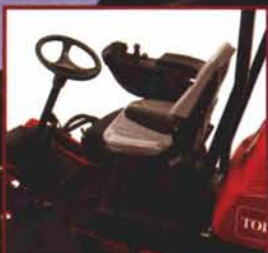


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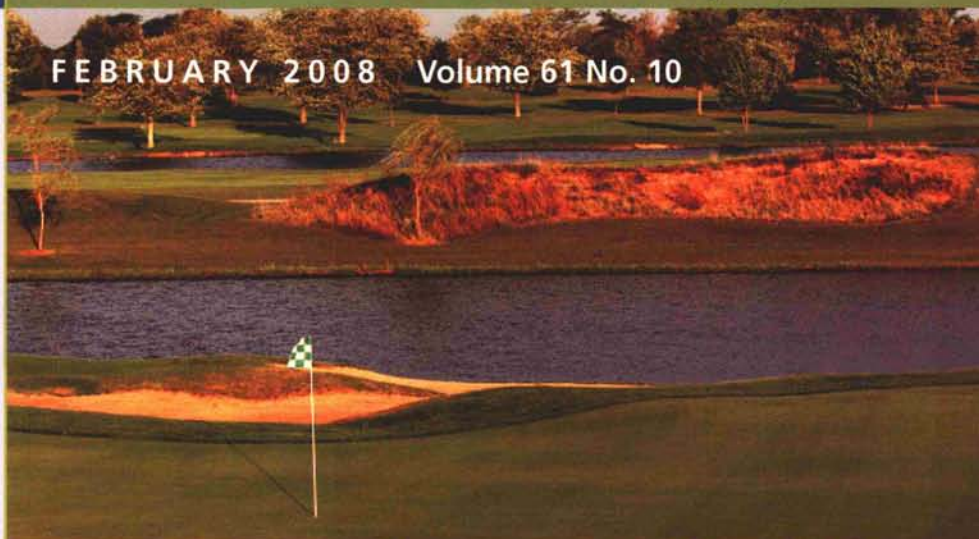
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Photo Credit: Luke Cella

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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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## DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Dan Sterr, Stonebridge Golf Club



# 2008 MAGCS Meeting Calendar

*The 2008 golf season will be here before we know it. The MAGCS has secured some excellent sites for the year, and the golf committee will have some exciting events for the membership to participate in this year. We start the season off with the Spring Scramble, on April 28, at White Eagle Golf Club, with Gilberto Velazquez as our host. The Spring Scramble is a fun event to get the season started.*

On May 12, 2008, the ITF and MAGCS will host their annual Spring Golf Day at St. Charles Country Club with Jim Keith. The Spring Golf Day is a fundraiser for the ITF, with money earned from the event going to turf research in the state, a good cause that benefits all of us.

On June 2nd we will again have the Dom Grotti Championship, the event that teams Superintendents with their Assistants in honor of Domenic Grotti, the long time Superintendent of Sunset Ridge Country Club. Domenic was a Superintendent who encouraged his assistants to become actively involved in the association. The Dom Grotti trophy is on permanent display at the Midwest Golf House in Lemont. All Superintendents are encouraged to grab their Assistants for the day, compete in this event, carry on the spirit of Domenic, and to encourage your Assistants to attend and become active in our association. The June event will also feature the Senior and Class C Championships.

Although there is no golf, mark your calendar for July 19th for the MAGCS Family Night Picnic at the Kane County Cougar Game. For those of you that have never attended this event, it has always proved to be a great night at the ball park.

On July 28th the Scholarship Outing will be held at Geneva Golf Club. Ed Braunsky will be our host. This event will help the association raise money for scholarships.

In August we will be playing the ever popular Foursome Progressive Logo ball along with a Low Gross/Low Net event.

Our current President, David Braasch, and Glen Erin Golf Club in Janesville, Wisconsin, will host the Annual MAGCS Championship on September 15th. The winner of the Championship Flight of this event will receive an automatic exemption into the 2009 Illinois Open.

The golf season will end with the combination ITF/MAGCS College Championship at Joliet Country. Mark Kowaliczko will be the host Superintendent. Like the Spring ITF Golf Day, this event is also a fundraiser for turf research, as well as an event that pits alumni of various Colleges and Universities against each other in a two-man team scramble format.

The Golf Committee encourages all members of the association to participate in the monthly golf events. Do not be afraid to sign up. If you cannot fill out a foursome, the Golf Committee will pair with you someone. The Golf events are an excellent way to meet new people in the association while enjoying a day playing golf. Please try to make as many events as you can. You will have a good time. **-OC**

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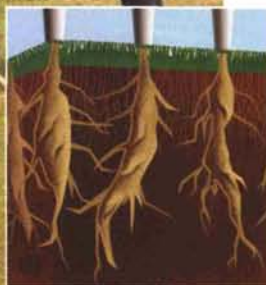
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## SUPER -N- SITE

Ken Shepherd, Prairie Bluff Golf Course

# Reynold Jacobson -N-

*For some unknown reason, Lemont, Illinois, is home to a long line of golf course superintendents.*

*They have either grown up in Lemont or worked on Lemont golf courses at some time during their careers. Included in this long line is Reynold Jacobson, also known as, "Ren," "Renny," "Jake," and sometimes "Snake." Not to be misconstrued as derogatory, the nickname "Snake" is a term of endearment to some of his closest superintendent friends.*

Renny grew up in Lemont and attended Lemont High School. At age 16, he went to work for Keith Fuchs at Gleneagles where he worked until he was 21. Renny spent the next three years laying bricks but then returned to the golf industry. He made the decision and crossed Archer Avenue to work for Kenny Lapp at Cog Hill for three years. Renny then made it to the show by taking the superintendent position at Inwood Golf Course within the Joliet Park District. He worked there for a short time before being transferred over to Wedgewood Golf Course, where he worked until 1989.

It was during his seven years with the park District that Renny and I became good friends. Because the Joliet Park District owned three golf courses, you were always working with two other superintendents. As Renny would say, "We've been down a lot of dirt roads together." During our years at Joliet we were involved in hiring Steve Crow to manage Inwood golf course. While Renny was at Wedgewood, he and Steve spent a lot of time together refereeing high school basketball games. Steve did a great job during his short stint at Inwood before leaving for Briar Ridge Country Club in Schererville, Indiana. In February of 1992, we found out that Steve had leukemia. By that June, he had passed away. While we were at the park district the three of us came to be known as "The Three Amigos." I could share a lot more stories, but that



would take up a lot of print. One story that Renny was always fond of telling both to Steve and to other people was how Steve got hired. Renny would explain that when we reduced the field down to the final two; we flipped a coin; and Steve won.

In 1989 Renny left Wedgewood and went to Carillon in Plainfield where he was involved in the construction of 18 holes. Years later nine more holes were built. Renny spent 13 years at Carillon. While there he was also responsible for the snowplowing of a couple of housing developments that were adjacent to his golf course, a job he said he does not miss to this day. The spring of 2002 arrived, and Renny went to work for the McEnerys at Green Garden Country Club in Frankfort. When Renny arrived at Green Garden, he was greeted with construction that already had begun on nine more holes. That would bring the total of golf holes up to 45. Since coming to Green Garden in 2002, Renny has worked hard to give the McEnerys what they need in order to provide their customers with a quality golf experience. It's a relationship that has been very good for Renny and the McEnerys both.

Renny and his wife Debbie live down the road in Manhattan, Illinois. Debbie works at the Midwest Golf House as Manager of Administration for Illinois Junior Golf. His daughter Melissa is a third grade teacher near Princeton, Illinois. Ren's three sisters still live in the Lemont area. I would be remiss if I did not



(L to R) Renny, Matt Hook  
and Ruben Jacobo.

(continued on next page)



mention his extended golf family, longtime assistant, Matt Hook, and equipment tech, Ruben Jacobo, have been with Renny since their days at Carillon.

As we look back and remember some of the tough seasons that we all have endured, I think what will stick out more in my mind will be the great friendships that were established. I like to

remember all the stories that can be told. Having Renny as a friend, there are a lot of stories that could be told! Come to think of it Ren, one story I swore I would never tell anyone was how we hired you back at Joliet in '82. When it came time to make a final decision on hiring you, we flipped a coin, and you won! I'm glad you did buddy. **-OC**



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## FEATURE ARTICLE

David Marquardt, *Dirt-N-Turf Consulting*

# Pay Me Now, or Pay Me Later



*New channels created yearly  
and backfilled with sand.*

*In the '70s there was an oil filter commercial that featured a mechanic in his garage overhauling an engine. He stopped his work long enough to hold up the oil filter of choice and tell us that had the owner of this vehicle simply changed the filter every time they changed the oil, then they wouldn't be overhauling their car.*

The slogan for that oil filter company was, "pay me now or pay me later." And pay we do. Every time we think we can take a short cut, or scrimp on solid maintenance practices, we end up paying for it. Indeed the old saying in horticulture is true: "we never have time to do it right, but we always have time to do it twice."

If any one of us found our shop technicians ruining engines by skimping on filters or other simple maintenance practices, we would soon be looking for a new technician. Yet, over the last few years it seems that we have done some of the same in our horticultural practices. As an industry, we have altered sound practices to fit the needs of the pro shop or greens committee, while putting our greens and jobs at risk. Too many outings and the ever increasing need for revenue have created a situation where the cart is now leading the horse.

Let me add a disclaimer. If this is not happening at your course, great! If you are able to maintain adequate playing surfaces without allowing the profiles to deteriorate, great! If you are a good communicator who has taken control of horticultural practices and schedules at your course or club, great! If this does not pertain to you, great! Unfortunately, we saw more profile issues this year with more seasoned superintendents whose jobs were on the fence than ever before. And, almost to the course or club, the problem resulted from altering sound cultural practices to meet the needs of the pro shop or greens committee agronomist.

We might well argue that the cause – the record setting rains with high temperatures – created the effect – deteriorating green profiles. However, courses that have maintained proper core aeration and profile modification felt little if any of the same effect. The problems we observed were most prevalent on the courses that tried to get away without "disturbing" play;

---

*As an industry, we have altered  
sound practices to fit the needs of  
the pro shop or greens committee,  
while putting our greens and jobs at risk.*

---

those courses that skipped thatch and compaction removal; those courses that topdressed regularly but failed to core out the old and replace with new; those courses that began rolling but have failed to understand the increased need for sand topdressing and profile management that rolling demands. In most cases, but not all, the real "cause" was straying from what we know are sound cultural practices.

It is also important to note that while both sand and soil greens felt the pressures of this season, it was the soil greens that suffered most. The absence of a place and a method for properly draining the amount of rain some courses received has nothing to do with the conditions referred to above, and we do not mean to imply that it does. As stated earlier, these conditions are course/club specific and generalized management statements are not intended.

Now, don't look for the next paragraph to provide the answers, because they are not that simple. Each course or club has its own politics and requires the superintendent to communicate with his or her upper management in order to satisfy the

*(continued on next page)*



needs of all. Many superintendents and owners/managers found the need for drastic fall and spring profile recovery tactics that will cost more in terms of work, sand, and player inconvenience than the inconveniences of proper maintenance. (Not to mention the stress on the superintendent/management relationship.)

Profile management is not a matter of **if**; it is a matter of **when**. Suppliers are offering newer, cleaner, and quicker tools every year that do in a few hours what used to take days. These new tools allow us to do smaller modifications more often with quicker healing than tools our predecessors used.

Many other factors such as water quality, fertility, expectations, and capabilities play into the scenarios described above. I would also add that as greens age and change, so must the management techniques we use.

When it comes to profile management, I offer the following: be careful when asking your colleagues for cultural advice. Yes, we undoubtedly have some of the best superintendents in the country right here in Chicago. But that is not the point. The point is that the variability of soil types, sand cap amounts, sand quality, turf variety(s), water quality, budget, equipment availability, staff

(numbers and ability), club expectations, fertility practices, internal and external drainage, design characteristics, shade, wind exposure, play levels, and more, all contribute to making quality cultural decisions. For many clubs, too much has changed over too many years to continue to do business as usual. Some


courses are better off harvesting cores, while for others it is a foolish removal of quality sand and organic resources. Ten or twenty years ago, similarities were the norm. Today our conversations need to swing to the unique challenges that each of our clubs and courses offer.

Regardless of the size of the bookstore, there is no textbook that can properly address the unique situations each course offers. There is no substitute for education and experience; that is why we have careers and not jobs. Our clubs count on us to be the experts they hired, which as we know, includes educating the pro shop, as well as ourselves. No, it is not easy. No, this review will not change your

green chairmen's mind about the fall golf schedule. What I hope it will do is to bring to light some of the difficulties facing many of us, so that we can take the precautions that prevent it. **-OC**




*Channels are capped on top when coring practices are abandoned.*



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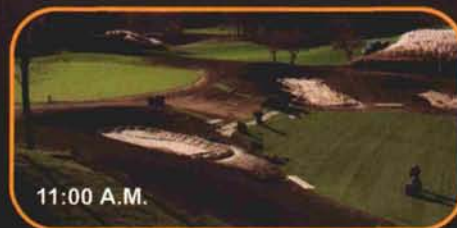
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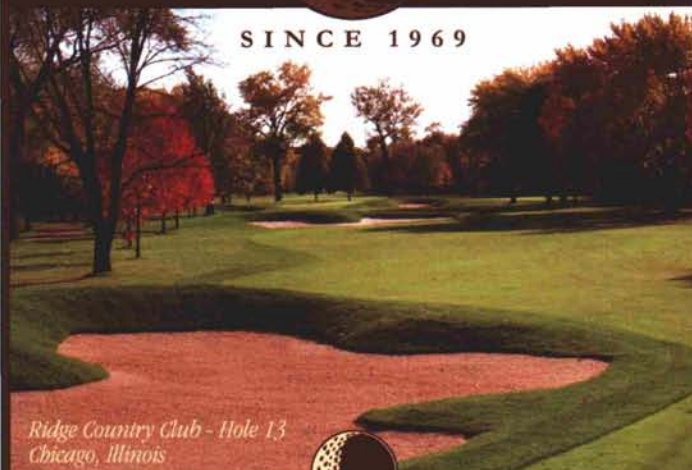


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