger Packard and Andy North, Cantigny Youth Links is a 9-hole course designed for junior players, ages 8 to 15. Just like the adult size course, Cantigny Youth Links features a club house complete with a real head pro who handles the Youth Links, a kid sized pro shop, snack shop, a course marshal, starters, and a complete tee time system. All youth golfers must go through a certification process, learning rules, safety and etiquette before being allowed to play on their own. Every

year the program has increased with over 1,000 children participating annually and over 14,000 rounds played on the Youth Links Course.

### **The Western Junior is the Oldest National Junior Championship**



The Western Golf Association officially founded the Western Junior Championship –the first national junior championship – in 1914.

Since then, the tournament has been held annually with the exception of 1918 and 1943-45 due to war.

The Western Junior consistently has been regarded as one of the premier junior golf tournaments in the nation. Each year the tournament draws the top junior players from around the country and throughout the world. For some, it has even been a prestigious stepping-stone to the PGA Tour. Past participants who have played on the Tour include the 1977 medalist Fred Couples, 1971 medalist Jay Haas, 1967 runner-up Andy North, 1978 champion Bobby Clampett and 1988 co-medalist Phil Mickelson. Other past participants in the Western Junior who have made their marks on the PGA Tour include Tiger Woods, Chip Beck, Mark Brooks, Hale Irwin, Scott Hock, Tom Lehman, Jeff Maggert, Rocco Mediate, Corey Pavin, Tom Purtzer, Craig Stadler and Fuzzy Zoeller.

The field of 156 participants is open to boys ages 16-19 with a hand-





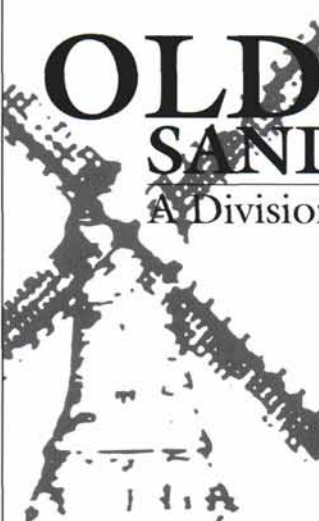
icap of three or less. The competition is 72 holes of stroke play. The champion's name is engraved a trophy donated by past WGA executive vice president Milt Woodward and named for him. The medalist's name is engraved on the Adelor J. Petit Jr. Trophy. Mr. Petit served as WGA president in 1966-67. In addition to winning this event, the champion and runner-up earn exemptions into the Western Amateur.

Recent champions have gone on to stardom in NCAA collegiate golf, including: 1990 champion Kelly Mitchum at North Carolina State; 1991 champion Trip Kuehne, at Oklahoma State; 1992 champion John Curley at Florida Southern; 1993 champion Michael Jones at the University of Arizona; 1994 champion Brad Elder at the University of Texas; and 1999 champion Hunter Mahan at Oklahoma State.

Past Champions have come from 26 states, including as far east as New York and New Jersey and as far west as Arizona and California. The championship has been held in 19

states and will return one of Chicagoland's finest public facilities this July. Scott Witte, CGCS and staff have been preparing the course and expect another fine tournament.





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## MIDWEST EDUCATION RECAP

Brad Anderson, CGCS Midlane Country Club

### April

Lee Miller, the Chicago District Golf Association Turf Program Coordinator, spoke to us at Heritage Bluffs about soil temperature and heating degree day data which he has been gathering in the Chicago area for the last four years. Lee is taking the data and developing reliable prediction models for scheduling our programs and

applications to coincide more closely with the actual outbreak and life cycle of insect, weed, and disease pests.

In our next issue of *On Course* Lee Miller will provide an article on this information.



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## MIDWEST PERSONALITIES



Name: **Bruce Schweiger**  
 Course/Club/  
 Company: **Marengo Ridge Golf Club**  
 Job Title: **General Manager**  
 MAGCS member since: **1989**  
 Date of Birth: **1-22-60**  
 Place of Birth: **Madison, WI**  
 Current Residence: **Janesville, WI (looking for a house in Illinois)**

College/Degree: **BS in Soil Science and a BS in Horticulture**

Spouse/Children: **Lovely Wife Carol, Three sons. The twins Paul and Brad, Scott**

My favorite childhood memory is: **Fishing walleyes with my dad on the Wolf River**

My personal hero: **Jesus Christ**

My professional mentors: **Robert Graunke, Don Altman, Mike Krupke**

Favorite Actor: **Russell Crowe**

Favorite Musical Performer: **Jimmy Buffet**

Favorite Restaurant:

Favorite "Pig Out" Food: **Pizza and Popcorn**

Favorite TV Show: **Amazing Race**

Favorite Color: **Blue**

Favorite Professional Sports Team: **Green Bay Packers, Go Green and Gold**

Favorite Pro Athlete: **Beckham**

Favorite Pro Golfer: **David Thoms**

My Handicap Index: **6.2**

My favorite place to play golf is: **Royal Melbourne**

My best/most memorable round ever: **The Springs in Spring Green WI, Playing a High Schools golf reunion I shot the course record of 67 only to have a friend in the next group shot 66.**

The most interesting/exotic place I've ever traveled is: **St Andrews**

The book I've been recommending lately:

**If you want to walk on water you've got to get out of the boat**

The last great movie I saw was: **Master and Commander**

In my spare time, I enjoy: **Walking the dog with my wife**

Three words that best describe me: **energetic, upbeat and helpful**

What I enjoy most about my job: **The challenge and all the people**

What I dislike about my job: **Closing at 9:00 pm and opening at 6:30.**

I'm a Midwest member because: **1989**



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