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JACOBSEN

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GENERALIZING

Pretty much every time I write about the relationship between superintendents and general managers – no matter how positive I try to keep it – I upset a few GMs and get a couple of nastygrams from good club executives. I'll try to avoid that this time as I attempt to put some perspective on Bruce Williams' excellent cover story on GM/Super relationships.

Oh hell, why even try? I know I'm going to get those emails, so here's what I really think.

GCI is, at its heart, a superintendent-centric publication. We tend to empathize with the turfheads and we occasionally joke about the blazer-wearers, burger-flippers and shirt-folders in the other departments. I think that's a function of our editorial mission, but also partly because – up until a few years ago – the supers were nearly always the underdogs in the facility pecking order. They were all too often the blue collar dudes who did what they were told and who stayed down in the “barn” away from the customers. Thus, we rooted for them the same way Cleveland fans root for the Browns or Chicagoans pull for the Cubs: with enthusiasm tempered by realism.

But, things have changed over the past decade. The balance has shifted – particularly in the post-recession golf market. There is growing recognition that a good super is perhaps the most critical factor to success in a crazy, competitive market. And, when push has come to shove (often when a GM at a smaller facility “resigned” for budget or performance reasons) superintendents are increasingly being thrust into the GM job. Why?

A growing number of owners recognize the fact that superintendents tend to be stabilizing forces internally, they already manage the facility's biggest budget (usually to the penny), and they tend to make up for what they lack in club management skill with plenty of trustworthiness and commitment.

That is NOT to say that GMs as a rule are

not trustworthy or committed. I just know from talking to a lot of supers who've become GMs overnight, it's often because ownership is exasperated by the lack of consistent quality out there and fed up with churning through managers every other year.

(GMs: Before you start composing your angry email to me, be advised that I am NOT talking about CMAA-level managers who are trained, educated, experienced professionals. I'm talking about guys who ended up managing the front of the house at a golf facility because

they couldn't hack it at Applebees. If you're reading this, you are not that guy.)

But here's the thing. Hardly any superintendents I talk with really want to be GMs. Either the job is simply given to them after the untimely departure of the previous manager or they seek it out because they're worried about what a new guy might do. In most cases there's very little additional compensation. Own-

ers see it as an opportunity to consolidate an “unnecessary” position and save a few bucks.

And that, my friends, is wrong. It's not fair to double the workload of the super and it's not a sustainable management structure in most facilities. A good general manager is equally as valuable to the success of a business as a good superintendent. Yes, the primary thing customers look for in choosing a facility is conditioning value for the dollar and that is a primary role for the super. But, the next most important thing on the list is outstanding customer service. And that all flows from the GM.

Today's GM – no matter what his or her background might be – should be the chief customer service officer for the facility. That means establishing a culture of really caring about the people who walk in the door and treating them like... er... customers. Tons of courses offer a good place to play. The ones that make the customer feel special will thrive in the leaner, meaner golf market of the future. **GCI**



Pat Jones

Editorial director and publisher

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– Daryl Pearson, Golf Course Superintendent,
Winterstone Golf Course, Independence, Mo.

Winterstone Golf Course Superintendent Daryl Pearson had a problem – one that golfers and ownership had noticed: weeds.

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More mellow

Thank you for putting Basil in your magazine. I thought the entire article was great. Turf needs more of these stories to keep things more mellow than the turf industry is most of the time.

Trevor Morvay
Golf Resort Superintendent
Sawmill Creek Golf Resort and Spa
Camlachie, Ontario

Old vs. new

There are flaws that exist among the professional staffs in our industry. I will touch on the pro shop, which you mentioned in your article about the poor attitude of many pro shops ("Have you hugged your golf pro today?" August, 2013). This is a serious issue which the PGA must pay attention to in the future. There are many professional club pros, but by and large pros at public courses lack management ability, customer service and business capability.

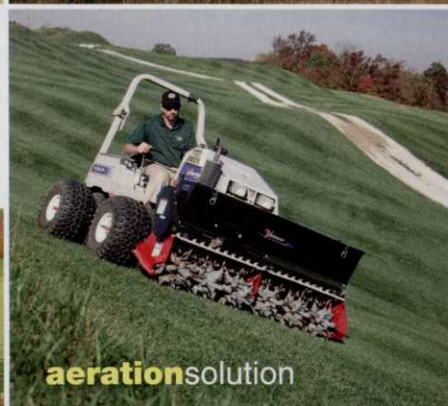
As for superintendents, at one of my courses I have an older

superintendent who has been in the business for decades. He is excellent in his management abilities, his ability to manage his employees and care for his equipment, and order only chemicals and other necessary ingredients for caring for his course. There are many who are like this superintendent. Most are mature in age and have learned the trade by facing the day-to-day battles of golf course grounds operations. This group is very secure in their job.

On the other hand there is a group of younger superintendents who do not belong in the industry. They are good in agronomy, but totally incapable of managing their personnel and making and meeting budgets. They treat their machinery as a daily replaceable item. Many of these new entries into superintendent positions cost owners or members far more than is comprehensible due to their lack of caring, knowledge, and experience.

The superintendents' association should be very careful who they bestow a Class-A designation. The GCSAA has been a dismal failure in sending Class-A superintendents into the workplace, especially the younger ones who are just not trained to take on the responsibilities that are expected of them.

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[REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK]

Sustainability in Golf...Beyond the Green

Bill Brown reports on what the industry is doing to make golf more sustainable.

Sustainability: There may be as many definitions as there are groups trying to define and implement it. As a former superintendent, I was consistently faced with questions on the topic of being environmentally friendly, native areas and sustainability. During my 20 years in the industry, I have seen several attempts by people or groups thinking they are going to make the industry sustainable or initiate environmental changes on a global scale, only to find these lose steam and die.

Earlier this month, Experience Green, a non-profit organization founded in 2010 that focuses on the what, how, why and when of sustainability launched an initiative called Sustainability in Golf... Beyond the Green, in Hilton Head, SC. Presented in partnership with The Sea Pines Resort and Syngenta, the event was a pioneering initiative bringing together all the segments of the golf industry to advance sustainability to benefit the planet, its people and prosperity or what they call the triple bottom line. The event hosted a slew of other partners/sponsors including RBC, John Deere Golf, NGCOA and ePar to name a few.

I was cautiously optimistic. The schedule of events and speakers looked great. Most of all, the



diversity of the audience is what intrigued me the most. Teresa Wade, Founder and Executive Director of Experience Green, expressed having three goals for the Sustainability in Golf event. The first goal was simple, to get all the key players of golf in one room. The first goal was accomplished, the event had total buy-in from each segment in golf. There were speakers and attendees from course maintenance, club managers, owners, golf professionals, the public and even a few junior golfers were in attendance. That last was impressive!

Day one was broken down into the three key segments, People, Planet and Prosperity. Each segment featured speakers representing these areas followed by time for panel discussions. Each group was charged with presenting how they are doing their own little part to



make golf more sustainable.

Following the panel discussions the attendees and partners broke out into their respective groups. One of the questions they had to answer was, "What do they need from the other segments of golf to help with sustainability at their facility?" The answer was simple, total buy-in.

Our last day featured a tour of The Ocean Course at Sea Pines Resort lead by Jim Cregan, golf course superintendent and Joellen Lampman from Audubon International. It was great to see many of the sustainable initiatives put in place at the Ocean Course. Jim and his team do a tremendous job. But I was equally excited to hear them communicate the cost of sustainability. Being sustainable on a course doesn't mean you will simply discontinue a practice, it is the reallocation of resources.



See the app version of this story for Bill's complete report from the event

From THE FEED



The golf course is a dangerous place, especially between seasons. Some sudden severe weather can close down the course instantly, but sometimes it's better to deal with the problem you can ride out rather than random acts of vandalism.



Ridgewood CC Grounds @RCC_Grounds

Microburst hit club today 50+ trees down, another 100+ tops sheared off. Course closed tomorrow. More later.



↑ **Jake Brooks@jakebrooks04**
Won't be needing that fan anymore.



Sam Leatherberry @SamLeatherberry

Seemed like a good idea to move back on August 1st. Seriously snow in October? #whoops



Fowler's Mill GC @FowlersMillGC

Needless to say, we are closed for the weekend #snow #christmascard.



Scott Reaves @ScottReaves5

Good morning.



↑ **Ian Nichols@IanANichols**
If there is a bright side least it wasn't burnt out in the middle of a green.



↑ **Scott Reaves@ScottReaves5**
Credit for persistence. This was their fourth or fifth attempt.



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LIVE FROM GIE+EXPO 2013

Turfheads came to learn and try out new equipment at GIE+Expo 2013 in Louisville, Ky., with lots of new opportunities for education and plenty of iron to ride. Here are a few of the highlights from the show:

-Chuck Bowen, the editor of GCI's sister publication Lawn & Landscape, moderated a Power Panel discussion with a group of smart, vocal landscape contractors on topics like using the H2B Guest Worker program, employee referral programs and new employee training.

-The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute launched a new education campaign aimed at alerting equipment users about the danger of misfueling small engines with E15 gasoline. The Look Before You Pump campaign starts the conversation about fuels with up to 15 percent ethanol. The campaign's website, LookBeforeYouPump.com, has educational resources about the new fuel.

-New equipment from many manufacturers, including several alternative-energy choices, like a dealer-installed propane kit for the John Deere ZTrak series, the Cub Cadet electric RZT-S Zero and the new Mean Green Mowers STALKER mower, complete with night camo finish.

-The maiden voyage of the AeroLawn 3000, our very own remote-control drone, which gave us a bird's eye view of all of the great machinery on display in the demo area.



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Podcast pick of the month

Sure, irrigation expert and president of Irrigation Consulting Brian Vinchesi shares his views on the importance of smart water usage on the golf course here in the pages of GCI every month as a featured columnist. But you don't have to go far to be a part of his intelligent irrigation bootcamp series on SRN, covering the how and why of efficient water usage. Head to <http://bit.ly/16iYxZC> to hear it.



Henry DeLozier is a principal in the Global Golf Advisors consultancy. DeLozier joined Global Golf Advisors in 2008 after nine years as the vice president of golf for Pulte Homes. He is a past president of the National Golf Course Owners Association's board of directors and serves on the PGA of America's Employers Advisory Council.

NO OTHER BUSINESS LIKE IT

The bona fide potential of golf's business segment will be revealed in the coming few years.

A simple yet eloquent exchange between two characters in the film *The Legend of Bagger Vance* is revealing for what it says about golf's appeal. Rannulph Junuh, a local golfing hero before he went away to fight in World War I, is speaking to Hardy Greaves, who is looking back on his life after collapsing on a golf course.

Junuh: You really love this game, don't you?

Greaves: It is the greatest game there is.

Junuh: You really think so?

Greaves: Ask anybody. It's fun. It's hard. You stand out there on that green, green grass, and it's just you and the ball. ... It's the only game I know that you can call a penalty on yourself, if you're honest, which most people are. There just ain't no other game like it.

The same can be said of the business of golf. There's just no other business like it. All of us who work in a golf-related field know we've beaten the system. That's not to say the business of golf is similar in any way to the days of Bagger Vance.

The business is ever-changing. Just how positive future changes will be for those who stake their living to the health of the game will be greatly affected by three important influences: the success of player development, the strength of the housing recovery and the ripple effects of the ClubCorp IPO.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT. The PGA of America's Get Golf Ready program has the potential to dramatically increase participation in a game that for the last decade has lost more players than it has gained. The program can be a game-changer if two key things happen:

- PGA professionals need to give more than lip service to the program.

If the PGA's 27,000 members (22,000 active) get behind the program, the potential to increase rounds and revenues is staggering. Could 22,000 professionals recruit an average of 12 golfers who stayed with the game (1 per month) in each in the next five years? If they did, that would add 1.3 million new golfers to tee sheets across the country. It's a meaningful start to rebuilding participation, which is the key ingredient of all golf-related businesses. Arithmetic is simple; recruiting, promoting and teaching are harder. But PGA professionals are our best ambassadors of the game. We need them to step up.

- The PGA of America needs to sustain Get Golf Ready through the preliminary five-year cycle. Increasing participation is a challenge worthy of the brand power and resources available to the PGA. No other organization is better positioned to be the tip of the spear.

Golf also needs to stop talking about and really put some meaningful work behind diversification. For years, golf leaders have identified the growth potential through better engagement of women and minorities. To date, little growth has been accomplished. According to National Golf Foundation data, women account for less than 5 percent of all golfers, and people of color represent hardly half of the small female segment.

We must do better, and it should start with the allied organizations that support the game: the PGA of America, GCSAA, NGCOA and CMAA. The gender and ethnicity of these groups simply do not reflect the diversity we need to see in the game.

HOUSING. The 2008 – 2012 recessionary cycle revealed the reliance of golf-related businesses on the health of the housing economy. Of course,

homebuilding and residential development directly influenced the over-supply of courses in most U.S. markets. But there's no denying that housing's impact on unemployment, consumer confidence and discretionary spending effect everything from rounds played to equipment purchased to hotdogs consumed.

As housing continues its recovery, more golf communities and clubs will be developed because golf courses remain extremely attractive amenities. This growth in housing brings a mixed bag for the golf segment of businesses. We certainly welcome the golfers who will be brought to the game and those who will return as they become part of new golf communities. But no one wants to see a return of the poor decision-making that led to too many overbuilt markets and under-financed properties.

Club managers, golf professionals and golf course superintendents share a vested interest in understanding the housing sector and anticipating the effects being spawned by increased demand for housing.

CLUBCORP IPO. The biggest and arguably the best private club owner and operator began offering publicly traded shares in the Dallas-based company in September 2013. The success of the public company certainly will influence the opinions of lenders, which would directly affect development. In addition, ClubCorp's track record – now visible as a public company – will provide benchmarks for investors who chart compensation levels, operational proportionality, gross margins and other performance criteria.

The bona fide potential of golf's business segment will be revealed in the coming few years. Keep your eye on player development, housing and ClubCorp. **GCI**



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areas of greatest friction you and your GM will wrestle with, and how to fix them now before you're down for the count.

By Bruce R. Williams, CGCS

The relationship between a golf course superintendent and the general manager can be likened to a marriage of sorts. Two people coming together and working as a team. Inevitably there will be a honeymoon period that is pure bliss, but there will also be times that are challenging over the years together. Marriages remain strong because people work at it. Each individual knows their role and also knows what makes the other person happy. Such it is in so many ways with the golf course superintendent and general manager relationship.

There was a time in which many clubs operated with independent department heads, but that has long been trending toward the general manager/COO concept and many superintendents find themselves reporting to a general manager rather than a green chairman or directly to a club's board of directors. The general manager needs the superintendent to perform their magic and the superintendent needs the GM to help get things approved and be supportive of the initiatives of the department. Similar to a marriage, it is a give-and-take proposition. When a relationship works there is nothing better, but when it sours it becomes difficult for people to work with each other. If a superintendent does not have the respect and support of his general manager, then it is likely that a job change is on the horizon.

To understand what makes for a great relationship it is important to know the areas of greatest friction between these two key management positions at a golf course.

1. COMMUNICATION

More superintendents lose their jobs over an inability to communicate than over an inability to grow grass.

It is extremely important to meet with the general manager as often as possible in a formal setting to discuss what has been accomplished and also what is planned for the days, weeks and months ahead. Knowing what the membership/players want is often expressed through membership comments to the board of directors or general manager directly. Like it or not it is imperative that they be shared. Through proper communication the general manager can become an advocate of the department and the work that is being done to meet or exceed expectations.

2. UNDERSTANDING CLUB GOALS

Golf course superintendents are trained to provide exceptional golf course conditions. Anything that stands in the way of that is counter-culture to most superintendents' way of thinking. However, the goals of the club are more important than the goals of any one department head. Superintendents should never put the goals of the department ahead of the goals of the business. While tee times with 7-minute intervals or hosting Monday outings may not be met with open arms by superintendents, if they provide the finances that support an operating budget and buy adequate equipment then it all contributes to the success of the facility.



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For more

Check out this issue's app version, as well as the Superintendent Radio Network, for an exclusive podcast between SRN Host Kyle Brown and Bruce Williams that continues the discussion about how to improve your relationship with not only your general manager, but with other department heads at your facility.

“Loyalty is not something that you can turn on or off. You are either loyal or you are not. **Be honest and be supportive.** It is very important to be there working alongside the GM not only when times are good but when they are bad as well. Be the go to guy that gets it done”

3. INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

A general manager who I worked for told me how important it was for his department heads and departments to get along. One of the roles of the general manager is to keep as many people happy in the organization as possible. With any type of disharmony this can create major problems for the GM. The golf professional, superintendent, chef, HR department head, controller and all must work cohesively. Superintendents should go out of their way to make this happen.

4. TEAM CONCEPT

There is an old adage of “together we win and divided we fall.” Every department is a part of the success of the operation of a club. From the receptionist at the front desk to the locker room attendant each and every person and department adds to the experience of a member. Thoughts of giving blame to others and compartmentalizing things with the thought of “that’s not my job” will encumber operations and develop ill will in the organization.

5. BUDGET ADHERENCE

It should always be important for any department head to meet their budget expectations. Clubs are a business. General managers run the business and are often judged partially on adherence to the overall club budget. Golf course maintenance is a big figure in that overall club budget. Many managers are given a bonus that has a component they are graded on for meeting their forecasted budget. When the golf course superintendent’s portion of the overall budget is greater than forecast then it could cost the manager some money.

6. LOYALTY

In a beautiful relationship there is a huge amount of trust between the superintendent and GM. There are often private discussions of a sensitive nature and those comments need to be considered privileged information. There will be times to disagree behind closed doors but it is very important that the two individuals be supportive of each other and work with a united front when dealing with the board and committees.

7. PROFESSIONAL ANIMOSITY

Nobody likes to talk about it but egos can get in the way of superintendents and GMs. There is no room for this and ultimately it is seldom that a superintendent will win the battle of egos. Set the egos aside. If the facility succeeds there is plenty of room for accolades for all and that often ends in above-average compensation or bonuses.



Advancing your career

Some superintendents desire a long career at the facility where they work and stay there for decades. Others

choose to move up the career ladder and move on to greater responsibilities and much higher compensation levels. I have found that the general manager can be so important in helping the superintendent in his career advancement.

I consider all of the managers who I have worked with and the general managers that I have worked for as key people in mentoring me over the years. Watching, listening, learning from how they manage people and handle leadership responsibilities has been important. Those GMs that take the time and have an

active interest in helping you grow are the best kind of people to work for.

What are your existing skills and what skills might you need to move on in your career? The gap that might exist can be learned when given opportunities to take on more responsibility or learn new skills through external education and support of networking opportunities and service through industry associations.

Some of my peers have attained certifications, received graduate degrees, learned a new language and managed other departments and projects beyond the normal scope that they were hired for. All of that bodes well to advance within the organization you work for or if you will need those skills on your next job.

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“When a relationship works there is nothing better, but **when it sours it becomes difficult** for people to work with each other. If a superintendent does not have the respect and support of his general manager, then it is likely that a job change is on the horizon.”

MAKING THE MAGIC. If we know what the major potential issues are in a relationship then what can be done to be sure the honeymoon lasts forever? Several ideas that will work should be put on a checklist to evaluate each and every year.

As a superintendent use effective communication with weekly meetings with the GM. It is best to also play the golf course or at least tour it so there are no surprises. I have never met a general manager that likes surprises. Hearing about a mainline break in the irrigation system should not come from golfers but be reported immediately to the front office.

With today's technology we can be in touch almost instantaneously with our supervisors.

Early on in my career I was told of a general manager that had a plaque on her wall, behind her desk, that said “Bring Me Solutions, Don't Bring Me Problems.” Any superintendent that follows that premise will surely have a great relationship with their GM.

Be sure to understand the mission, vision and goals of the facility. This should be shared with your staff and explained thoroughly to all new hires. If those items don't exist then departments may be headed in different directions and the left hand won't know what the

right hand is doing.

Check your ego at the door. I worked for a wonderful GM in Jim Brewer who was at LACC for 37 years. Not a day went by in which I would tell myself that I was entering Mr. Brewer's kingdom and he was King! He was the boss and I had the utmost respect for him. The buck stopped with him and while we both were well respected in our industries there was no room for any level of discord. Department heads worked in unison and that was all a part of what made The Los Angeles Country Club the great club that it was.

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dent tries to adhere to. Through the use of proper purchasing, labor management and resource management most years' budgets should be met. In the years disasters take place, or unexpected circumstances, then it is important the GM be informed monthly of any variances and also if the board needs to make overall adjustments due to down revenues.

Loyalty is not something that you can turn on or off. You are either loyal or you are not. Be honest and be supportive. It is very important to be there working alongside the GM not only when times are good but when they are bad as well. Be the go to guy that gets it done. When the superintendent is the guy you can count on and also the guy that has your backside covered it is the glue that holds the relationship together.

TIES THAT BIND. The happiest of superintendents are those people who love going to work each and every day. A major part of that

The benefits

Some of the benefits of a strong relationship have been discussed. But none is more important than having the general manager serve as an advocate for the golf course superintendent.

Each club has a different governance structure but most utilize the general manager as the conduit for information from department heads to the board of directors, finance committee, etc. Therefore the GM should be serving as an advocate and spokesperson to advance the needs of the greens department.

If the superintendent communicates effectively, is a team player, is loyal and runs his department with fiscal prudence then it is likely that the GM will carry the proper message to the leadership of the club to get the resources required to meet the goals and expectations of the club.

is liking the people you work with and who you work for.

We don't always get to choose who we work for but we all get to choose whether or not we want to make that relationship work. There are so many upsides for you, your career and the success of the facility to not want to work hard to make the superintendent and

general manager relationship work. Make it a priority each and every day and you won't be disappointed. **GCI**

Bruce Williams, CGCS, is principal for both Bruce Williams Golf Consulting and Executive Golf Search. He's GCI's senior contributing editor.

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Monroe Miller retired after 36 years as superintendent at Blackhawk CC in Madison, Wis. He is a recipient of the 2004 USGA Green Section Award, the 2009 GCSAA Col. John Morley DSA Award, and is the only superintendent in the Wisconsin Golf Hall of Fame. Reach him at groots@charter.net.

CLOSE CALLS

No one wants to face the consequences when a close call turns to disaster.

Sometimes, when I look back on my 40 years of work in golf course management, little beads of sweat break appear on my forehead. I had a lot of close calls and dodged bullets more times than I care to remember.

It is no wonder, really. I am descended from a long line of miners and farmers, two professions that rank among the most dangerous, and my status as a former farm kid provided me an awareness of just how dangerous work around machinery can be.

During my “invincible” teen years, I got my foot caught in a chain on a hay elevator and I was put out of commission for several weeks. I had ignored my father’s admonition, “Climb the ladder into the hay mow and under NO circumstances ride up the elevator.” He was right. Another time I was on crutches for 14 weeks after too casually walking alongside a milk cow too close the stanchion. She kicked me back 15 feet and broke my leg. It happened on a snow day when school buses couldn’t get through, so my parents got me to the doctor by dragging our car to town with a tractor!

Corn pickers, combines, balers and choppers all claimed victims, taking fingers and arms and sometimes lives. Farm equipment operated from PTO shafts took their toll, often choking victims with their own clothing. Back then, most tractors were “tricycle” types – imagine a triplex greens-mower turned 180 degrees. These tractors were easily tipped over, often killing the operator. Too often, riding on a fender, standing on the hitch or even straddling the hook of a tractor resulted in these passengers falling off and suffering injury or worse.

Our parents lectured us constantly about being careful. The only time I ever heard a cross word between my dad and my grandfather happened

when Gramps administered a severe chewing out to my dad over a safety issue. My dad took his medicine in silence because he knew he deserved a tongue-lashing. The current owner of that farm I grew up on, twice removed, suffered the death of a child this summer when the youngster

tricksters were totaled in accidents at night. I worried about them moving 808 Rain Bird sprinklers during a rain and lightning storm. Too often, they took too long to get off the course. I made many trips back to the course at night to make sure these guys were OK.

“Early on, my primary concern about safety revolved around night water men.”

fell from an ATV towing a piece of mowing machinery. The whole town mourned his death.

We were reminded of the dangers of mining because my great uncle was killed in a lead mine not 25 miles from our home. He got caught under a rockslide and didn’t have a chance.

Needless to say, when I became a superintendent, one of the things I worried about most was safety – my own, but especially that of my mostly young employees. I had seen too many farm accidents to feel otherwise.

And when I started, the experience of a freshly minted superintendent loomed large. He had been awarded a superintendent’s job almost immediately after graduation. The course was new, but the equipment wasn’t. The old dump truck box wouldn’t drop until you manually tripped the hydraulic cylinder. A high school age kid, who obviously should not have been operating that truck, tripped the cylinder but didn’t get out of the way fast enough. The box came down hard and killed him. It also killed the superintendent’s career and pretty much ruined his life for decades.

Early on, my primary concern about safety revolved around night watermen. In those early years, a Datsun pickup and two Cushman

I still shudder when thinking about how Michael Lee straddled a PTO shaft on a Royer soil shredder and fell. Fortunately, he wasn’t injured. I had a tractor and sprayer get away from me, just missing trees and features that could have tipped the rig over. No harm was done, but it was an incredibly close call. A weld on an end cap of a filter tube in our pump station broke while my assistant was in the building. He was smart and quick and shut the main breaker on the 440 V service. It was another disaster avoided.

My list of close calls could go on and on, and I suspect my superintendent colleagues could compose similar lists from their own experiences. We all worry about skin cancer, hearing loss, pesticide use, injury from flying golf balls, vehicle rollovers, cuts from reels and blades and scores of other things. Danger actually lurks everywhere on the links, and superintendents know it. The changes in safe equipment and products have been tremendous, and our awareness has increased similarly. We have been aided by OSHA (once you overcome their tendency toward minutia), state agencies, professional organizations like GCSAA and our university extension services. No one wants to face the consequences that can result when a close call turns to disaster. **GCI**



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PLANT HEALTH

When Times Are *Tough*...



Foliar fertilizers are the stuff. So say researchers and manufacturers alike who praise the benefits of foliar nutrition. by Jason Stahl

You may not think of turf as ground-cover, but it is. Every square inch of the ground where it exists is covered with canopies, leaves, etc. This is precisely what makes it ideal for foliar fertilization.

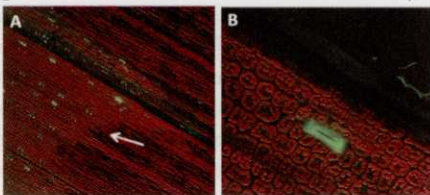
"Because it covers everything, anything we apply on the turf surface should be received on the surface or canopy," says Haibo Liu, professor in the School of Agricultural, Forest and Environmental Sciences at Clemson University. "We have the resilience of the leaves, where the plants are not designed for some nutrient uptake due to having a barrier to protect against losing water or any penetration, but the plant can still get those nutrients, including all chemicals and pesticides."

This is what a lot of Liu's research has been focused on: penetration of the plant's cuticle. If they could understand how different nutrients perform based on their penetration of the cuticle layer, they could determine which nutrients are the best to apply via foliar fertilization. After comparing nitrates, ammonia and urea, Liu's research affirmed what others studies had: urea is a better form for foliar fertilizers.

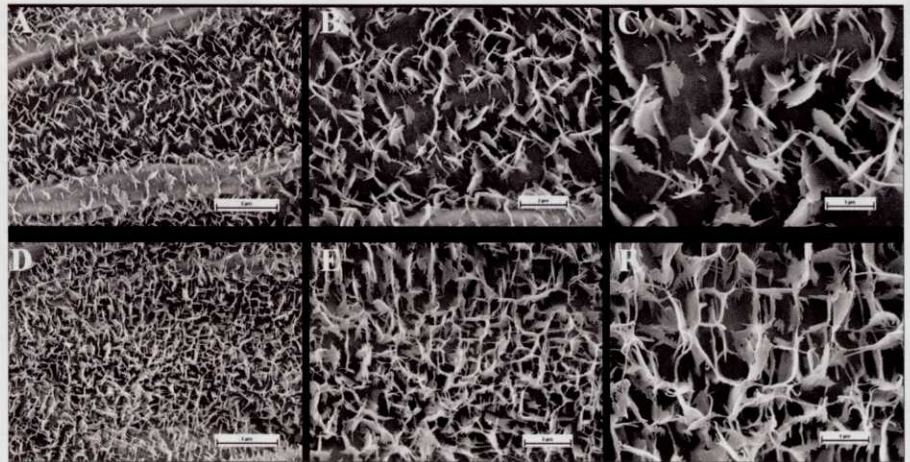
"You cannot rely heavily on ammonia or nitrates for foliars," he says. "When we compared nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, we found nitrogen penetrated the plant much more easily while phosphorus and potassium were more difficult – even though you could still apply it."

Given this finding, Liu said courses that use more potassium than nitrogen on greens cannot rely on foliar applications and instead would have to do granular fertilizing.

"The reason is because the high rate of potassium would burn the turf," Liu says.



Bentgrass at 10X mag. (A) Fluoresce in the solution collecting around the stomates on half of the leaf. At 60X (B) fluorescent solution accumulated at a stomata and the guard cells.



Scanning electron micrographs of creeping bentgrass cuticle layer under 100 percent ET and 50 percent ET irrigation regimes.

"Phosphorus is comprised of larger molecules, so it doesn't penetrate the cuticle layer like urea. Therefore, the efficiency of phosphorus is not as great as other elements. There are 14 elements for plant nutrition, and we are just beginning our studies into all of them."

But foliar fertilization offers more benefits than just direct-to-leaf contact. It also allows you to reduce the total amount of fertilizer applied. According to Liu, granular's efficiency is not even close to foliar's.

"If you apply granular fertilizer, it must get into the soil, dissolve and then the plant will get it," says Liu. "With any type of fertilizer, you typically don't get more than 50 percent efficiency, and a lot of times you get lower. With granular, you can get leach out or runoff, but with foliars you avoid these things."

Foliars also cannot be applied heavily or they could burn and kill the turf, Liu says. This restriction is a good thing, though, as it prevents you from "overdoing" it and promotes a strong feeding strategy beneficial to plants.

Finally, because foliars are liquid, you can mix them with other things easily to expand their use. For example, it's common to mix them with plant growth regulators. You can even mix them with pesticides, although most researchers do not recommend that.

While foliars have many benefits, it's not to say that granulars don't. For instance, Liu says there are tremendous labor savings when you

can apply 1 lb. or even ½ lb. of slow-release nitrogen per 1,000 square feet and have it work over the next few weeks. You can't do that with foliars because the plant will use them as soon as you apply them.

"But we recommend a spoon-feeding strategy, which is nice for turfgrass because we're not shooting for yields but performance and color, which is beneficial," Liu says.

The fact that the plant uses foliars as soon as they're applied plays into when superintendents should apply them. According to Liu, foliars must be applied when the plant is able to use them, particularly in stressful times during the growing season.

"Right now, though, it's getting a little colder, and you still need to do some late fertilization, but foliars are not as good for this as controlled release," he says. "You would rather have that fertilizer stay in the soil and have more control time and release to the plants when they need it."

Courses with bentgrass greens will use 100 percent foliars in summer because granulars would burn the turf under the summer stress no matter how little you apply. On the opposite end of the spectrum is wet conditions where there is a lot of water and washout, leaching and runoff. Under these conditions, turfgrass will have a weak root system and therefore uptake will not be great, so the best way to correct that is through foliars.

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"So either in dry situations or wet situations, foliar fertilization is the best way to improve the turf," says Liu. Foliars benefit the Transition Zone most because it has both warm- and cool-season turf. Warm-season turf, he admits, is a little tougher and thus can handle granular better. And, when the air turns cold, it's best to put slow release on cool-season turf.

"But it doesn't matter where you are because even Minnesota in summer can get very hot and stress the turf, so foliars could help there too," says Liu.

Jake Straub of Performance Nutrition echoes Liu's observations when he says the upside to foliars is the fact that they're taken up very quickly by the leaf.

"Whenever you have the ability to put foliar out, you're going to take some of the highs and lows of granular fertilization applications out of play," he says. "It helps give you a nice even keel from the nutri-

tional side."

Supers looking to get nitrogen to their turfgrass can spoon-feed foliars in small doses, Straub says, so the plant doesn't get a big slug, grow like crazy and slow down greens or make fairways and tees out of control. Then, staff is running around trying to get everything mowed.

"That's where foliar nutrition is really important," says Straub. "You can tweak your program so you get nice, consistent growth and color out of all your turf."

Straub emphasizes the importance of understanding what you're trying to get out of the foliar product.

"Sometimes guys put out a product and think they will see one thing and, in fact, they don't," he says. "You have to understand why you're putting it down, so you need to know if it will go directly in the plant and will I see a response in a day or two or is this something that will take a little longer to act?"

The program Straub sees, at least

Foliars: Not Just For Fertilization

From a post-emergent perspective, foliar herbicides do a great job of controlling weeds.

"Foliar products give better coverage and efficacy because you get more of the active ingredient to the intended target," says Brian Thompson, strategic account manager with BASF.

Fall, Thompson says, is an ideal time for applications of post-emergent herbicides because many weed plants are metabolizing and storing carbohydrates in preparation for winter. Thus, the active ingredients in these herbicides get easily translocated, resulting in higher rates of efficacy.

Spring is also a good time to apply, says Thompson, but superintendents should be mindful of the products they're using, the active ingredients and the biology of the weed species they're going after.

"Since crabgrass is a summer annual weed, those applications are most effective from a post-emergent standpoint at a juvenile state, which could be anywhere from May through July depending on geography," Thompson says. "But many applications targeting perennial weeds, whether dandelion or broadleaf clover, are best made in the fall because the herbicide gets more readily translocated in the plant. The key thing here is understanding the weed species you're going after, its biology and growth cycle, and the chemistry that best fits that growth cycle."

When it comes down to technique, it pays to consider the product you're using. For example, Drive XLR8 for post-emergent control of crabgrass is best used with a methylated seed oil.

"This additive in the spray tank helps quinclorac, the active ingredient in Drive, become more readily available to the plant and hastens its uptake," says Thompson, adding that other herbicides' efficacy can also be improved with the addition of methylated seed oil, non-ionic surfactants or fertilizers.

A new product, Pylex, has a unique mode of action that controls warm-season grasses in a cool season turf environment. Launched last summer, Thompson says it has performed well in a research setting as well as with customers in taking Bermuda out of cool-season turf and providing post-emergent control of goosegrass.

on warm-season grasses in the North Mid-Atlantic region, is applications of granular in spring and fall and foliar in the summer. When it comes to spraying greens, crews are doing every seven days or every 10 to 14 days, whether it be a micronutrient or end source.

"They'll do granular fertilizer till it gets hot out and sometimes the release can get away from them, and that's when foliar nutrition becomes more of a pinpoint method," Straub says.

The most important thing is

understanding the foliar product you're applying and the desired effect you're trying to achieve.

"What technologies are being used to deliver a particular nutrient into the plant in the most effective way possible? That's something everyone in the industry needs to educate themselves on. In the long run, it benefits everybody," Straub says. **GCI**

Jason Stahl is a Cleveland-based writer and frequent GCI contributor.



For more info

Seeking out some more information on foliar feeding and turfgrass? Enter the following links into your web browser and access recent USGA Green Section research on this topic.

Foliar Nutrient Uptake by Cool-Season and Warm-Season Turfgrasses:

University of Arkansas research lends insight into understanding turfgrass foliar feeding. bit.ly/1a2Ris0

Soil Fertility And Turfgrass Nutrition 101: Some important concepts you might have missed in or outside of the classroom. bit.ly/1bQ3Wbo

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ALUMNI UPDATE

The presentations were condensed and to the point. We had a short period of time, so it had to be specific. They did such a good job putting it all together; all the Wake Forest University professors were great.

The sessions on negotiation and conflict management were interesting and insightful, particularly the information about staff development. I've been implementing some of the learning tools for my staff and myself; particularly the four-step process: directing, coaching, supporting and delegating.

I've talked to friends and colleagues in the industry and urged them to participate. You get so much out of it beside the curriculum; the staff and other superintendents you meet give you a terrific networking opportunity.



Bryan Barrington

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Brian Vinchesi, the 2009 EPA WaterSense Irrigation Partner of the Year, is president of Irrigation Consulting Inc., a golf course irrigation design and consulting firm headquartered in Pepperell, Mass., that designs irrigation systems throughout the world. He can be reached at bvinchesi@irrigationconsulting.com or 978/433-8972.

WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?

Getting to the bottom of a unique installation.

I was sent the picture to the right and after my “Oh my God!” reaction, I figured a review of its hydraulics is in order. First, a few comments on the picture:

- Obviously there was no pipe on the truck or in the parts room, but there were lots of swing joints;
- The course has a high budget as swing joints are more expensive than pipe;
- Pressure is high as friction loss is not a concern; and
- Whoever installed the sprinkler had lots of time on their hands to complete the work and thread all the swing joints together.

Designers are concerned with two things, friction loss and velocity. The sprinkler is most likely a 1-1/2 inch inlet, so all the swing joints can be assumed to be 1-1/2 inches, too. The average flow on a 1-1/2 inch golf sprinkler at 80 psi is about 38 gpm. We don't know the inside diameter of a swing joint, but we will go with 1.5 inches, which is being generous. Doing the math, the velocity through the swing joint would be 6.9 feet per second (fps). Velocities in PVC pipe are supposed to be limited to 5 fps, but a 1-1/2 inch sprinkler on a single swing joint is common at that velocity on most course irrigation systems. It is also for an 18-inch swing joint. This swing joint is somewhat longer – hard to say but looks like 6 to 7 feet at a minimum in a straight line, not including the elbows. The higher velocity at the longer length as well as the turns will make the water very turbulent and add to the water hammer potential when it's turned on and off.

The friction loss in a 1-1/2 inch, Class 315 pipe at 38 gpm is 3.67 psi per 100 feet. So at 7 feet that would be a friction loss of only 0.26 psi. That's not very much, but that assumes there are no turns. The Rain Bird website – it's a Rain Bird sprinkler and the color makes me think Rain Bird swing joints – says about 0.5 psi friction loss through their 1-1/2-inch swing joint. A normal swing joint has three turns; this one looks to have 25 turns, just a few more than necessary. So the friction loss through this mess is at least 4 psi, but given the configuration I am sure it is more like 10 to 15 psi.

When they calculate system hydraulics, most designers do their analysis through the mainline pipe and maybe the lateral piping. They would use a number of 1 or 2 psi for the swing-joint friction loss. So for a sprinkler operating at 80 psi they might assume a minimum pressure of 82 or 83 psi at the sprinkler base or because valve-in-head sprinklers are pressure-regulating more likely 92 or 93 psi. Remember, valve-in-head sprinklers require a minimum 10 psi difference in pressure for the sprinkler to regulate. In this case, with the excessive friction losses, the sprinkler is most likely not receiving the intended pressure and it may not be receiving the intended flow.

The picture makes you wonder if there if this is the only one, or are there more. Was this the original installation or a repair? If it was the original installation, then it is probably not alone. If that's the case, I would hate to see what else might be in the ground. If it was a repair, it is hopefully a one-time expensive occurrence.

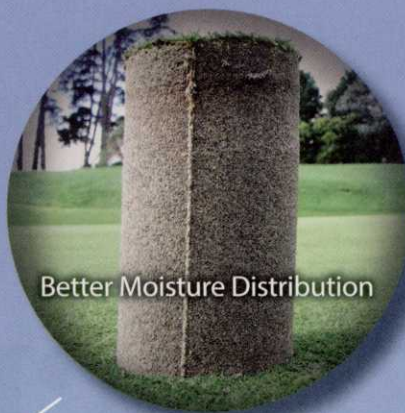


So let's look at the installation aspects of this configuration. My first question is – why? What would make someone think of doing this let alone do it? Followed by; who is supervising the work? On golf course irrigation systems hydraulics are extremely important and their analysis quite detailed. The person who installed this elongated swing joint either had no idea how it would affect the sprinklers' operation or didn't care. It may have been done to get the sprinkler out from under a cart path, but that's no excuse.

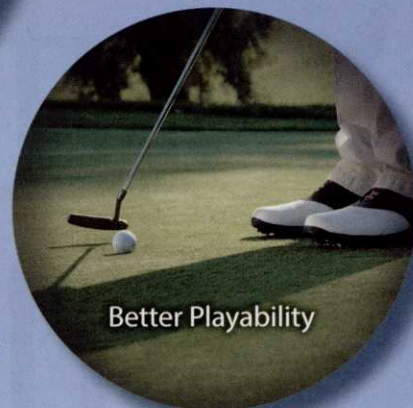
Sprinklers are sensitive to pressure issues which affect both the distance of throw and the flow and therefore the uniformity. It's important staff and installer crews are educated on how their actions can affect the operation of the overall irrigation system and the individual sprinklers.

It's amazing what you see people do in the irrigation business, and this picture is proof. I'd say nothing surprises me anymore, but as long as there are systems being installed there will still be stupid things done to them. **GCI**

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Southern Discomfort

Sustained warmer weather provides some unique challenges for southern turfheads. by Rob Thomas



Much like sweet tea and hospitality, the South has its own brand of disease pressure. While many northern superintendents will be dealing with ice and snow over the coming months, their southern counterparts will be keeping a close eye on their turf.

Mike Stevens, regional director of agronomy in the Southeast and Ohio Valley for Billy Casper Golf, says his company has 20 courses comprising the Southern Regional team, with turf variety consisting of Champion, TifEagle, TifDwarf, 328, paspalum and zoysia.

According to Stevens, the fall has been going smoothly, with one odd standout.

"This fall has been pretty slow with disease pressure with exception of our paspalum, which has seen a variety of known pathogens up to and including pink snow mold, believe it or not," he says. "Our guys have been extremely proactive with their cultural practices and focused on basic plant health throughout the summer. With record rainfalls over the spring and mid-summer, they've worked hard to keep the canopy open to encourage the necessary gas exchange needed to survive such saturated conditions.

"Consequently, more aerifications and similar cultural practices have been taking place than in normal summers, leading to healthier stands of turf heading into fall, and less need to rely on

chemical means of control," Stevens adds. "There have been the routine cases of dollar spot and brown patch that you'd expect to see during such expansive times of rain, but overall, it's been a relatively quiet season."

In the case of the paspalum greens, the BCG team has been on an extensive recovery grow-in plan on a new property that brought the company on board.

"The plant, being so succulent from the increased levels of fertility, has been more susceptible to diseases during extended periods of rain," Stevens says. "We've monitored conditions to look for times conducive to disease activity and treat preventively according to forecasts, which, unfortunately in Florida and the Southeast, can change at a moment's notice. In those cases, when disease does break through, tissue samples are sent for testing to verify what we're seeing and treatment is made accordingly.

"Staying in line with Florida's BMPs [Best Management Practices] and proper turf management, fungicide class and mode of action are kept in mind and included into a rotation to help avoid potential resistance buildup," he added. "Systemic strobilurin-based fungicide made up a good base of many of our applications this summer and fall, in combination with a good contact chlorothalonil or mancozeb base."

The BCG superintendents have seen good control during

"We have been seeing our normal disease pressure increased this fall, thanks to the tropical weather we have experienced thus far, from the usual suspects: Curvularia, leaf spot, fairy ring, algae and dollar spot."

— Jay Abbott, ClubCorp



There have been the routine cases of dollar spot and brown patch that you'd expect to see as a result of such expansive times of rain.

times of application this fall, Stevens says, speculating the quality of products in the market today played a large part, as well as the company's continuous effort to improve and reduce its overall environmental footprint across the board.

"We've become less chemical dependent through our operations, so when applications are made, the response is greater due to the lesser amounts of resistance existing in the field," he says.

Jay Abbott, ClubCorp's regional director of agronomy for Southeast Texas, credits Mother Nature for upping the workload for his superintendents.

"We have been seeing our normal disease pressure increased this fall, thanks to the tropical weather we have experienced thus far, from the usual suspects: Curvularia, leaf spot, fairy ring, algae and dollar spot," Abbott says.

ClubCorp's southern superintendents, spread out among 47 clubs between Georgia, Florida, South Carolina and Texas, have used chemical applications where needed and cultural practices on others.

"We have some very strong,

experienced and knowledgeable superintendents who do a great job," Abbott says of the group's success in battling turf disease pressure.

Brent McBrayer, CGCS, director of grounds maintenance at Pearl River Resort's Dancing Rabbit Golf Club in Choctaw, Miss., has been seeing fairy ring and zoysia patch in the fairways as a result of wet conditions over the summer. They've also seen some brown patch in the Bermudagrass.

"Pro Star has been applied to some of the worst areas, but costs prohibit our ability to treat all affected areas with this product," McBrayer says. "We are beginning to utilize Torque and Affirm to treat the rest of the affected areas.

"We have seen some success with all of the products, but the weather has continued to be conducive to the development of disease," he adds.

Over the coming winter months, McBrayer and his team will keep an eye out for dollar spot on the bent greens and hope that spring dead spot is kept in check in the Bermudagrass.

"We will continue preventive applications with various con-

BUG ALERT

Unfortunately, turf diseases aren't the only challenges facing southern superintendents. Bugs – large and small, seen and unseen – can cause potentially damaging affects to golf courses.

Brent McBrayer, CGCS, director of grounds maintenance at Dancing Rabbit Golf Club in Choctaw, Miss., offered a list of the top five offenders his colleagues should prep for in 2014, based upon what he's seeing at Pearl River Resort:

- Grubs
- Cutworms
- Fire ants
- Mole crickets
- Army worms

Jay Abbott, ClubCorp's Regional Director of Agronomy for Southeast Texas, agrees with mole crickets, grubs, army worms and cutworms, but also adds earwigs and pine bark beetles to the list of possible bug offenders in 2014.

Mike Stevens, Regional Director of Agronomy in the Southeast and Ohio Valley for Billy Casper Golf, narrowed it down to the top three ... if you include the nematode as a bug:

- Nematodes
- Mole crickets
- Army worms

"You could include web worms and fire ants in there to round out the top five, but with the increases in control measures out there for those two, there really isn't the concern in the field that there was, even five years ago," he says. "There are discussions about new nematode suppression coming into the market in 2014, but until that happens, there really isn't an inexpensive option to deal with them."



Two top turf pests – mole crickets and army cutworms.

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tact and systemic fungicides as long as conditions are favorable, and monitor fertilizer applications on the bentgrass," he says. "We are applying Rubigan to the Bermudagrass greens and select areas in the Bermudagrass fairways and roughs at the moment to lessen the impact of spring dead spot. I'm really going to miss being able to use Rubigan."

Abbott's team will keep their eyes on leaf spot, fusarium and spring dead spot throughout the winter. At clubs where they've historically had issues, superintendents will spray a preventative fungicide program, while clubs without a history of issues will treat curatively.

If another "extremely mild" winter unfolds, as it has the last two years, Stevens' superintendents will know what's ahead

of them.

"A stronger strain of leaf spot has been the most widespread disease across the board over the past two seasons, causing the most damage, so we'll look to stay ahead of the curve this year, monitoring weather trends and watching for key indicators, especially as we approach mid to late December," Stevens says.

He stresses that the best treatment is, and always will be, a healthy and strong turfgrass plant.

"Focus will be to establish the strongest coverage of turf as we head into our winter season, ensuring our soil and tissue tests are producing results necessary to fend off the ever-present pathogens that exist in the field, waiting to attack when conditions are conducive," Stevens



Disease pressure hasn't been an issue this fall with the exception of paspalum, which has seen pathogens, including pink snow mold.

says. "If breakthrough does occur, our treatment will be based on proper disease identification, both by our agronomic team and our national lab partners. There are many lines of products to choose from in the market today, but in a case of basic leaf spot,

we'd likely move toward an application of Chlorothalonil to control any activity."

It's impossible to say if spring 2014 will look anything like spring 2013, but it can't hurt

(DISEASE continues on page 52)

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A LETTER TO MEMBERS

Getting them to realize how hard it is to keep a course both playable and enjoyable.

I write this column every month with you, the superintendent, in mind. I try to make your life easier, more interesting, educational, and just plain fun. Your comments keep me going and give me ideas for future subjects. But this month's column isn't intended for you but for the people you serve, the golfers who enjoy the fruits of your labors, and address some of their concerns and complaints about maintenance.

It's obvious no one is having success getting through to real golfers about how hard it is to keep a course both playable and enjoyable. Our national organizations aren't doing enough, and according to many of you, your clubs aren't either. So let me try. Feel free to cut out the letter below and post it in the locker room or somewhere else you think it will do the most good.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Check out this issue's app edition and/or online edition for a downloadable and printable PDF of Tim's letter.

Dear Golfer:

On behalf of superintendents everywhere, I hope you have a great round today. There's no better game in the world than golf and nowhere better to have fun and challenge yourself than on a golf course.

However, when you're out there, I hope you'll notice the conditions and think about what went into maintaining the course you are lucky enough to be playing.

The Golf Course Superintendent at your facility is a highly trained and educated professional whose job is to take care of your club's most precious asset. No one cares more about the course conditions and maintenance than your

GCS. However, in the current economic climate – and this is true wherever you're reading this – it is very difficult to provide quality playing conditions when dealing with reduced staffing, old equipment, cost cutting and small budgets.

Add to that list one more item: Complaining from the members/golfers like you.

As a club member or fee-paying guest, you are entitled to complain about poor conditions or problems on the course. However, it never fails to amaze me how people who are otherwise successful and astute in their own businesses can become so emotional and irrational about an area in which they have very little knowledge.

Just because you have a backyard or a garden does not make you qualified to be a golf course superintendent. GCSs have spent years in school and on the job learning and honing their craft. They are experts in chemistry, biology, agronomy, turf science, entomology, tree management and much, much more.

Please do not judge a golf course simply by how "pretty" you think it is. Making a course pretty also can make it unhealthy. You want a course to be playable for as many different types of golfers as possible as well as attractive.

The greatest cause of harm to a golf course isn't weather or weeds or bugs. It's golfers, particularly those who don't do the little things – rake bunkers, fix ball marks, repair divots, drive on cart paths, pick up garbage (like broken tees) – that are vital to the course's health.

What's that old line from the 1960s? If you aren't part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

Here are a few other things you might not know. Don't jump to conclusions if you see an irrigation system running during or soon after a rainstorm. Some courses are required to dump effluent

water periodically to meet environmental regulations. Irrigation systems need to be checked regularly to monitor sprinkler heads and throw patterns. Perhaps your superintendent is irrigating new sod or seed, or watering in new chemical applications.

Speaking of rain, have you ever wondered what happens to grass after a downpour? Before complaining that the rough is too long, consider the damage a two-ton piece of equipment would do to soggy soil and turfgrass.

If you spot unraked footprints in a bunker, don't assume someone on the grounds crew put them there. Chances are it was another golfer who was too lazy to clean up after himself. And speaking of bunkers, don't complain about their slopes breaking down if you and your buddies walk up and down them to get in and out of the sand. Walk in and out at the lowest, flattest point and the bunkers will stay in better shape longer.

Don't get me started on greens. Yes, they have to be aerified (otherwise they'll decline). Someone isn't going to like their speed, but the course has to be set up for the greatest good, not the small percentage of players who really are good – or think they are. Furthermore, green speed changes every hour based on weather, traffic, environment and the time of year. Yes, hole positions must move every day or else one area of the green will get too much traffic and suffer.

And yes, ball marks really do damage greens and are all golfers' responsibility to repair. Particularly the golfers who made them.

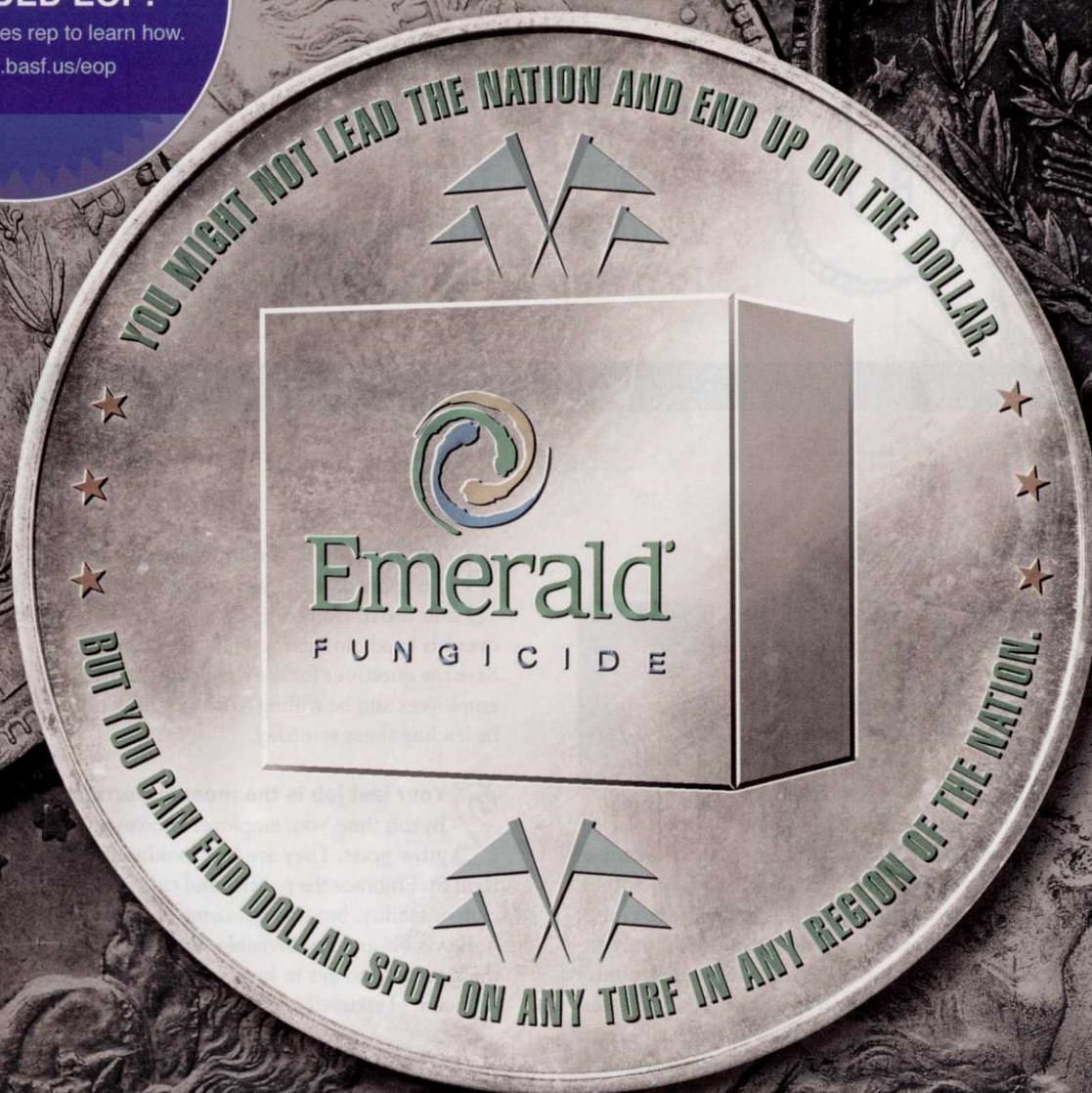
As for the weather? It's not an excuse, it's a fact.

I'm not saying golfers sometimes don't have the right, even the obligation, to complain about course conditions.

(MORAGHAN continues on page 56)

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10

THINGS I LEARNED

With more than three decades of experience, Tom Werner has a wealth of life lessons to offer.

by Tom Werner, CGCS

Choosing the right career is daunting to say the least. Try doing this in an era when technology as we know it today was pure fantasy. Some of us were fortunate to get an opportunity to do what they enjoyed at an early age. For others, it may have taken them somewhere else at first until it became clear. My opportunity came at a time of somewhat innocence, the 70s. Disco music, crazy clothes, post-Vietnam and Nixon. High gas prices, high interest rates, and lots of growth in the game of golf: a game my family enjoyed and still does. My brothers and I worked at the country club we came to know as home in Houston. The place was known as El Dorado Golf Club back then and the super was Gary Luscombe, a K-State grad. The property still exists and is now the Redstone member's course. Lots of houses nowadays, but back then it was woods so thick you couldn't see your way through if you happened to stray from the fairway, which happened to me often.



Tom Werner

Gary was great to work for and taught us a lot, especially if you worked hard. One day I asked him about career opportunities, and he suggested a few places and Texas A&M was my next stop. I never had any trouble finding a job when I came back home for the summer and even worked a little bit while a student at the research plots under Dr. James Beard, our turfgrass professor.

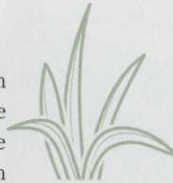
College was great, but the real world beckoned in 1980 when I graduated and got married. I began to realize I did not know much of anything, but was willing to learn. That is why I came up with the top 10 things they do not teach you in college or out in the field, because quite frankly, everyone's situation is different and the circumstances change over time. The person who writes this 100 years from now may use some of the same anecdotes, but I hope they learned it better than I.

1 Your first job is the most important

This applied when I was an assistant. Work hard, listen, and learn. Don't second guess the boss and don't go over his head, no matter what the circumstances may be. Save the questions for the right time. Learn from the other employees and be willing to do anything they do. You will be leading them someday.

2 Your last job is the most important

By this time, your employer knows you can grow grass. They are just looking for the right fit. Embrace the politics and culture of the club or facility, but don't become engrossed in it. Be visible and not invisible. Embrace the members and their guests and get to know them. Lead by example and take care of yourself and your employees.



3 Don't be afraid to admit you were wrong

When something does not work out, don't blame others or technology. Things happen and don't experiment at the risk of losing your job. Give praise to your subordinates and accept blame with humility and do it quick!

4 Surround yourself with good people

Sure, there will be some bad apples, but cull the herd and weed out the undesirables. You are only doing yourself and them a favor. You cannot make everyone happy. Train your replacement and cross train others. No one enjoys doing the same thing over and over.

5 Get involved

Whether it is with your local chapter, your community, your church, or your children's activities. Have a life outside of work and make friends outside the industry. Take time to make time! Network with your old classmates, fellow professionals and friends.



D AS A SUPERINTENDENT



6 Don't think you have all of the answers

You don't know it all. Be humble and kind, but not passive and weak. Be firm, but fair. Be friendly, but not friends (especially with fellow employees). Continue your learning by being involved and search for the answers. Try new methods and technology when the old fails. Don't be afraid and at the same time be cautious. Do your homework!



7 Embrace technology; use it to your advantage

There are a lot of gadgets, gizmos, and snake oils out there, so don't be taken in by the glitzy sales pitch or suspect testimonials. Just because the other person claims (or the sales rep claims) they have been successful does not mean you will be successful. University research is still the best. Apply it to your application.

8 Play golf and enjoy the game

Respects the rules and history of the game. You don't have to be good and others will perceive you are trying, especially the members and golfers at your facility. Play golf with the members and management team. Keep it fun and if you are competitive, be careful.

9 Learn how to deal with Mother Nature and human nature

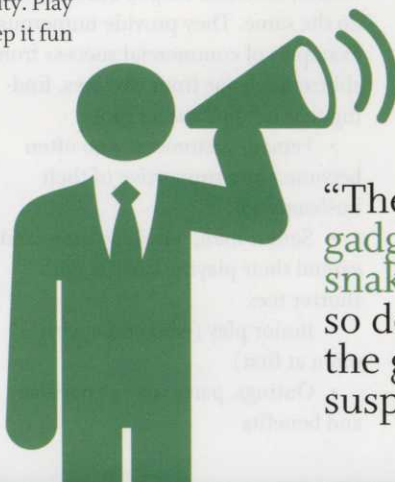
Remember, they don't always get along and there is nothing you can do about the former. The latter is hard to master, but try to understand others whether it is the members or fellow employees. Imagine yourself in their situation and don't overdo it. Keep it simple and sensible when it comes to your speech. Don't bake the cake, just serve it!

10 Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em

If you aren't part of the solution, maybe you are part of the problem. If the situation is bad, get out. If the situation is good, stay. The grass is not always as green on the other side of the fence as it may appear. Don't give up and show that you don't care. Don't complain and voice your opinion to others. Agree to disagree, but never argue or get mad. It only shows you are weak and lack self-control. Carry yourself about professional and look and act the part. When you do part company, make sure you thank your employer for the opportunity no matter what the circumstances. Look at change positively and keep in mind that it is better to build a bridge than to burn it. There are good jobs out there and sometimes it may require a lateral move or career change. Good luck and enjoy the ride! GCI



Tom Werner, CGCS, has spent 33 years in turf, 30 of them as a superintendent in Texas and Florida. He works in turf equipment sales and resides in Katy, Texas.



"There are a lot of gadgets, gizmos, and snake oils out there, so don't be taken in by the glitzy sales pitch or suspect testimonials."



Jeffrey D. Brauer is a veteran golf course architect responsible for more than 50 new courses and more than 100 renovations. A member and past president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, he is president of Jeffrey D. Brauer/GolfScapes in Arlington, Texas. Reach him at jeff@jeffreydbrauer.com.

ONCE MORE ON FORWARD TEES

Because it's just that important.

At a recent golf conference, I again presented the case for generally shorter forward tees. It seemed more industry people attended and at least nodded in agreement. That, of course, is no guarantee they will rush home and rework their courses.

One of the most interesting things I heard was a GM relating that "His job is to let our players have fun and prolong their playing careers." Perhaps Baby Boomers are finally abandoning our quest for "eternal youth" and admitting we are getting older. As golf's biggest demographic, it may spur us to finally design courses for the way golf is really played (The second most interesting thing was a consensus that continuous putting is the biggest key to increasing speed of play).

In the last 30 years of design, there was too much concern over "how Tour Pros would play this" even though chances of hosting any kind of tournament were about equal to the chance of an alien landing. At the same time, there was far too little concern for whether seniors or females could carry a creek, had an awkward angle or were even having fun on the golf course. In other words, we spent three decades designing for all the wrong creatures.

I was made aware of designing for all players early. My mentors designed mostly public courses, and actually sent me out to spend a day measuring where average golfers, seniors, and women actually hit their tee shots. (About 225, 190 and 140 yards respectively back then, and no different today, despite the distance gains at the top).

As ASGCA president in 1995, Alice Dye, an early forward-tee proponent, sought me out to discuss an article I had penned for *Golf for Women* magazine. I had written that I design

most par 4s so a woman's third shot was equivalent to an average man's typical approach shot, i.e., both being about 7 irons.

She asked one simple question – Why? I asked one, too. Why couldn't I answer?

It just seemed too difficult to design for 140 to 300 yard tee shots. Maybe so, but why favor the 1 percent who hit it 300 yards? Why ignore the 20 percent of senior golfers and 4-20 percent female players? Pure math compels us to design for those who actually play the course the most.

Setting tees 25-30 yards shorter than the previous tee gets all tee shots to the same landing area, with an economically efficient single set of fairway bunkering, etc. However, leaving both back and forward tee players with the same distance to the green creates vastly different golf experiences and certainly isn't equal.

Old paradigm – determine forward tees with 25-30 yard tee splits.

New paradigm – determine forward tees by a percentage of hole length. Front tees should be about 48 percent of back tees, based on 140 to 290 yard tee shots.

My co-presenter was Arthur Little, who with his wife Jan Leeming, had added shorter tees at their own golf course, and later helped other courses do the same. They provide numerous examples of commercial success from shortening your front two tees, finding that it helps attract more:

- Female customers, who often become more supportive of their husbands golf
- Senior men, who play more and extend their playing careers with shorter tees
- Junior play (who come with mom at first)
- Outings, particularly charities and benefits

- Women feel they are a contributing and valuable team member

- Men actively recruit women to play on their teams (A "D" player who can reach greens is really valuable!)

Bringing in all these less-traditional golfers increased revenue through a larger and more durable customer base. Some revenue increase was a result of faster play because with properly positioned forward tees, not only are many shots eliminated, but back tee players don't have to wait as long for players ahead to be out of range. Lastly, the perception of women as slow players started to disappear!

I asked Arthur and Jan how much marketing this took. As it turns out, women share their feelings more than men (who knew?) and word-of-mouth was about all it took to bring a new customer base to these golf courses.

Adding forward tees is usually easy and not terribly expensive to do. On most holes, I can add one back tee (for those "must have 7,000 yard holdouts" and two forward tees, as per the example below. The middle two tees often remain untouched, while we convert the former red tees (often over 5,000 yards, rather than at a more desirable sub-4,400 yards) to white, which is just about right. (These are shown just right of the power orange line depicting power lines). Then, we add the new red tee well up the fairway at the proper yardage.

We have found that it's easier to convince golfers if we look at individual holes (especially those with forced carries, or long par 4s that are just out of reach) rather than tell them up front we are wholesale shortening the course. There is still some male ego and female aversion to "condescending attitude." However, they usually adjust when shown the benefits on a hole-by-hole basis. **GCI**



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Bob Lohmann makes a close examination of Basamid, one of golf's few future fumigation options.

As we've all been waiting for the clock to run out on methyl bromide use, it's surprising to see just how few fumigation options have surfaced to fill that pending void.

We had the opportunity this summer to use one of those options, Basamid, as part of a summer greens renovation project at Brown County Golf Course in Oneida, Wis., up near Green Bay. It went very well, so I wanted to share our experience, and that of Brown County GC's superintendent Scott Anthes, as one window on the future.

There were two main factors that pointed us toward using the Basamid fumigation method at Brown County GC:

- Anthes has used Basamid before, to fumigate a chipping green;
- This summer project was approved very quickly (the way so many renovations are these days – when the money is made avail-

able) and we had very limited time to get all 18 greens ready, fumigate with MB, get seed in the ground, and achieve meaningful growth before the fall.

Instead, we at Lohmann Golf Designs worked with the contractor, Janesville, Wisconsin-based Links Land, LLC, to prepare a few greens at a time, after which Anthes and his crew would come in and fumigate. Basically, Anthes followed Links Land around the golf course as we went along.

"They would strip a green and the surrounds of all sod," Anthes recalls, "and then they'd grade them, eliminating all the sand dams at the edges. Then they came in and put in the slit drainage. Once the slit drainage was done, we fumigated to be sure we got all the *Poa* seed. After 5 days of fumigation, we aerified to let the gas escape. Then we came back and fine graded a bit, resodded the surrounds and seeded the greens with Luminary bentgrass."

These greens were interesting. They were old push-up jobs and drained very poorly. Indeed, that poor drainage and the infestation of *Poa*, which led to severe winter kill this past year (and several years prior), were two primary reasons for the renovation.

But this poor drainage was one of the reasons Basamid worked well on this job. Basamid is a granular product that emits a gas – the fumigant – when it comes into contact with water. That gas can move quite quickly through a green's drainage network. In fact, I'm not sure the deployment of Basamid is a very good idea on greens that drain too well, i.e. those modern, USGA-spec green profiles. If you're dealing with old push-up greens where you're sure there is little to no drain tile in them, it's a solid option.

Here's a good capsule of what to do and expect:

- Day 1, put the Basamid down and water heavily (avoid windy days, on account of its fine, granular nature; mornings make sense).
- Day 2, water less heavily.
- Day 3, water three times – morning, noon and night.

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- Day 4, stop doing anything.
- Day 5, ditto.
- Day 6, plant a lettuce seed on the green – if that germinates in 2-3 days, you know you're ready to go.

To be honest, in an ideal world we would prefer fumigating with Basamid before enhancing a green's drainage capability via the slit-draining, but then you run the risk of re-contaminating the sterilized soil when you incorporate the drainage materials.

"I don't know that you have to fumigate before drainage necessarily," Anthes says. "I would suggest you don't run your outlets till afterward, or finalize your outlets – put the pipes up and leave them up in the air to reduce the chance of the Basamid traveling further down the tile lines... We did fumigate one green and afterward got a heavy rain. It got into an approach area that we hadn't intended to kill, but it popped back pretty quick."

This stuff dissipates very fast – within 30-60 minutes of activation – but it also travels fast. Obviously, use of this product and procedure requires an intimate knowledge of exactly what sort of drainage/tile network exists under and extending from every green.

Procedures vary from state to state, but in Wisconsin, you have to be a licensed applicator to do anything associated with Basamid. We didn't tarp the greens at Brown County, like you would if you fumigated with methyl bromide, but if we had, everyone who participated in that process would have to be licensed.

Anthes obtained that certification, but not without a small hiccup: He took the test and scored 16 out of 100.

"They said I'd get my score back in a week, but I didn't hear from them. So I called and the guy said there must be something wrong, because you could guess and get higher than 16! Turns out they gave me last year's test but scored it with this year's answers. I retook it and got a 90. You need a 70 to pass."

Anthes explained that one is only required to wear 14 mm gloves when working with Basamid, but he elected to go with the full hazmat suit and respirator – which scared the hell out of a few golfers.

"Yeah, everyone gets a little freaked out when you're in a respirator mask and white suit," he says. "I vividly remember a Tuesday



Top: Installing slit drainage. Middle: The final grade prior to fumigation. Bottom: An example of fumigant damage.

Methyl bromide (MB)

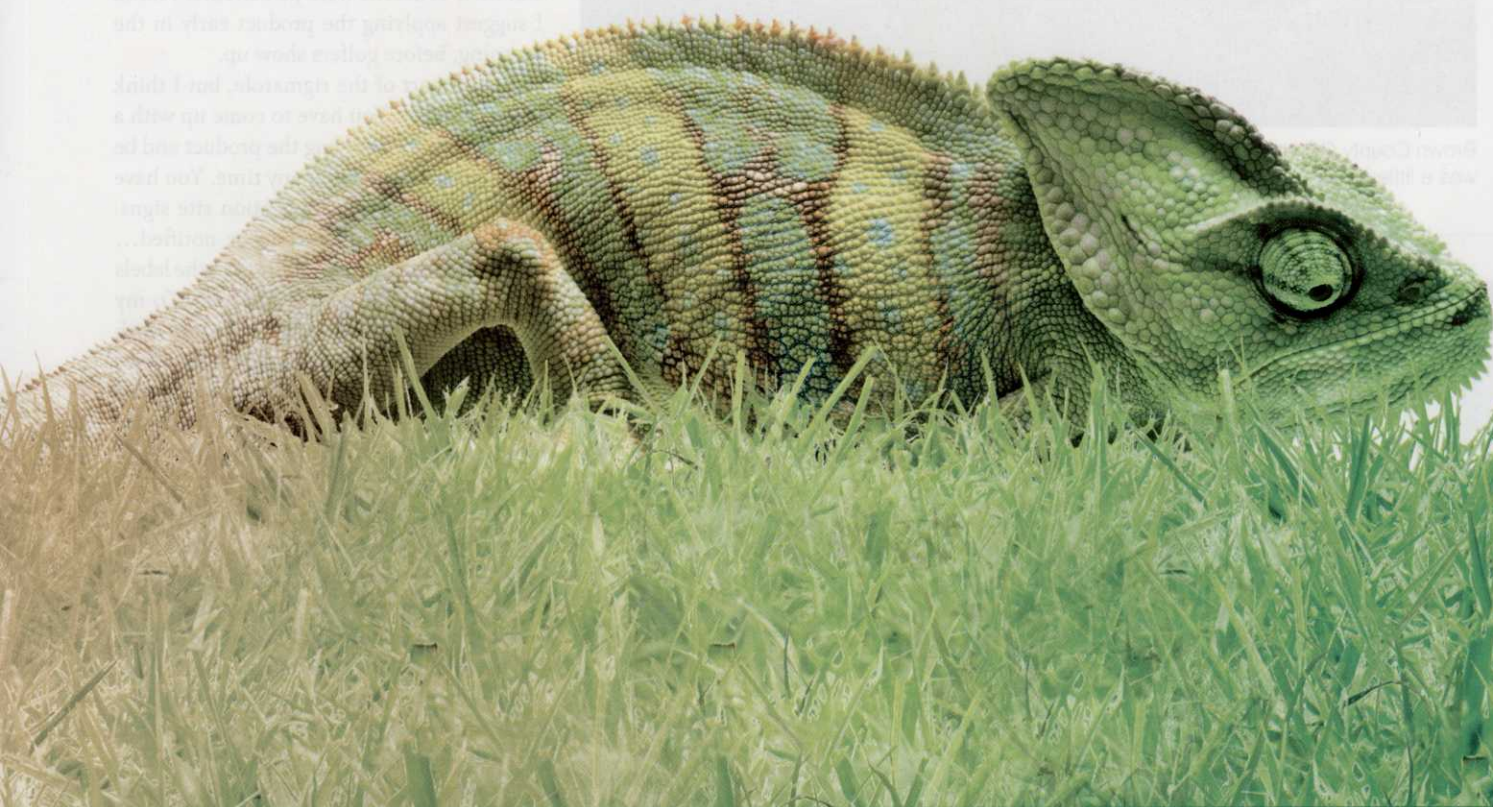
A quick update/reminder on where things stand with regard to use of methyl bromide (MB) on golf courses.

Right now, supers are allowed to tap into existing stockpiles of MB until April 30, 2014. Whatever is purchased by that date can be used until its depletion. The GCSAA is continuing its lobbying effort: In July, MB registrants and GCSAA officially requested that the EPA amend the existing memorandum of understanding to allow golf course use of MB to remain on the label beyond the current deadline.

There's little question that MB is an effective fumigant, ridding soil of any/all traces of lingering grass strains (usually *Poa annua*) in preparation of reseeding or resodding greens. However, the writing's on the wall. What's more, iodomethane, or methal iodone, one MB alternative, is no longer available to golf courses, as last spring the manufacturer removed it from the market.



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Brown County GC stayed open with temporary greens throughout the whole process, which was a little nerve-wracking.



Doing contour adjustments and applying the finish grade.

on the 14th green: a couple women golfers were asking, Are we all gonna die? Like I told them, according to the label, you don't need the mask and suit, but I'm overcautious. I didn't want it on my clothes during the day. But their concerns were just another reason I suggest applying the product early in the morning, before golfers show up.

"It's all part of the rigmarole, but I think it was worth it. You have to come up with a master plan for applying the product and be prepared to present it at any time. You have to have buffer signs, application site signs. Some state agencies have to be notified... The labels are a lot more strict than the labels guys are using for methyl bromide. To my knowledge there are no buffer zones with that, for example. After you're done, you have to generate a post-fumigation assessment for the state. You have to keep track of the weather, because if it's too windy and rainy, it's not practical to lay it down.

"We stayed open with temporary greens throughout the whole process, which was a little nerve-wracking. I might shut the course down if we fumigated again, but I'm very happy with how it all turned out. If the project involved doing all the greens at once, early enough in the year to use methyl bromide, and waiting for all of them to grow-in, that's one thing. But I needed to get seed in the ground ASAP, and the Basamid allowed that. I've got great growth on these greens because we didn't have to wait. I feel like we're in great shape headed into the fall and winter, the way the grass has come in."

And the cost? Well, that might be the best part. "I talked to a company about doing this with methyl bromide and they quoted me 50 grand. I put the Basamid on myself and it was \$9,500. Big savings," he says. **GCI**

Bob Lohmann is founder, president, and principal architect of Lohmann Golf Designs and a frequent GCI contributor. Check out his blog at lohmanncompanies.blogspot.com.

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John E. Kaminski, Ph.D. is an associate professor, Turfgrass Science, and director of the Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program at Penn State University. You can reach him at kaminski@psu.edu.

WHAT'S IN A TITLE?

Dr. John argues that titles should be reserved for positions that deserve titles.

I recently wrote an article in the Green Section about developing an internship at your golf course. In the article, I hinted to the fact that the demand for interns far exceeds the supply of students. This discrepancy in the numbers has given students the upper hand when it comes to the decision-making process. So how do interns and soon-to-be grads ultimately make their decision on which job to take?

THE LURE OF A TITLE. In an effort to attract students and recent graduates to their club, superintendents have creatively developed various titles indicative of the leadership roles so desperately desired. Take a look at the various job boards and you'll find the suitably named assistant superintendent and a slew of secondary titles such as second assistant, assistant in training, graduate assistant and foreman. There are also several other titles for specialized leadership like spray technician, irrigation technician, and turf technician. Many of these names aren't new, but they (for some reason) can be highly attractive to the younger generation.

As director (yes, even I have a title) of the golf turf management program at Penn State, I find the students often clouded by the necessity of a title upon graduation. Perhaps the thought is that if a classmate gets a better title that he or she is going to become more successful. If it's anything like most of the younger generation, perhaps they are thinking that they ALREADY made it.

WHAT'S CAUSING THE SENSE OF

ENTITLEMENT? In what seems to be an increasing trend, many students from what is often thought of as the entitlement generation feel that they DESERVE a title. In some cases,

they actually do while in others they couldn't be farther from reality. In a discussion with friends over a few pints, we used the example of little league sports around the country. One friend pointed out that they don't keep score at their child's sporting match. Another made fun of the fact that although they keep score at their son's game, that "everyone is a winner since they all get trophies at the end of the season."

So although many feel that they deserve a title because of their 2 to 4 years of "hard work" at school and their two summer internships, they soon find out that the hard work is just beginning.

WHY OFFER THE TITLE? When thinking about it from the perspective of the golf course superintendent, I can completely understand why titled positions are created and offered. I would be doing whatever I could to get a competitive advantage in the hiring process over another course.

“Often falling on deaf ears, I try to explain how **sacrificing titles and even financial gain** early in their career may be necessary to reach their career goal.

Building an army of turfgrass graduates with a string of titles from 1st assistant to AITs to graduate assistants would be a logical choice if the finances were there to back up the titles. I would be even more creative and create new positions to woo a potential grad.

I can see the interview process when they look to work at a different course. "I see on your resume that you were traffic coordinator at your last position. What exactly does that entail?" asks the superintendent.

Quick and energetic to respond, the applicant describes how he "was responsible for diverting cart traffic on worn areas throughout the course." In his head, the traffic coordinator is thinking, "Surely my meticulous roping skills make me a perfect fit for the 1st assistant position."

So if I suggest that the students overthink the importance of a titled position, but go on to say that I would create as many titles as possible then what's my point.

A SATURATED MARKET? We in academia often hear about a saturated market and are asked "Why are you continuing to send so many students out in the industry?" I even had a student applying for an internship position receive an email from the superintendent questioning the student's career choice and describing advancement in the industry as "challenging for about two decades with many sacrifices involved along the way."

On the surface, I actually agree

with the superintendent's misguided advice. The road to becoming a superintendent is long and full of sacrifice. For this reason, many graduates never make it to the level of superintendent. The bottleneck at the top means that only those good enough, patient enough and lucky enough make it to that level.

Despite the long road to the top, job placement for graduates is about 100 percent. Referring back to my opening

(KAMINSKI continues on page 56)

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BY ZAC REICHER

Late seeding and winterkill risk

A summary of winterkill information and options for establishing turf now.

We are now out of the preferred seeding period as our temperatures are trending down. Growing degree days (GDD) is a measure of heat units and are often used to predict pest and plant growth. We often use a base of 50F, so the calculation is $[(\text{daily high F} + \text{daily low F})/2 - 50F]$.

Figure 1 shows the 25 year average for growing degree day accumulation and is

graphed opposite of traditional, showing expected GDDs remaining this season. As of writing this on Oct. 1, we have less than 35 GDD remaining this year compared to 700 GDD at the beginning of the prime seeding window on Aug 15 and 170 GDD at the end of the window on Sept. 15. Putting GDD in practical terms, turf seeded on Aug 15 could be five times more mature by winter than an identical stand seeded

on Sept. 15 or 20 times more mature than a stand seeded on Oct. 1. This is why we always recommend seeding as early in this Aug. 15 to Sept. 15 window as possible.

Though seeding might still be successfully done yet this fall with significant inputs and precautions, poor establishment or winterkill should practically be expected if seeding is still attempted this fall. Winterkill of all turfgrass plants can

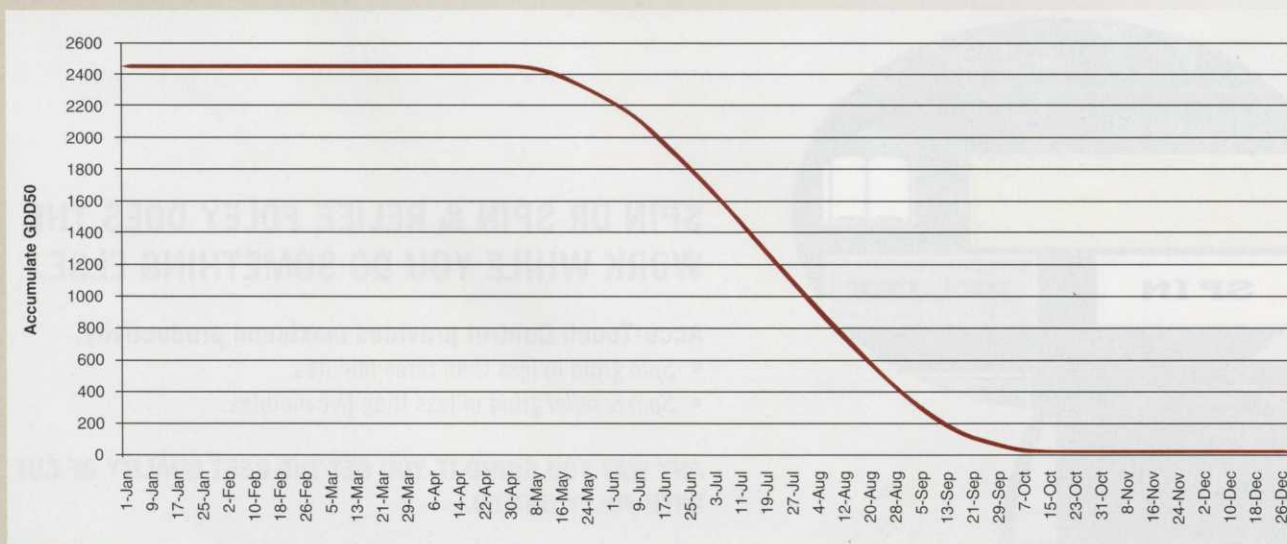
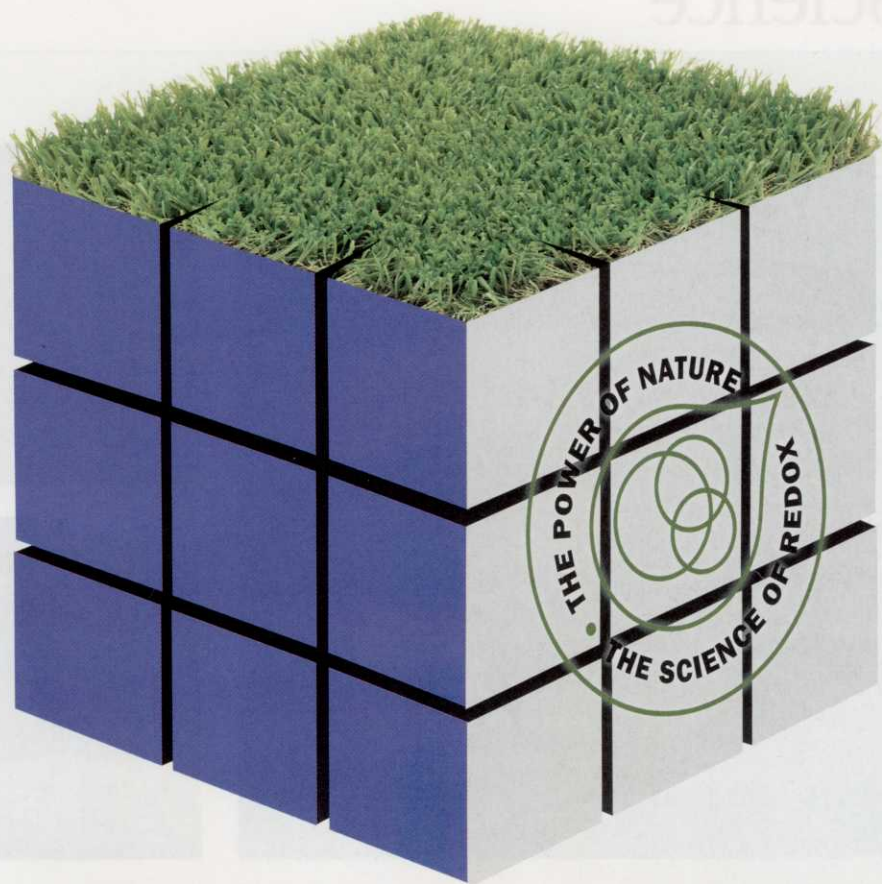


Figure 1. Remaining growing degrees days (GG50) left in the season based on 25-year averages at our turf research station in Mead NE. Less than 35 GDD are expected to accumulate yet this year which is likely not enough for turfgrass establishment.



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Figure 2 (Above): Spring 2013 cover of turf seeded September of 2013 in the foreground compared to turf seeded in August of 2013 in the background. **Figure 3 (Top Right):** May 2013 picture of creeping bentgrass seeded very early spring 2013, covered with a seed cover on the right and uncovered on the left. **Figure 4 (Bottom Right):** Early September 2013 seeding after three weeks of covering with an erosion blanket on the left, uncovered on the right

be through desiccation in dry windy areas, crown hydration in poorly drained areas, or direct low-temperature kill with dramatic temperature drops to extreme cold in the fall or winter (like last year's early October freeze in Figure 2).

More information is at <http://turf.unl.edu/pdf/articles/march%20winterkill.pdf>, but following is a summary of winterkill information and options for establishing turf now.

SPECIES SELECTION. Winterkill risk varies with species, but seedlings are especially susceptible to all forms of winterkill.

- Perennial ryegrass is quick to germinate, but especially prone to winterkill.
- Tall fescue germinates in 10-14 days and can still achieve 80 to 100 percent cover by winter if seeded now and maintained properly, but tall fescue is also particularly prone to winterkill.
- Creeping bentgrass germinates in 7-14 days and could also achieve 80 to 100 percent cover by winter if seeded now and maintained aggressively. However, it is

also markedly prone to winterkill.

- Kentucky bluegrass germinates in 21-28 days and would be lucky to achieve 50 percent cover by winter if seeded now, but has good winterkill tolerance even as a seedling.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS REDUCING WINTERKILL RISK

- Warm and long fall to maximize seedling maturity
- Areas that can be effectively irrigated now and covered with seed covers or erosion blankets to maximize speed of establishment (Figures 3 and 4)
- Areas protected from winter winds out of the north and west
- Areas that can be watered during the winter
- South-facing slopes that should stay warmer deeper into the fall
- Areas that can be covered with winter covers, erosion blankets, or snow

OPTIONS

- Seeding now is still an option for the

next 7-10 days on areas where the risk of winterkill can be justified, depending on the species and the previously mentioned environmental factors. Also seeding now on small areas that will take little cost and effort to reseed if winterkill occurs should also be seed as soon as possible.

• Seeding on erodible sites should also be done ASAP to limit soil erosion over the winter, and consider hydromulch or erosion blankets to hold soil. Temporary turf like perennial ryegrass or pasture grasses like oats or winter rye could be seeded at 2-4 lbs seed/1,000 sq ft. The ultimate erosion preventer is sod, which can be laid almost any time of the year as long as it is available.

• If the risk of winterkill to seedlings cannot be justified given the previous discussion, dormant seeding is a great option to be done between November and March.

GCI

Zac Reicher is a professor of turfgrass science in the department of agronomy and horticulture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

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(DISEASE continued from page 33)

knowing what the past has held when looking to the future.

"It's hard to predict what activity is coming our way, even with the advances we've made as an industry and the technology we have to help predict weather patterns based off of past trends," Stevens says. "The best we can do is to continue to educate and coach our teams to become the best at monitoring conditions and producing the best products they can in preparation for what nature brings.

"With the changing weather patterns we've seen in the Southeast over the past 10 years, there is no 'normal' anymore," he adds. "I think we've seen that with the introduction of pink

snow mold in Florida."

Considering the rate of success experienced this year, Abbott's team isn't likely to change its strategy heading into the 2014 season.

"Leaf spot and dollar spot were very active in the spring of 2013, so most of the superintendents will be looking and spraying preventatively for them as we warm up in the spring of 2014," he says.

McBayer, who has been at Pearl River Resort for 15 years, is doing his due diligence as he looks to the past to predict the future.

"We experienced a fair amount of dollar spot in the Bermudagrass roughs last spring,

so I would anticipate having to fertilize roughs and fairways a little earlier in the season," he says. "I also anticipate treating for zoysia patch in the spring again, especially if it is going to be wet.

"I'm talking to other superintendents and studying up on new products before I pull the trigger on new treatments," McBayer adds.

As for depending on the accuracy of long-range forecasts for the upcoming winter ... Abbott isn't convinced.

"I read the Farmers' Almanac every fall and am an avid follower of the Weather Channel," he says. "I don't really rely on the long-range forecast, but am

always paying attention to see what the meteorologists think it might be like."

The volatility and unpredictability of the weather has Stevens paying attention to the overview provided by local TV weathermen, but seeking greater detailed information.

"We lean heavily on weather forecasts to help us plan our operations," he says. "Unfortunately, it's not an exact science, but it's a crucial part of our operations. We base much of our applications around humidity/moisture levels, soil temps, ambient air temps and extreme weather swings, so even though it's a moving target, it's the best we have, so we rely on it and stay abreast of any last-minute changes to adjust accordingly."

Likewise for McBayer. "I'm not sure that anyone can put much stock in long-range forecasts," he says. "I will hope for the best and prepare for the worst." GCI

Rob Thomas is a Cleveland-based writer and frequent GCI contributor.

"Our guys have been extremely proactive with their cultural practices and **focused on basic plant health** throughout the summer. With record rainfalls over the spring and mid-summer, they've worked hard to keep the canopy open to encourage the necessary gas exchange needed to survive such saturated conditions."

— Mike Stevens, Billy Casper Golf



Many supers will be on the lookout for outbreaks of leaf spot, fusarium and spring dead spot (pictured) this winter.

PHOTO (LEFT): KEVIN MATHIAS, BUGWOOD.ORG
PHOTO (RIGHT): MARY ANN HANSEN, VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY, BUGWOOD.ORG

SUREGUARD® HERBICIDE: OUTSTANDING POA CONTROL IN DORMANT BERMUDAGRASS

SureGuard® HERBICIDE

When Damon Dean rooted around in his Bermudagrass roughs, looking for any sign of surviving *Poa annua* after a fall application of SureGuard® Herbicide, he came up happily empty.

"You dig down in there and you can't find any *Poa*, and that's awesome," said Dean, the superintendent at Keith Hills Golf Club in Buies Creek, N.C. "SureGuard is the only one I know of that has that ability—giving you postemergence control—and I think that's awesome."

SureGuard provides turf professionals with fast-acting postemergence and season-long preemergence control of *Poa annua* in a single application when applied to dormant Bermudagrass in the fall (typically November–December). SureGuard also delivers consistent postemergence and long-lasting residual control of winter annual broadleaf weeds such as chickweed and henbit.

"SureGuard has a unique fit for fall treatments after *Poa annua* has germinated, providing postemergence control as well as season-long preemergence control," said Dr. Jason Fausey, regional field development manager for Valent Professional Products. **"No other product can be applied once and work this well on *Poa*."**

Flexibility of application

SureGuard has low water solubility and binds tightly to the soil. And, unlike many other preemergence herbicides, SureGuard does not inhibit root growth. This can help turf recover from winter injury and spring dead spot damage. Plus, SureGuard will not delay spring Bermudagrass green-up.

For optimum postemergence control, SureGuard should be applied when *Poa annua* is young and actively growing during Bermudagrass dormancy.

"If you put out SureGuard at dormancy, you don't have those ragged weeds popping up and making things look bad. You get a smoother transition," said Dr. Bert McCarty, professor of horticulture at Clemson University. "People don't mind Bermudagrass going dormant as long as it's not full of weeds. SureGuard helps ease that going into winter."

New mode of action

SureGuard also provides a novel mode of action that supports resistance management strategies for *Poa annua* and other tough, glyphosate- and ALS-resistant weeds.

"SureGuard fills a need," McCarty said. "It provides good *Poa annua* control in the fall... and it's a pretty versatile material that gives us another rotational option to help with resistance issues."

Making quick work of *Poa*

Despite generally cooler temperatures in late fall, SureGuard performed well in McCarty's trials when applied at a rate of 12 oz/A.

"SureGuard is a lot quicker-acting than existing products, which slow down when it cools off," McCarty said.

"SureGuard seems able to do its thing regardless of the temperature or the weather. You start seeing activity within hours instead of days."

At Keith Hills, the home course for Campbell University golf, Dean remains impressed with the results delivered by SureGuard.

"It was clean," he said of his roughs. "I plan on using SureGuard again, that's for sure."

For more information on SureGuard, contact your Valent territory manager or visit www.valentpro.com/sureguard.



Untreated Control
Image Taken: Jan. 18



SureGuard 12 oz/A — Nov. 1
Image Taken: Jan. 18
(78 Days After Application)

SureGuard provides excellent control of *Poa annua* when applied to dormant Bermudagrass in the late fall.

Source: Dr. Scott McElroy, Auburn University.



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Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 41-year, life member of the GCSAA. He can be reached at 757-561-7777 or terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

Travels With Terry

Globetrotting consulting agronomist Terry Buchen visits many golf courses annually with his digital camera in hand. He shares helpful ideas relating to maintenance equipment from the golf course superintendents he visits – as well as a few ideas of his own – with timely photos and captions that explore the changing world of golf course management.

TURF VEHICLE BLOWER



This 2011 Billy Goat 18-hp push-type blower produces approximately 3,700 cfm with a wind speed of 180 mph that originally cost about \$2,700. An Ultra Tow 12-inch Long Category III Trailer Hitch Receiver, with an Ultra Tow 5-inch wide by 7-1/4 inch plate, is mounted underneath the center of the bumper of the 2013 Club Car Turf 2 (approximately \$9,800 including the materials). The blower has a 2-inch male Category III hitch assembly

that is held in place to the turf vehicle with one turnbuckle on either side of the bracket after the wheels are removed. The operator uses the throttle on the blower handle and there is an optional electric toggle switch to rotate the shroud. It took about four hours to build. Brian Goleski, golf course superintendent, and J.R. Wilson, equipment manager, from the Noyac Golf Club in Sag Harbor, Long Island, N.Y., were the design and build team.

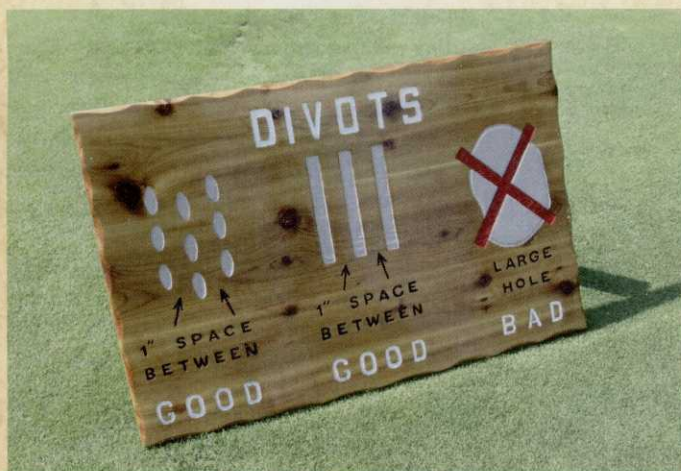
GREENS FAN TRAILER

This 50-inch 7.5-hp Precision Premium/Platinum Series Green's Fan (approximately \$8,000) is mounted on a homemade 52-inch by 52-inch trailer that was built using 30 feet of 2-inch by 2-inch square metal tubing 1/16-inch thick; C-channel 50-inch long that is 1-inch by 4-inch by 1-inch axel kit with leaf springs, two turf tires, four swiveling trailer jacks, and one 2-inch trailer hitch. The wheels are removed so that the fan can be angled toward the green's surface properly with the trailer jacks and to prevent turf loss underneath them. The leaf springs were installed to make it safer when going up steep terrain because the fans are top-heavy. At the time the trailers were built, there were no specific commercially available trailers. Brian Goleski, golf course superintendent, and J.R. Wilson, equipment manager, from the Noyac Golf Club in Sag Harbor, Long Island, N.Y., designed and built the trailers, which took about four hours to build using a "jig" at a cost of about \$950 each.



PRACTICE TEE DIVOT SIGN:

Explaining to golfers the proper way to take divots on a practice tee has always been a challenge for turf managers. This decorative sign was built using 2-inch-by-8-inch cedar planks glued together. The planks were then sanded with 80-, 120- and finally 220-grit sandpaper. The lettering was done with stencils and freehand marked with a pencil. A Dremel tool was used for the engraving. Two coats of enamel paint were used to color-in the wording and diagrams. Finally, the entire sign was varnished to protect it from the elements. The total cost for materials was about \$100 and it took about 24 hours to build it. Rick Bowden, superintendent, designed their own version of the sign after seeing a photo of one at Hawthorn Woods Country Club, Hawthorn Woods, Ill. And John Minorini, groundsman, built the sign at the Bob O'Link Golf Club in Highland Park, Ill.



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(MORAGHAN continued from page 34)

They do. But only when they know what they're talking about and have first made an effort to understand the situation, talk to the superintendent, and ask intelligent questions.

Because as I said above, the golfer is just as responsible for a course's condition as the superintendent is. (Among the best things you can do is help others in your group understand their effect on the course and take better care of it.)

Finally, please thank your superintendent every once in a while for the terrific job he or she is doing under difficult, and constantly changing, conditions. Say hello, strike up a conversation, and you never know what you might learn. You might even get some helpful tips for that backyard garden you have at home.

Enjoy your game, enjoy your course,

Tim Moraghan
Principal
ASPIRE Golf GCI

(KAMINSKI continued from page 46)

statements and my Green Section article, the demand far exceeds the supply.

So what's the solution?

I'm not even sure what the problem is to be honest, so it's hard to come up with a solution. I tend to focus more on what it takes for students to reach that highest and often unattainable goal rather than the title of their first position following graduation. My focus with students in the 2-year program is about setting and understanding goals.

Often falling on deaf ears, I try to explain how sacrificing titles and even financial gain early in their career may be necessary to reach their career goal. We even have superintendents in as guest speakers who share their stories of personal and professional sacrifice that ultimately led them to their current position. The host of the recent U.S. Open at Merion comes to mind.

If there's no solution (and possibly no problem) then what's your point?

I guess I don't really have a point. My general feeling is that the market is still strong and that although the road to success is a long and difficult one, the cream will ultimately rise to the top. Those that don't have the intestinal fortitude will leave the business, making way for those that had the patience and luck to stick it out.

If we really want to help our early career (and future of the industry) professionals, perhaps titles should be reserved for positions that deserve titles. Giving new employees a false sense of leadership and position within the club through watered-down titles only continues to reinforce an entitled generation who grew up receiving a trophy just for showing up.

Success in this business is tough. Showing up isn't enough. **GCI**

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FOR MORE

To read John Kaminski's Green Section article "Interns: A valuable resource with the upper hand," click bit.ly/1gVkaGm or enter it into your web browser.



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REALITY CHECK

A new pipeline of understanding will lead to a more connected GCSAA.

I'm writing this from seat 5B inside a big metal bird blasting over the Rocky Mountains on my way back from the Peaks & Prairies GCSA annual conference and show in Billings, Mont. It was an awesome event, but also a reality check. Allow me to explain...

I've always loved the chance to participate in chapter events and regional conferences. I get to see old friends and make new ones and, unbelievably, I'm often given the chance to rant and rave about some industry topic for an hour. I've been giving the same speech for 25 years and, incredibly, no one has caught on. Go figure.

It's tougher and tougher for me to get to regional events as my job description has gotten broader, but I could not say no to the fabulous Lori Russell, the empress of the northwest chapters, when she asked me to meet with her board to talk about the evolution of chapter publications, websites, newsletters and social media.

I've had similar conversations with leaders from other chapters – big and small – and the short version is that it's really difficult for associations led by volunteers to come to grips with the new member communications model that's emerging. They all feel pressured right now by all sorts of factors (key members, sponsors, etc.) to abandon their printed publications and materials and go all digital.

I'll tell you what I told the Peaks & Prairies board: It needs to be a planned transition, not an overnight switch. You have to communicate across multiple platforms these days: print, website, email and social media. It's "cheaper" but harder and even more time-consuming than just killing trees and printing newsletters. If you're a chapter leader and you want to learn

more, give me a call and I'll be glad to dispense my usual free opinions about the issue.

This is daunting stuff for small association like Peaks & Prairies – and dozens more like it out there – but it's just the tip of the iceberg in terms of challenges faced by local associations these days. Here are the really big concerns:

- How can you establish (or re-establish) the value of local networking/education events in the minds of clubs and course owners? The recession shrunk or killed professional development budget lines at many facilities. How do you get those back?
- How can you engage younger members who don't necessarily understand the value of the chapter and who tend to network via texting and social media? The value of chapters can be enhanced by Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook, but it also makes it less important to attend meetings and interact in the minds of younger folk. Plus, who's going to pay for those younger guys to join and participate in chapters? And where will the next generation of leaders come from?
- How can you get butts in seats at chapter meetings and regional trade shows? Healthy attendance drives revenues but it's tough in an era of smaller budgets and a nagging perception that being away from the course for "fun" things like shows makes you vulnerable to criticism within your organization.
- How can you demonstrate the value of your association to sponsors who want metrics to validate the investment they make in your chapter? Remember that about 20 companies directly or indirectly fund about two-thirds of all the sponsorships, advertising and trade show participation in the entire industry. Their budgets are

gradually shrinking. How can you show them that your group still deserves a piece of that ever-shrinking pie?

Those are serious issues, many of which will require significant change in the way chapters have historically done business. It's going to be a long and difficult evolution to the new model. That's one reason I'm heartened to see the direction the GCSAA chapter outreach program and field staff program is taking. They've hired a good group of people for those regional positions. I know many of them and they are hard-working, passionate guys with a down-to-earth sense of the support they need to provide to the local associations and to individual members.

What's really cool about the field staff concept is it's a two-way conduit. In addition to the help they provide in the boonies, they do something else that's important: They communicate what's going on out in the real world back to GCSAA leadership in Lawrence.

I've always felt that the headquarters staff was pretty insular and disconnected from the "real world" of working superintendents and that too much of their effort was directed at the needs of the top 20 percent who serve on committees and come to the national show. My sense is that's changing thanks, in part, to some new voices on the board and the reality check provided by having staff out in the field every day.

I sincerely hope this new pipeline of understanding leads to a more pragmatic and connected GCSAA in the future. If it doesn't, we risk becoming more fragmented and having the chasm between the haves and the have nots grow wider. That would inevitably spell the end of the sense of fraternity that's always made this business special. Let's not let that happen as we rush toward the future. **GCI**

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