

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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The 195-yard 11th hole at Colonial Williamsburg's Golden Horseshoe Green Course, designed by Rees Jones, features an amphitheater green nestled above a sharp slope to a pond in front. For more on new courses, see pages 23-26.

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Ice, wind and fire

Startling snowstorm buries Midwest

By Peter Blais

The Halloween snowstorm that blanketed the upper Midwest horrified superintendents, forcing many to close courses early and leaving them shaking their heads for failing to blow out irrigation systems or make chemical and fertilizer applications earlier than usual.

Originally forecast to dump less than four to six inches of snow, the early-season storm left 28 inches of the white stuff in Minneapolis and as much as 40 inches farther north near Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis. That's close to half the average yearly snowfall in all three areas.

Southern Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri received a mixture of snow and freezing rain, resulting in tree damage, power outages and delayed chemical and fertilizer applications.

"It was the largest single recorded snowfall here in the last 100 years," reported superintendent David Kohlbr of the 37.9 inches deposited on his Donald Ross-designed Northland Country Club in Duluth.

Kohlbr was fortunate. He blew out his irrigation system Oct. 1 and was just applying the last snow mold application to the final tee as the snow began falling around 1 p.m. on Oct. 31.

"My major concern was that the ground wasn't frozen yet," he added. "Snow mold could thrive in that stuff and we could have some real problems, especially on the fairways, next spring."

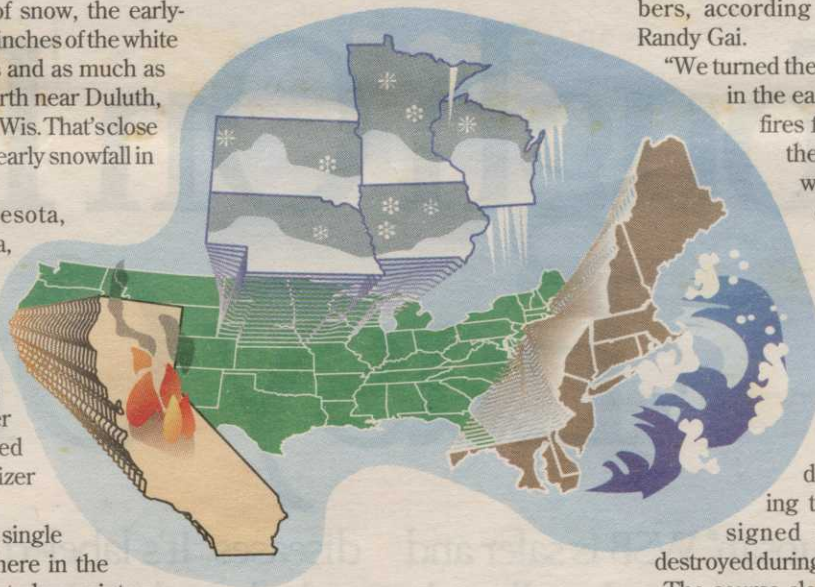
Kohlbr also feared crown dehydra

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Hurricane slashes, floods East Coast

By Mark Leslie

Fronted by ferocious winds and coinciding with high tide, Hurricane Grace blasted the East Coast from Maryland to Maine on Oct. 30, leaving some areas looking like a war zone — complete with National Guard troops. Golf courses built for beauty along the coastline paid the price for that location in a frighten-



ing few hours that brought chaos from which it took a week to recover.

Driving from east to west, the storm hit Maine and Massachusetts, then turned south, pounding the shoreline with 15-foot waves and causing heavier damage than Hurricane Bob, which had struck Aug. 19.

"It was scary," said Brian Cowan, superintendent at Eastward Ho Country Club in Harwich, Mass., on the outer edge of Cape Cod. He described 78 miles-per-hour winds and massive waves that washed 14 cottages and a half-dozen

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Runaway blaze terrorizes Oakland area

By Peter Blais

OAKLAND, Calif. — One golf course suffered major damage and several others barely escaped the intense flames that engulfed the hills west of the city in late October.

The 12th green, 14th tee and several fairways at Claremont Country Club were severely burned by falling embers, according to superintendent Randy Gai.

"We turned the irrigation system on in the early afternoon to stop fires from springing up in the more outlying fairways. It looks like a disease outbreak where the cinders landed. We'll have to re-sod some spots," Gai said.

At least 300 trees along the course and another eight to 10 acres of wilderness area belonging to the Jim Smith-designed facility were also destroyed during the blaze, Gai added.

The course closed from Oct. 22-28, re-opening the front nine on the 28th and the back nine a day later. No temporary greens or tees were needed.

Gai's crew re-seeded and re-sodded the damaged turf areas and removed 200 trees, including many stately redwoods and cypress, while the course was closed.

"We'll leave some of the scarred trees in and see what happens. But I expect we'll lose at least 300," the superintendent said.

The cost, mostly labor, to remove burned trees and repair damaged turf could run as much as \$200,000, Gai

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EPA puts pesticide laws in states' hands

From staff reports

The federal government will soon give more responsibility to the states to manage pesticides that could contaminate ground water.

The Environmental Protection Agency's recently

released Pesticides and Ground Water Strategy gives states a major role tailoring programs to meet local conditions to avoid adverse effects on human health and the environment.

"Current findings do not

indicate a public health problem," noted EPA De-puty Administrator Henry Habicht. "However, monitoring studies, including EPA's National Pesticide Survey of Drinking Water

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Hurricane Grace racks Atlantic Coast with wind, waves

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houses out to sea. Seawater covered much of his course, depositing a tri-hull catamaran on the 16th fairway and assorted debris along the course's shoreline.

Dick Barry saw the storm from two viewpoints — as a member of his local fire department and part-time grounds employee at Cohasset (Mass.) Golf Club.

"It was like a war zone here," he said. "There are natural gas leaks everywhere, soldiers keeping watch over homes..."

Superintendent Rich Caughey at Hatherly Country Club in North Scituate, Mass., perhaps told the most symbolic tale of the hurricane.

"There is a house on our course," he said. A week after the storm, the house was still sitting in a marshland.

Elsewhere, coastal courses in Maryland, New Jersey and Long Island's Hamptons region were hit hard by the storm.

Jim Gilligan, superintendent at Richmond County Country Club at inland Belle Meade, N.J., said: "We were spared. The Jersey shore took a beating, but it was strictly a coastal storm."

Most superintendents on all the affected courses reported that their major task was cleaning up debris. Many said heavy rains helped flush the salt water through the turf, neutralizing the salt water. Others recorded no rain whatsoever.

"The best blessing was that no one was killed in the storm," Cowan said, relating how many homes and camps were washed into the ocean. "In the 25 years I've been here we've never had a storm this bad. Erosion went 30, 40 feet above sea level.

"The ocean came in with such fury it took out a portion of the 7th tee, went over the tee into the fairway, and flooded the fairway. Boats, docks, anything that wasn't tied down broke loose. We have lumber, chairs, propane tanks, all sorts of things on our shoreline."



A catamaran takes up residence on a fairway at Eastward Ho Country Club on Massachusetts' Cape Cod.

Photo courtesy of George Cowan, Eastward Ho

Although one tee was torn apart and two greens were dangerously eroded, repairs at Eastward Ho are "in the distant future," Cowan said. "We can't do anything about it, yet. We've been in the permitting process since 1989 trying to get permission to build a seawall to prevent this from happening in Northeasters or tidal surges. Now it's happened."

Eastward Ho still must get permits from a number of federal, state and town agencies, Cowan said.

The major loss?

The elevated green on the signature 15th hole (once declared by *Golfdom* magazine "one of the prettiest holes in the country") was undermined by erosion.

"Erosion is so close to the playing surface I don't want the liability of someone getting hurt," Cowan said, adding that golfers are playing a 14-

hole course.

Cowan's crew had to pump water off the course for four days and, despite a four-inch rain, may still have to spread gypsum to neutralize the salt, he said.

Caughey saw 10 feet of water submerge much of Hatherly Country Club, which has ocean on two sides and marsh on the other two.

"Three holes were completely covered and five others were two-thirds under water for several hours," Caughey said.

He figures one major task next year will be digging out and refilling Hatherly's bunkers.

Caughey felt the three inches of rain that fell flushed the salt past the root zone. "We're lucky it didn't occur at a stressful time of year for the turf," he said.

While waiting to get on their wet

course for a "massive cleanup," Caughey's six-man crew used the club's two backhoes to clear area roads—which were three feet deep in sand — so residents in North Scituate and Minot could get to their homes.

Then, a week of work faced them at the course.

Courses along the South Shore of Cape Cod mainly faced cleanup from windblown debris.

Superintendent Curtis Niven at Duxbury (Mass.) Yacht and Country Club said: "We had a lot of wind that knocked down limbs. But our only water was on the 10th fairway."

And Charles Passios, whose Hyannisport Club suffered heavy damage from Hurricane Bob, said rains from Grace actually helped his course. The area has had a drought since Aug. 19 when Bob hit, and the turf welcomed rain to

flush the salt out of the turf, he said.

On Long Island, superintendents John Carlone and Richard McGuinness, both near Kennedy International Airport in Queens, saw Hurricane Grace submerge their courses.

Carlone's Middle Bay Country Club in Oceanside was closed for two days after six- to 10-foot tides from the hurricane submerged fairways on six holes. The greens and tees, all elevated, remained above water.

Carlone said two things saved the day, and his turf: the tide receded quickly — four hours — and he irrigated at 20-minute cycles.

He reported: "West Hampton got blasted pretty good. Maidstone had one tee flooded. All South Shore courses did the same as we did — irrigating in cycles. Also, the winds were high and there was a lot of debris on courses."

McGuinness, from the Woodmere (N.Y.) Club, had to stop play for four days on his Robert Trent Jones-designed layout.

Woodmere is so close to sea level that it "has trouble at moontide," McGuinness said. Luckily, Grace brought little wind and no rain — just high tide, he said.

When the hurricane struck, the 17th and 18th greens were underwater for 36 hours. "But we turned on the irrigation to flush them out — one hour on, one hour off."

It worked.

Rehoboth Beach (Del.) Country Club assistant superintendent Ed Brown said high tides flooded about 80 percent of his course, all fairway. The greens and tees are elevated.

"The bay surged over tide gates and bulkheads and onto the course. It stayed flooded for two days and drained by itself," Brown said.

He said crews have applied gypsum in the recent past, so they did not need to apply it again. "We irrigated heavily as soon as it started to dry," which proved sufficient, he said.

Oakland fire frightens area courses

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estimated. The figure could have gone much higher, especially if the flames had reached the clubhouse. Fortunately, the building sits on the extreme southwest corner of the property while the fire bore down from the northeast.

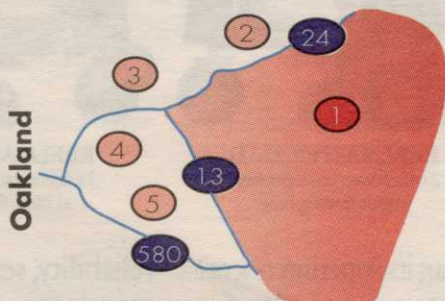
"The course acted like a giant fire break," Gai said.

Gai said 15 to 18 members were among the 3,300 people who lost their homes in the blaze, which caused an estimated \$1.5 billion damage.

While the fire stopped about 1-1/2 miles short of nearby Montclair Golf Course, the blaze has severely affected business at the par-3 facility.

"Many of the people who play here lived in those homes," said owner Pillim Lee. "We were the closest public golf facility, so we'll feel a big impact."

Smoke was visible over the ridge separating Orinda Country Club from the inferno, although flames never reached the course, said assistant pro Bob Tomasini.



- 1) Moraga CC; 2) Orinda CC;
- 3) Tilden Park GC; 4) Claremont CC;
- 5) Monclair GC.

Dark circles are route numbers.

"Helicopters used our lake to get water to fight the fire," he said. "They made 18 trips with those 500-gallon buckets."

Flames licked the edges of Moraga Country Club, but stayed west of the course.

"We could see flames behind the 13th green," said Director of Golf John Lundahl. "If the wind had been blowing directly across from the west, we would have been heavily damaged."



Claremont Country Club's trees got scorched and its fairways burned by hot debris.