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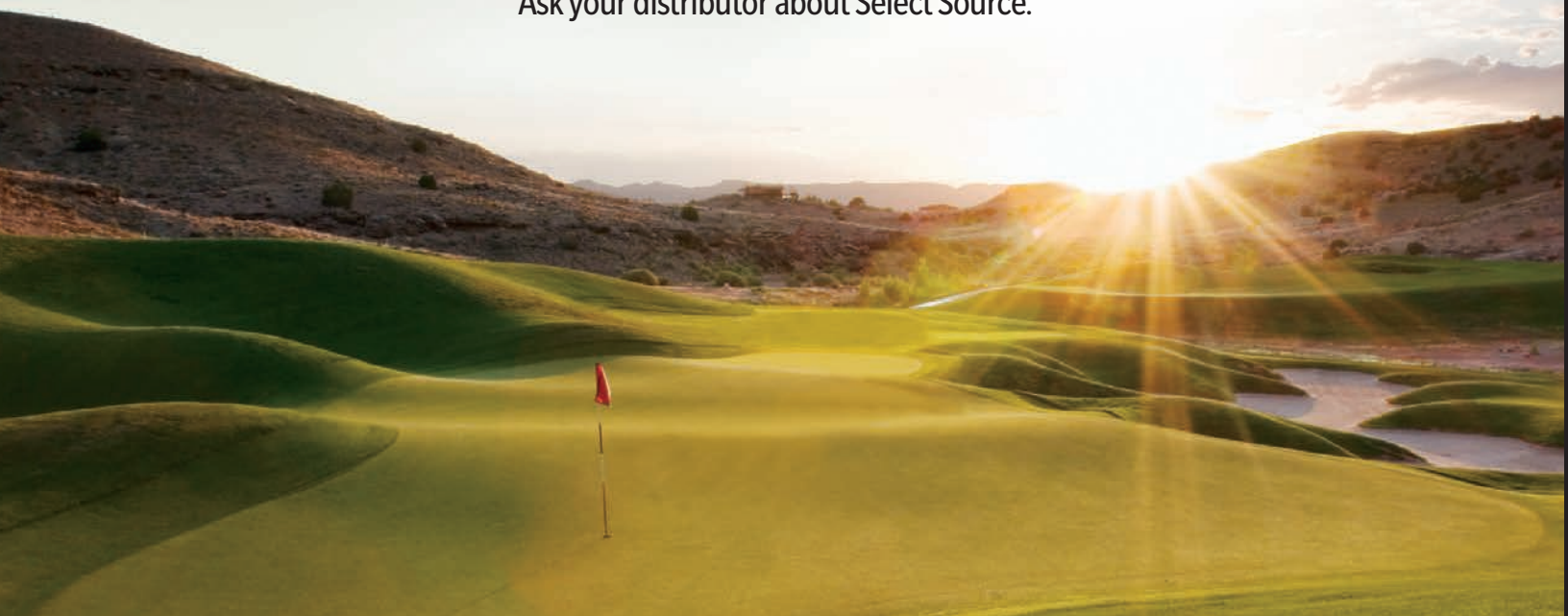
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We all know why we aerify our greens, but did you know when most of our members aerify?

Michael Paciga surveyed the membership and the results are published in his article.

PHOTO: Luke Cella

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Chuck Barber



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2014 MIDWEST EVENTS

- 2/5 Midwest Hospitality Reception, Orlando FL
- 02/18 Annual Assistant Winter Workshop, Lemont IL
- 03/06 Midwest March Meeting, Lemont, IL
- 04/29 Midwest April Meeting, Silver Lake Country Club

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Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS) exists to promote professionalism and integrity, to provide networking, education and career enhancement opportunities to all members who facilitate the growth and enjoyment of golf.

On Course is published monthly with original member content. For advertising opportunities please call 630-243-7900.

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Brain Placzkowski
*Assitant Superintendent
Royal Melbourne CC*

Winter Workouts

While we are all enjoying the polar vortex that won't seem to go away, it's important to remember that this time of year isn't all bad. It brings all kinds of events that help us prepare for the upcoming season.

Equipment is undergoing essential annual service, numerous education seminars are being attended, and most importantly, relaxation mode is in full swing. Whether it's vacationing to somewhere warm, partaking in winter sports, or just spending extra time with our families, we all have unique ways of decompressing after a long season.

When the weather turns cold I particularly look forward to the weekly skate with the Grassholes at Addison Ice Arena. I'd love to call it a hockey game, but it's more like a big practice that turns into a scrimmage depending how many people show up. No matter what you call it, it's a blast. Our group is comprised mostly of golf industry personnel with a few local pick-up players intertwined. The talent levels range from high-level juniors and college players, even one former pro, to those



with virtually no experience at all. The best thing is we don't discriminate, we take everybody, and there's always somebody there willing to teach you something new, which is a good thing, because I was pretty green when I first joined the gang. Here I am four years and many bruises later, (mostly from falling on my rear end and accidentally knocking people on theirs... sorry Chuck) able to make it around in a fashion that somewhat resembles a hockey player. Our hour and a half of four on four battles generally produce some pretty stiff competition and trash talking, but all is well with a postgame frosty beverage.

If you are interested in getting involved, but worry about the expense, I would encourage you to check one of the many local Play it Again Sports stores. You can find decent used equipment at bargain prices. Another approach is to check out one of the many online retailers. Every company has varying levels of equipment to fit any budget. There's no reason you couldn't put together a decent set of pads and skates for \$200-300. Once you've gathered all your gear, it's actually a pretty affordable hobby at \$10 a week, (post game beverages not included).

So, whether you're a long time hockey buff or a newly found enthusiast, it's never too late to give it a try. It's a great opportunity to get some exercise and make some new friends. All it requires is an open mind and a little bit of effort. For anyone interested, we play every Tuesday at 2:00 PM at Addison Ice Arena from November to April. Feel free to send me an email for more information. Come on out, you don't know what you're missing, and remember...DETROIT SUCKS!!! @

When We Aerify: Survey Results

Michael Paciga, Kemper Lakes Golf Club

Golf course superintendents clearly understand the agronomic reasons aerification needs to be performed. These benefits include: Restructure deflocculated soils, reduce compaction, improve surface and subsurface drainage, break down thatch by increasing microbial action, reduce black layer, reduce dry spots, allow top-dressing to be incorporated into thatch and soil without layering and increase overall health of the turf.

Last year, you may have recalled, I sent out a survey to the superintendent members of the Midwest to find out about aerification timing. The following are the results of that survey. It's unfortunate that aeration doesn't get scheduled when the time is ideal. It is often scheduled according to the golfing calendar. Aeration too early in the year makes the recovery process take longer than expected and you may end up favoring the wrong grass species. In the Chicagoland area, it's recommended to core aerify when soil temps are above 55°F, but optimal times are when temps are between 60°F and 65°F. It is recommended that aerification take place when the turf is actively growing, usually around the end of April or early May for cool season grasses such as creeping bentgrass and poa annua. Additionally, the timing of aeration can affect the species that you want to interseed. For example, if you are trying to push more creeping bentgrass into the aeration holes and inter-seed, it would be best to aerify when creeping bentgrass is actively growing (ideally when soil temperatures are in the 60°F and 65°F range). When temperatures are below 55°F, poa annua would have the best opportunity to become the predominant species.

A total of 57 responses were obtained from superintendents of public and private sector golf courses with budgets ranging from approximately \$500,000 to \$1.5 million annually. The following charts summarize the results on the timing of aeration and the overall objectives of the superintendents. Data is also presented comparing the difference in timing of aeration by private and public golf courses.

Aerification Scheduling- Spring

The results of the survey show, according to table 1, that among the surveyed superintendents, both private and public,

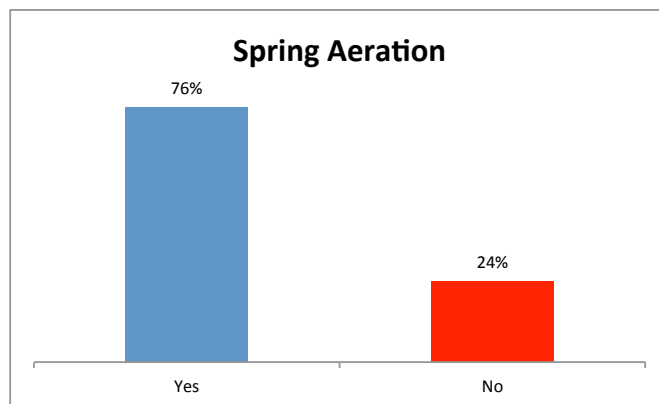


Table 1. Spring Aeration. 76% of all golf courses perform a spring aeration. April is the preferred month for aeration (58% versus 42% for May) because play is less.

about a ¼ of them don't aerify in the spring. Table 2 shows that most superintendents that do aerify in the spring perform the work in April.

It becomes apparent through the results that spring aeration is not as critical as the fall aeration to the superintendents. The overall objectives of the superintendents for the spring aeration are outlined in table 3. These results reinforce that spring aeration is important for thatch control and air/water movement. Due to the inclement weather Chicagoland's spring weather brings, most superintendents try to aerate during April when play can be minimal and recovery can often go unnoticed due to weather changes.

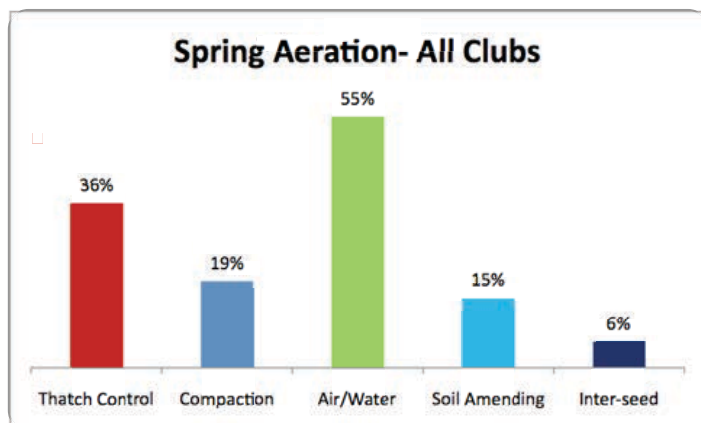


Table 3. Spring Aeration- All Clubs. The primary objectives for spring aeration in clubs that do aerate.

Aerification Scheduling- Fall

The fall aerification process is one of the most important agronomic practice scheduled on golf courses. According to the survey, 97.9% of the golf courses perform fall aeration. The timing of the fall aeration is important. The grass should still be actively growing to speed recovery. If aerification occurs too late in the season, the holes may not be completely healed going into winter. The optimal time to complete the process is September, normally right after Labor Day or within the next couple weeks. As the day lengths begin to shorten, the duration of air temperatures also begins to decline. This marks a special time as photosynthesis begins to decline as the plant begins to prepare for winter. A frost, which can occur at the end of September or early October, is generally the cue for the turfgrass plant to begin

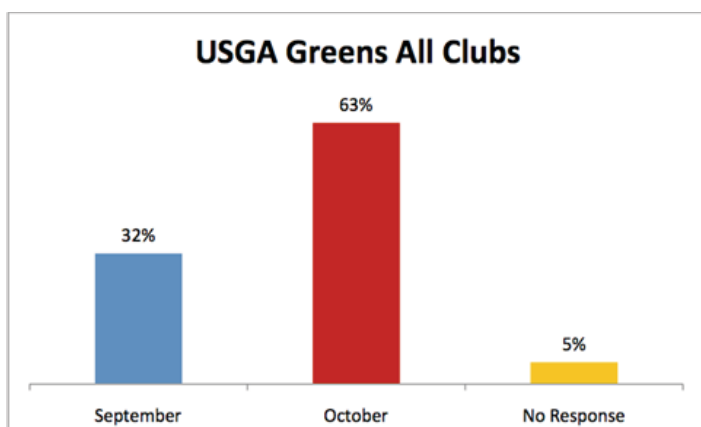


Table 4. USGA Greens All Clubs. When superintendents that have all USGA greens perform their fall aerification.

cores to the surface will also bring viable Poa seeds to the surface further encouraging germination" (Reicher, 2003). Greens should not be core aerified in fall; only solid tine aerified as coring will promote Poa annua infestation. If aeration holes are not healed over, this may encourage poa annua infestation, as this species is the first to begin growth next spring. The unrecovered holes from the previous fall provide a perfect opportunity for germination next spring.

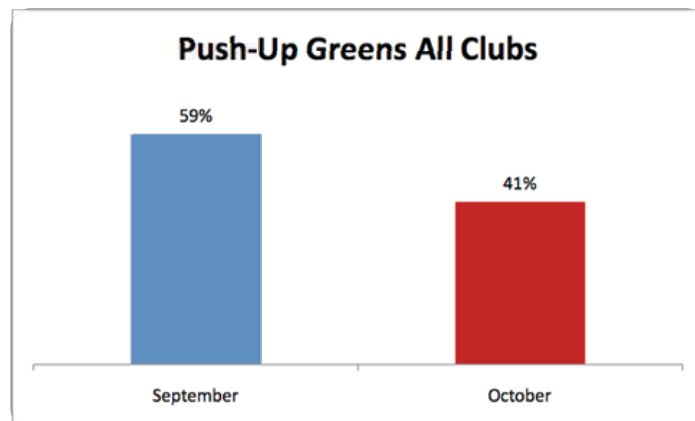


Table 5. Push-up greens all clubs. Members with push up greens typically aerify in September.

When is the Right Time to Aerify in the Fall?

Members at private country clubs often feel that their courses are the only ones that aerify in September. This is not the case. The survey cited earlier was conducted among public and private

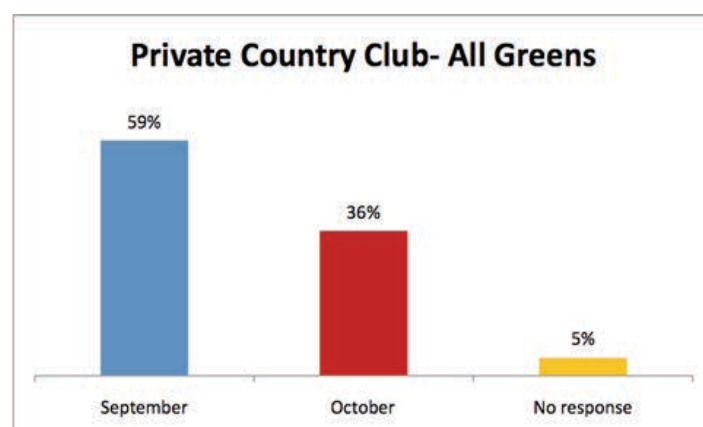


Table 6. Private Country Club- All Greens. Private country club superintendents aerify USGA or push-up greens primarily in September.

storing carbohydrates and signals root growth. At this point, growth of the turfgrass plant has declined significantly, which is a problem for many courses if aeration is scheduled too late into the fall. According to Zac Reicher, PhD from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, "Poa annua germination peaks in September and October, but will continue to germinate throughout a warm winter and well into spring. Open holes from late aerification will encourage Poa annua germination. Additionally, bringing soil

course superintendents in the Chicagoland area. The following tables classify the practices of private and public golf courses on different green types (i.e. USGA and push-up). Table 4 indicates that most courses with USGA greens will aerify in October.

The opposite is true if the course has push-up greens. Most of these courses will aerify in September which is the optimal time for healing after the summer stresses and allow for the optimal

time to inter-seed and germination. Table 5 indicates that the majority of clubs, private or public, aerify in September.

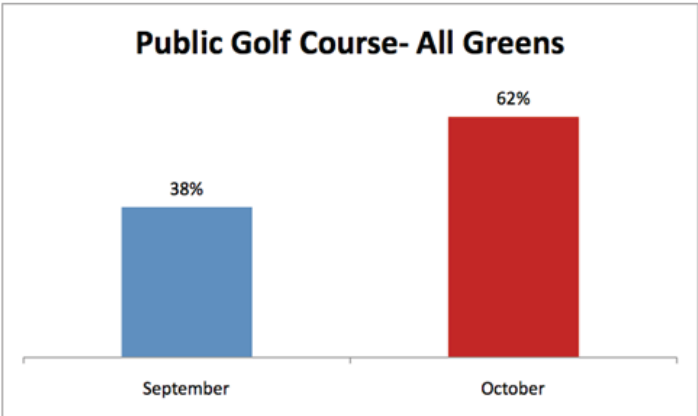


Table 7. Public Golf Course- All Greens. Public golf courses superintendents generally aerate both USGA and push up greens in October.

The survey results also indicate a difference between private and public golf courses relative to when they aerify in the fall. As expected (Table 7), public golf courses aerify in October due to revenue pressures. Most private golf courses (Table 6) with push up greens and USGA greens aerify during September for optimal recovery and benefit to the turfgrass plant.

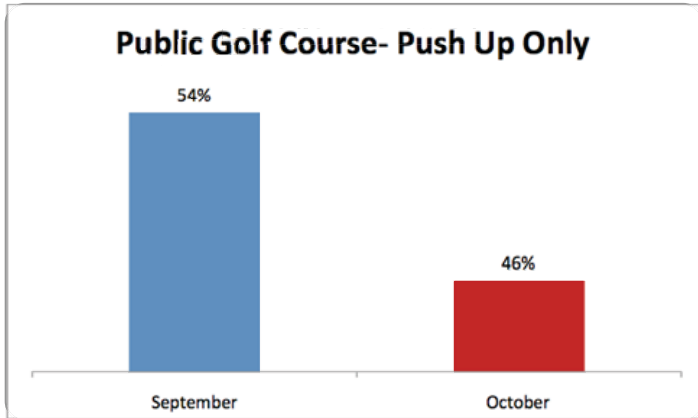


Table 8. Public Golf Course- Push Up Only. Public course superintendents with push up greens primarily aerate in September.

To further demonstrate the importance of fall aerification especially during September when the turf is actively growing the data shows that the majority of both public and private golf course with push up greens aerate in September (Tables 8 and 9).

The primary objectives for aerification of golf courses that have USGA vs. push-up greens differ dramatically. As stated earlier, USGA greens management is primarily concerned with thatch control and air/water movement as shown in Table 10. Golf courses that have push-up greens are primarily concerned with compaction. There is an increase in soil amending and inter-seeding by superintendents that have push-up greens (Table 11).

Whether you aerify your greens in the early spring or late fall or both, whether you have USGA greens or modified push up greens, we can all agree the benefit of this practice is proven.

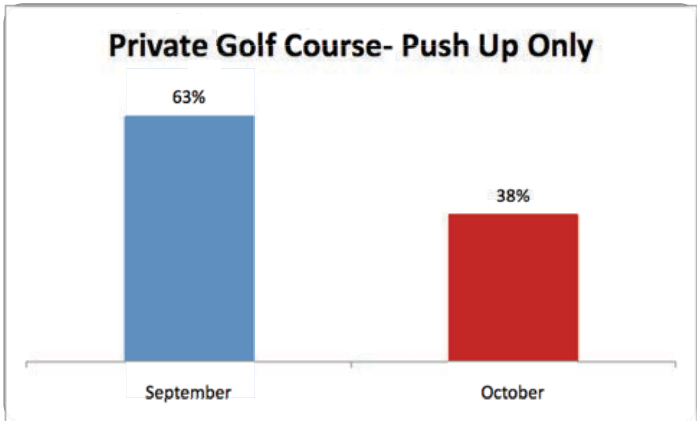


Table 9. Private Golf Course- Push Up Only. September is the optimal time to aerify push-up greens on private courses.

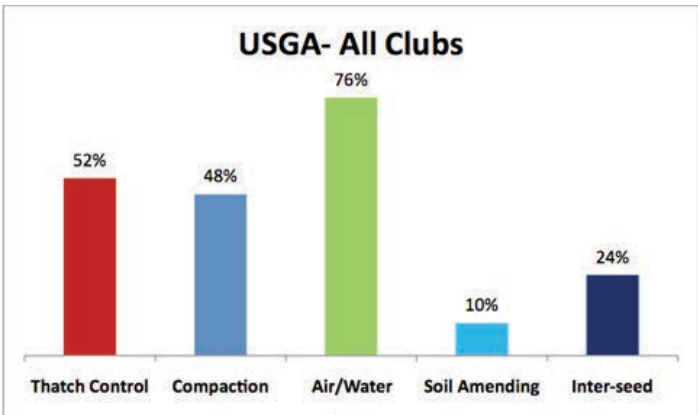


Table 10. USGA Aeration. Primary objectives of aerification from all clubs that have USGA greens.

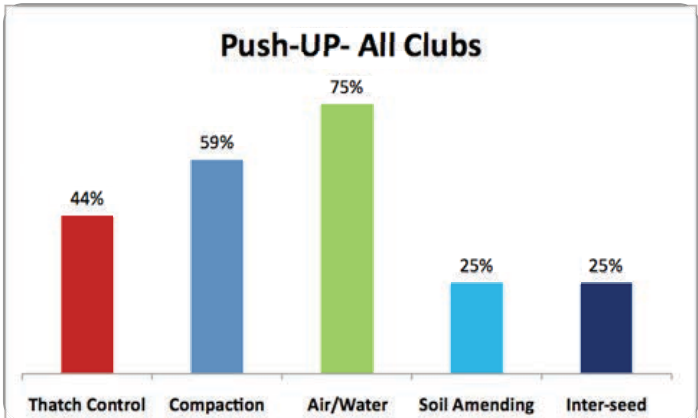
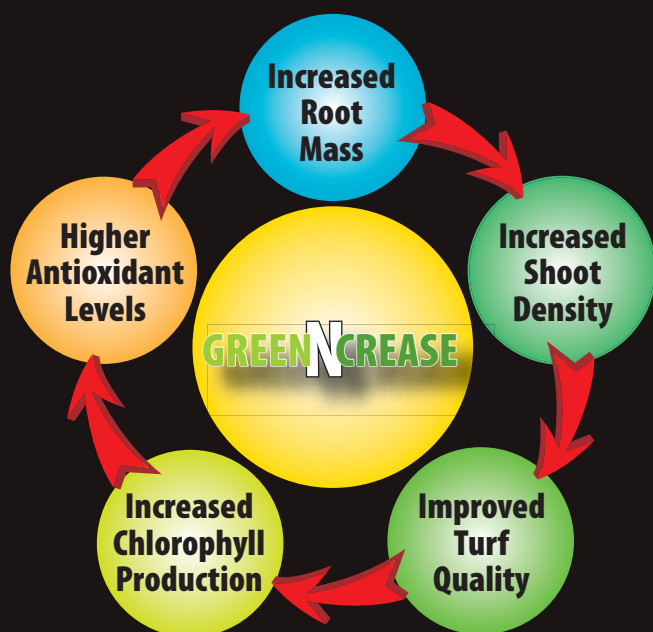


Table 11. Push Up Aeration. Primary objectives of aerification from all clubs that have Push-up greens.



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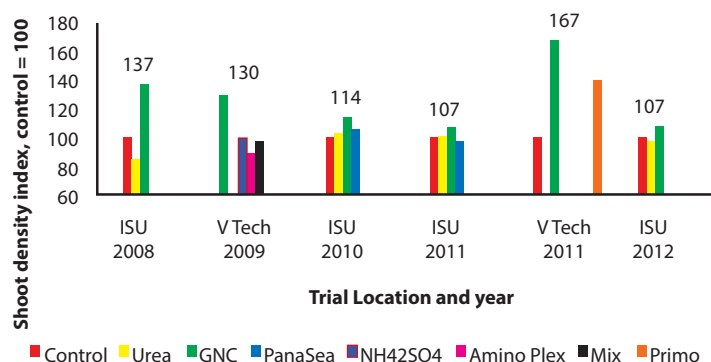
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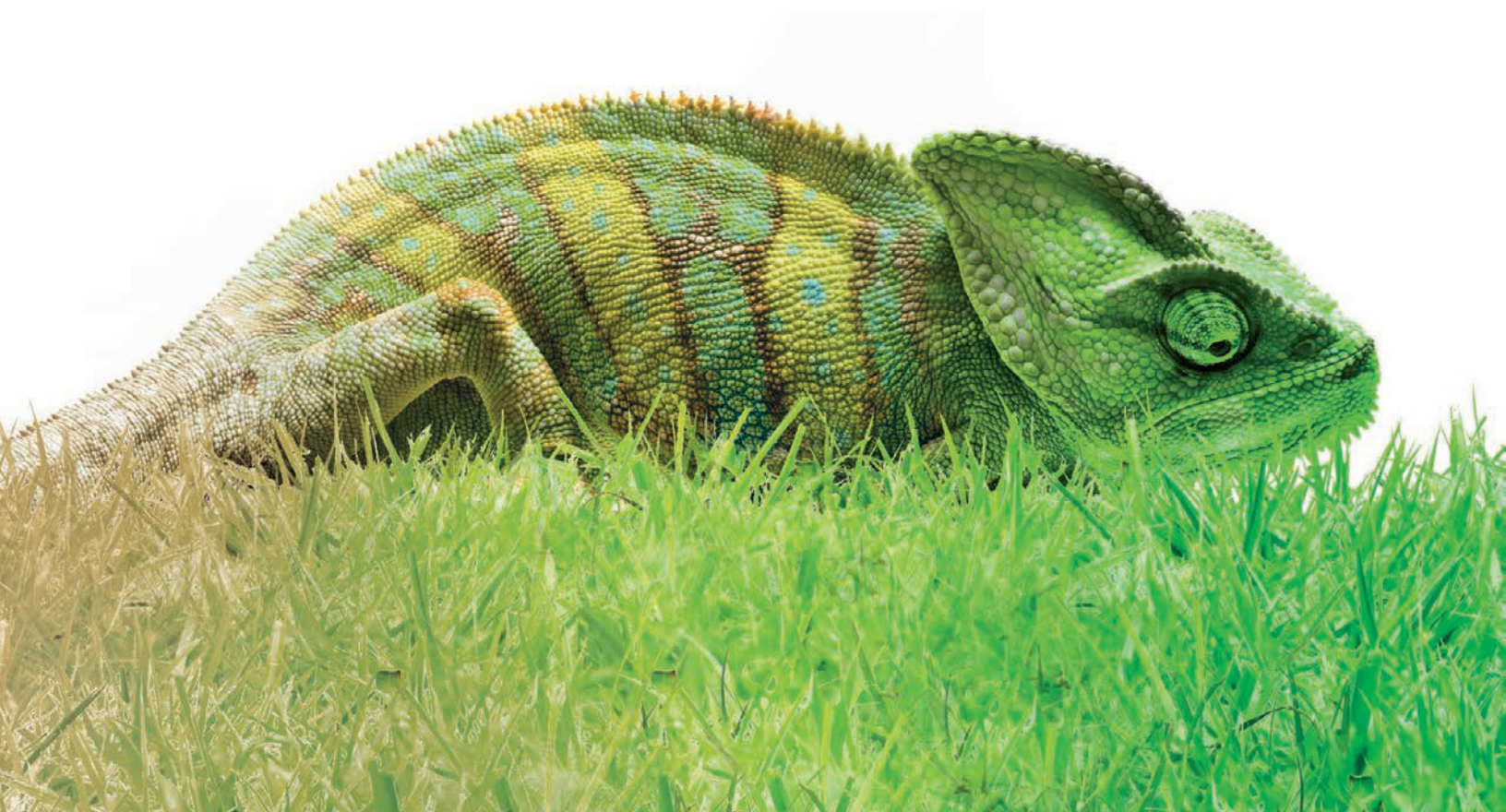
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The BullSheet



FEBRUARY 2014

Dates to Remember

February 18 - Annual Assistant Winter Workshop - Midwest Golf House, Lemont, IL.

March 5 – John Deere Landscapes University at the Midwest Conference Center in Northlake, IL. Call 1-800-347-4272 for details.

March 6 – MAGCS meeting at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL, Dr. Ed Nangle and Chris Painter hosts.

March 11 – Conserv FS' Tech Day at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, IL, Dan Murray, CGCS host.

March 12 – 30th Annual Chicagoland Forum at Naperville Country Club, Tim Anderson, CGCS, MG and Steven Biehl hosts.

March 30 – Deadline for nominations for GCM's Most Valuable Technician awards program presented in partnership with Foley United.

April 9 – CAGCS meeting at Lake Shore Country Club, Jeff Frentz, CGCS host.

April 29 – MAGCS monthly meeting and Spring Scramble at Silver Lake Country Club, David Kohley host.

May 5 - ITF/MAGCS Combined Event -Country Club of Peoria, Andy Morris Host.

It's nice to be here in the Midwest, where the only weather issues we face are the occasional tornado, the hundred-year flood that happens yearly, or the blizzard that stops us in our tracks. So we have to pick up a few sticks, squeegee off a bit of water, and plow a little snow. In Wales last month, golf courses got to REALLY experience Mother Nature's wrath in the form of huge waves off of the Atlantic Ocean which brought some unusual debris with them. Along with the assorted sea plants and garbage, Welsh greenkeepers had the pleasure of cleaning up all the stinky fish that were just too old or tired to swim back out with the sea when it receded. And there were some really BIG fish—this one weighed over 15 pounds (or is that what its market value was?)



In another of Her mood swings, Mother Nature brought us that polar vortex early last month, which really messed with ITF's Turf Conference 2014 on the 7th and 8th. Because many of the people scheduled to speak at the event and many attendees had difficulties traveling to Oak Brook on the morning of the 7th, the start was delayed until noon, and many last-minute alterations had to be made. Thanks to **Bruce Branham**, Luke Cella, the ITF board members, the presenters and the venue—the Hyatt Lodge—the event went on somewhat as planned and was a great success. Nice job everyone on calling those audibles from the line of scrimmage!



The Lodge at Hamburger University on 1/6/14. It doesn't look like it is -16°F.



Speakers were "skyped" in while moderators advanced their slides and relayed questions from the audience at the Turf Conference.

Our sincere condolences go out to the Dinelli family on the passing of **Frank (Jerome) Jerry Dinelli**—father of **J.D. Dinelli**—on January 19th at the age of 73. Mr. Dinelli retired from Northmoor Country Club in 1974, where he worked with then Data Control Systems (now IBM) on the first computer-controlled irrigation system—a man well ahead of his time. Rest in peace, Mr. Dinelli.

Congratulations to **Roger Stewart, CGCS** at TPC Twin Cities in St. Paul, MN on being named the recipient of GCSAA's 2014 President's Award for Environmental Stewardship. Rog, who once plied his trade in these parts at Riverside GC and Stonebridge CC (have I forgotten any?), has been an industry leader in environmental stewardship throughout his nearly 40-year career, and received his award at the Opening Session of this month's Golf Industry Show in Orlando. Great work, and well-deserved, Roger!



Roger Stewart, CGCS

Q: What is it called when you choose to use a cart at **Todd Schmitz's** course?

A: A Phillips Park 'n' Ride.

BIG time movement in the superintendent ranks around town. **Scott Goniwiecha**, formerly at The Glen Club is the new superintendent at the Dunes Club in New Buffalo, MI. **Paul Bastron, CGCS**, most recently with Midwest Turf Products has taken over the reins at Kenosha Country Club. **Dan Tully** from Kemper Lakes Golf Club has moved to his new position at Twin Orchard Country Club. Lastly, Drew Barnett, who has been

with the Philadelphia Cricket Club for the last three years is the new superintendent at Knollwood Club, taking over for the retired **Randy Wahler**.



Drew Barnett

I think I've discovered the new Dream Job—golf course superintendent at Santa Clara Golf & Tennis Club in California. The reason? You'll be known for the firmest fairways EVER. Why? Because City officials have approved a special permit to use said fairways for 5,000 extra parking spots on games days at Levis Stadium where the 49ers play. Thank God it never rains in California...

Congratulations to Lauren and **Matt Harstad** (Calumet Country Club) on welcoming their son Tucker Carl Harstad into the world on January 14th. Tucker arrived after putting up a good fight to stay put at 8:19 PM weighing 8 pounds, 10 ounces, and 21.5 inches long.



Welcome to the world Tucker Carl Harstad.

A couple unique education events are on the horizon that are worth looking into. On March 5th, the John Deere Landscapes University will take place at the Midwest Conference Center at 401 W. Lake St. in Northlake, IL—call 1-800-347-4272 for information. Then, on March 11th, Conserv FS' Tech Day will take place at the Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, IL (**Dan Murray, CGCS** host). You can register by contacting Kimberley Schumacher at kschumacher@conservfs.com.

GCSAA recommends an item for your New Year's To-Do list: Record your service and education points!

Bull Sheet continued on page 13