

MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



The Snapshot

In the customer service industry the common expression is: "you never get a second chance to make a first impression". Golf courses are no different; we are in the service industry. People come out to play our courses and for better or worse, the course they play that day is the impression they have for the rest of the season and sometimes longer. At times people are playing our course for a tournament, an outing or just a "road trip". People may play our courses one time the entire year and that is the snapshot they take of the golf course. Because "word of mouth" is still one of the most powerful forms of advertising the snapshot matters. Today expectations are high when it comes to golf courses.

As turf professionals, we know conditions vary day-to-day, month to month. Physiologically, the plant is different in the summer than it is in the fall. At the same daily mowing height, the greens may be fast or slow depending on the weather. It might be sunny and wet or it could be dry and cool. Maintenance tasks vary day to day. You might have top-dressed that day, aerified tees or not mowed certain areas. You might not have changed the cups, raked bunkers or maybe not string trimmed around some of the details. It might be a Monday or a Friday. The staffing levels may be different day to day and the tasks may vary from day to day. In this era of budget constraints, people are trying to do more with less. How often have you heard from golfers that they just want consistency? Golf is being played outdoors on "real" grass and inconsistency is the rule when dealing with all things natural. It's a tough "sell".

As we all know in our day to day golf maintenance tasks everything we do is a process. There is staffing, training, equipment operations and agronomics that all blend together as part of the process. It's not like an "I Dream of Jeannie" or a "Bewitched" episode where we just magically blink our eyes and the golf course looks like Augusta National during the Masters. We have to complete the tasks one hole at a time, starting at O:dark:30. It takes a few hours just to complete the daily basic morning set up tasks of changing cups, mowing greens, moving tee markers and other specialized mowing areas. To the average golfer with the 8:00 tee time all he/she sees is a finished product. They take a snapshot of that golf course on that particular day, at that particular time.

This was a difficult growing season, one of the toughest ever. Although the fall was dry, most courses had good recovery but the memories of poor turf conditions will linger. All we can do is our best to attempt to communicate what is happening with our turf and the limitations we all have with the nuances of each particular golf course. Each player who plays our courses takes a snapshot memory of their experience. Perfection is an illusion. Hopefully the pendulum will swing back to the days of yore when people were just glad to be out on the course having fun, enjoying the great outdoors and the camaraderie the game lends itself to. Until then, all we can do is try to be picture perfect. **-OC**

THE BULL SHEET

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



November 2010

DATES TO REMEMBER

November 3 – 58th Annual Midwest Turf Clinic at Medinah Country Club, **Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS** host.

November 9-11 – Turf & Ornamental Seminar at the Daniel Turf Center in West LaFayette, IN. Check out www.mrtf.org for info.

November 15 – Deadline for nominations for the 11th Annual TurfNet Superintendent of the Year Award presented by Syngenta.

November 16-17 – The 2010 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium at the American Club in Kohler, WI.

November 16-18 – 2010 Penn State Golf Turf Conference at the Nitany Lion Inn in University Park, PA. For more on this event go to www.paturf.org.

November 30 – Deadline for entries in GCSAA's Turf Wars Video Contest.

December 6-9 – Ohio Turf Conference and Show at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, OH. A few simple clicks to www.ohioturfgrass.org gets you all the dope on this deal.

December 14-15 Illinois Turfgrass Foundation's Winter Workshops. Straight Education provided by the ITF. Midwest Golf House, Lemont, IL.

January 18-20 – 2011 Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show at the Polk Convention Complex & Marriott Hotel in Des Moines, IA. Try www.iowaturfgrass.org for more info.

January 19-21, 2011 – Mid-Am Expo in Chicago, IL. Visit www.midam.org to learn more.

A couple of venerated golf facilities in our midst have recently been honored. First, Olympia Fields Country Club was selected by the USGA as the site of the 2015 U. S. Amateur Championship, to be played August 24-30. The tournament will be contested on both the North (designed by Willie Park and opened in 1923) and South (a 1915 Tom Bendelow design) courses. Congratulations to **Sam MacKenzie, CGCS** and everyone at OFCC on this great news. Second, Cog Hill's Dubsdread course (**Ken Lapp** superintendent) was named to *Golf Digest* magazine's List of Most Important Courses by Decade in its November issue, which salutes the most important courses that have had the biggest impact upon the game decade by decade. Dubsdread was among the top ten courses in the 1960's. Congratulations to Ken, as well as to owner **Frank Jemsek** and the Jemsek family on achieving this honor.

Deepest condolences to **Paul Bastron, CGCS, Patrick Bastron**, and the Bastron family on the sudden and accidental death of Paul's father and Pat's grandfather Robert in a boating accident on October 5th.

Congratulations to **Travis Dykstra**, formerly of Prairie Landing Golf Club, who has accepted the Assistant Superintendent's position at St. Charles Country Club under superintendent **Jimmy Keith, CGCS**. Travis replaces **Josh Therrien** who recently took on the superintendent's duties at Piper Glenn Golf Club in Springfield. Good luck to Travis.

Ravisloe Country Club in Homewood, IL began a new chapter in its long and storied history on October 4th when it welcomed its new steward into the fold. **Andrew Cross**, previously assistant at Exmoor Country Club under superintendent **Kurt Galisdorfer** was named Ravisloe's superintendent by GolfVisions Management, Inc., the club's operator. Congratulations, Andrew.

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Andrew Cross

Don't forget the Big Cheese of Wisconsin golf turf events—the 45th Annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium—takes place at the American Club in Kohler this month on the 16th and 17th. Lots of good stuff up there, and a great location. Did you catch the pun there with the cheese thing?

Congrats to MAGCS members **Brad Legnaioli** of the Highlands of Elgin, **Curtis Tyrrell** of Medinah Country Club, and **Scott Witte** of Cantigny Golf Club on their recent recertification with GCSAA.

Ever wonder what happens when you slightly over-apply root stimulator to your turf? By slightly I'm talking like 100 times the normal concentration. Just ask **Bob Kohlstedt** of Fox Bend Golf Course...



What kinda cup cutter did he use to pull that sucker?

KemperSports has announced that the City Council of Highland Park, IL has chosen to extend its current agreement to manage Highland Park Country Club (**Daniel Cherrstrom, CGCS**).

Several MAGCS-member golf course architects have been keeping busy recently, bad economy or not:

On his golf blog, **Bob Lohmann** (Lohmann Golf Designs) relates details of his extensive work at Poplar Creek Country Club in Hoffman Estates (**Dustin Hugen** superintendent). Sitting in a flood plain and surrounded by development, the course is frequently rendered unplayable in many areas after rain events. With the help of the Bruce Company, Bob's plans call for a major redesign of the course, including lifting three fairways out of the flood plain while creating a giant system of ponds for increased and more flexible water retention. Along with this, the creek will be expanded in half a dozen different areas of the course, and connect to these ponds. With these new and improved features, rerouting of the layout in spots will create new risk-reward shot opportunities that weren't available before, along with a more attractive look thanks to the fescue-accented wildlife buffers along the new wetlands. There's much more on the plate for Bob and Poplar Creek, and it sounds as if the result will be outstanding.



Bob Lohmann

Greg Martin and his Martin Design Partnership are also kicking butt and taking names in our area. Greg is involved in several projects, including the current renovation work at Arrowhead Golf Club in Wheaton (**Mike Mumper** superintendent). The project is a three-phase renovation including bunkers, tees, fairway adjustments, tree removal and relocation, as well as the realignment of two holes on the East Course. At Fox Run Golf Links in Elk Grove Village (**Greg Thalmann, CGCS** superintendent), Martin will be providing a plan for infrastructure improvements and design facelift to the 40-year-old facility. This facelift will include drainage, irrigation, bunkers, tees, tree removals (a common theme around here, no?), and the redesign of two holes. Ground breaking is expected for 2011, and the project

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is based on a Master Plan done by Greg in 2010. At Kishwaukee Country Club, Greg is generating a tree management plan which will analyze and determine trees for removal as well as new plantings for the course. Finally, Martin is preparing a Master Plan for Wilmette Golf Club (Mike Matchen superintendent/manager) and will begin a phased improvement plan for the 90-year-old course.



Greg Martin

Last but certainly not least, **Rick Jacobson** and Jacobson Golf Course Design have remained busy in Asia, with two projects underway. Rick recently broke ground on China's

new Mogan Mountain Golf Club located in one of China's premiere resort areas about 100 miles inland from Shanghai. Also on the docket is the renovation of one of Japan's most prestigious courses—the 27-hole Ibaraki Kokusai Golf Club. The first phase was recently completed, and once it is finished, he will have installed new greens on all 27 holes (sodding them with A-4 bentgrass), renovated teeing areas, redesigned bunkers, and reconstructed cart paths. He will also improve and update the practice facility before it's all said and done.



Rick Jacobson

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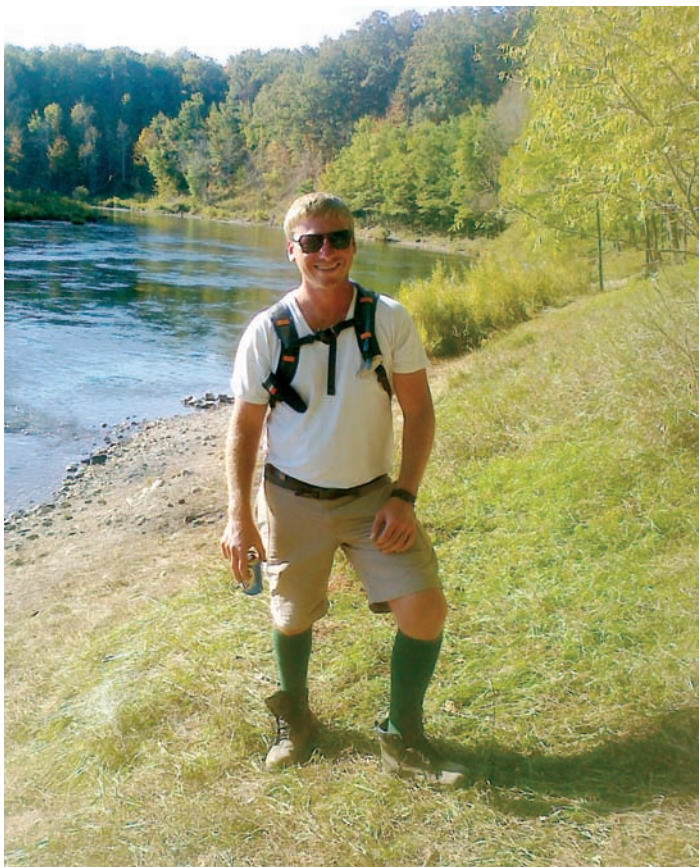
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MAGCS Playmate of the Month: Luke Baker.

Likes: Miller Light. Dislikes: Shallow people and fashion.

Hobbies: Hiking and stealing socks from Girl Scouts.

3rd Place **Pete Kiraly**. Many thanks to Scott and everyone at Cantigny for their wonderful golf course and facilities, to everyone who participated and helped with the event, and to our ever-generous sponsors for the day, who were: **BASF, Bayer Environmental Science, Burris Equipment Company, Chicagoland Turf, Harris Golf Cars, JW Turf, Inc., John Deere Golf, Jacobson Golf Course Design, Inc., Nadler Golf Car Sales, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Palatine Oil Co., Inc., Quali-Pro, Syngenta, and XGD Systems.** Again, thank you all!



On October 4th the gang at Cantigny Golf Club (**Dave Gelino, Mike Nass, Jeremy Duncan, Mark Kosbab, Steve Kuretsky, John Maksymiu, and Tom Weigand**) hosted the MAGCS monthly meeting and Golf Championship. It was a picture-perfect October day—for aerating greens in my case—and the course matched that description in condition. Greens were as slick as snot, challenging the field to go for those tough pin placements. At the end of the day, the best man won, and **Dave Kohley** emerged as our 2010 Golf Champion, edging out **Ed Fischer** (Chuck Anfield captured 3rd Place). Winners and runners-up in the other flights were as follows: Superintendent Flight, Champion **Bill Ahlstedt**, 2nd Place **Dan Charlton**, 3rd Place **Scott Witte**. Commercial Flight Champion **Chad Rotert**, 2nd Place **Doug Myslinski**,

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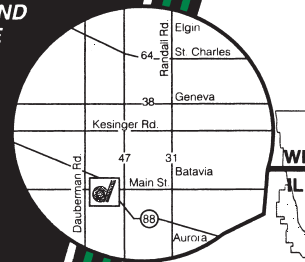
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Scott Witte is all smiles after hosting the Midwest Golf Championship.

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The 2010 MAGCS Champions - Chuck Anfield, Dan Charlton, Chad Rotert, Ed Fischer, Bill Ahlstedt, Doug Myslinski and seated Dave Kohley.



Budget cuts even hit the PGA Tour this year. Paul Vermeulen knows retirement isn't as close as it used to be and will be happy to find a chair for his new desk.

Another golf event of similar significance was held in October when **Brian Mores** and Inverness Golf Club hosted the Annual University of Illinois Turf Alumni Golf Outing. OK, maybe it shouldn't be compared to the Championship, but it's still pretty fun, bringing many orange-and-blue-clad alumni together for a day of golf and camaraderie on an outstanding golf course. Brian had it dialed in as they say, and a gas was had by all Illini in attendance. Big thanks to Brian and Inverness, and to **Matt Kregel** (fresh off the injured reserve list) for his hard work in arranging the day.

