

From THE FEED

Hurricane Sandy came knocking on New Jersey's door Oct. 29 and carved a deadly swath into the east coast, upended millions of lives through the week. We at the GCI Intergalactic HQ hope everyone took the proper precautions getting ready for this storm and remained safe and were another story.

Photos of flooding and damage were showing up on Twitter as superintendents watched the storm plow through - from a distance.

Ryan Howard, superintendent at Winters Run Golf Club in Bel Air, Md., kept us all updated on course damage, including some heavy flooding.

Ryan Howard, @TWRyanHoward

Winters Run creek about to breach. Won't be long before 5 holes are snorkeling.



4 hours ago. This bridge becomes a dam if trees fall. Go easy #sandy.

Got antsy and drove back to work and now almost home. Dicey ride. Fortunately course holding well so far. Creek has breached but minor.

5.25" caught in rain gauge so far since this morning. But it's coming down sideways. Not sure how to quantify that. Big thing is water looked clear of debris.

Driving into the club ranks right up there on one of the dumbest things I have done. #thelistislong

Very grateful to say we were spared by #sandy with minor tree damage and flooding. Winters Run GC will be closed for a few days to dry out.

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Fuzzy forecast

Winter can have a profound impact on turf condition, so it's no surprise that many superintendents want to know what Mother Nature is cooking up for Winter 2012-13. The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently released what can only be described as a fuzzy best guess for the winter.

"The science behind seasonal prediction is in its infancy," said Mike Halpert, deputy director of NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, in an official statement. "Despite recent advances, this year's winter outlook has been difficult."

So many climate influences - such as El Nino, El Nina and the North Atlantic Oscillation - play a role in what winter will turn out to be. NOAA climatologists say there is considerable uncertainty with the specific temperature and precipitation forecasts for Winter 2012-13.

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As of mid October, here's what NOAA thinks might happen:

- Above-average warmth is expected this winter from the Rockies to the Plains states.
- States from the Great Lakes to the Northeast and Southeast have equal chances of seeing below, above or near-average temperatures this winter.
- Below-average precipitation in the northwestern US and the Upper Midwest.
- Above-average precipitation is expected from eastern Texas eastward along the Gulf Coast to central Georgia and northern Florida.
- The High Plains, Southwest, Northeast, Ohio Valley and Mid-Atlantic have equal chances of seeing below, above or near-average precipitation.



Marathon men

Golfers usually want to get as many rounds in as they can before the end of the season, but two brothers-in-law playing at Pinewood Golf Course took it to the extreme. Erik Haselius and Dave Butts clocked seven full rounds in one day at the public 9-hole course.

They played 63 holes each to take advantage of an all-you-can-golf deal on a Sunday, starting at 9:15 a.m. and only wrapping up because the sun went down. A quick stop for food was their only break from swinging for the tee. Thanks to the deal, the marathon only cost them \$39 total, including green fee and cart rental - a final cost of about 31 cents per hole to each of them.

