


JUNE 2019 | golfcourseindustry.com

GOLF COURSE[®]

INDUSTRY



THE THRILL OF THE TURF

THEY LEFT. THEY RETURNED.
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS
DESCRIBE WHAT LED THEM
BACK TO DAILY LIFE ON A
GOLF COURSE.

Most foliar sprays are meant to give your turf a tune-up. Ours rebuild the whole engine.

Foliars+ liquid fertilizers endow your turf with a deeper vitality as they beautify it.

By nurturing and supporting trillions of soil microbes beneath the surface of your plants, they fortify your root systems for improved nutrient and water uptake.

That's why our Foliars+ liquids don't stop at the plant level, as other spray fertilizers do. They infuse your soil with a rich mineral mix and advanced humic acids to stimulate its microbiology.



Over 30 active ingredients supercharge microbes to digest thatch and other organic matter, turning it into bioavailable fuel for your plants. You get an immediate boost now, and a long-lasting benefit into next season.

Call 800-732-8873 to learn more about EarthWorks' Foliars+ programs. Because turf with beauty and vitality comes from a deeper respect for the soil—as well as the work you do.

Foliars+



Ask us about Foliars+ liquid fertilization programs

EarthWorks

A Deeper Respect

COLUMNS

- 12 AMERICA'S GREENKEEPER**
Matthew Wharton: Still having fun?
- 24 OUTSIDE THE ROPES**
Tim Moraghan: The A word
- 34 GAME PLAN**
Henry DeLozier: Substance over style
- 58 PARTING SHOTS**
Pat Jones: The revolving door

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 TEEING OFF:** Long Island lessons
- 6 NOTEBOOK:** Inside the major spotlight
- 53 TRAVELS WITH TERRY:**
Equipment ideas
- 57 CLASSIFIEDS**
- 57 AD INDEX**

14

FEATURES

*Cover Story***14 THE THRILL OF THE TURF**

They left. They returned. Industry professionals describe what led them back to daily life on a golf course.

*Technology***31 MIAMI MONEYBALL**

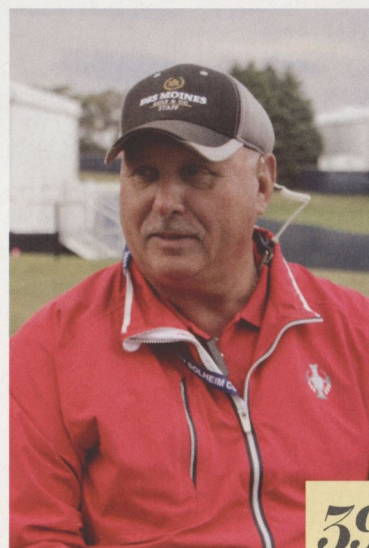
South Florida gem Crandon Golf turns to GPS tracking, heat maps and data analysis to cut back on its enormous water bill.

*Industry Q&A***39 HIS CROP IS TURF**

Lessons from small-town beginnings helped Rick Tegtmeier land and keep his dream job at Des Moines Golf and Country Club.



50



39

*Spotlight***50 THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRACTICE FACILITY**

Golfers are spending more time and money honing their games. Anthony L. Williams, CGCS, CGM, explores a part of a course where technology and social possibilities are converging.

LONG ISLAND LESSONS

A few observations after spending 80 hours on Long Island last month ...

Persistence pays

This journey to a golf-rich region for the PGA Championship started with a stop at Meadow Brook Club. Dick Wilson, one of the more overlooked figures in golf course architecture history, designed a course for the club on a rolling piece of Jericho, N.Y., land following New York City power broker Robert Moses's decision in the 1950s to route a parkway through the club's previous site.

Superintendent John Carlone has the architectural history memorized and uses a map in his office to explain the evolution of Meadow Brook. Along with architect Brian Silva and golf author and historian Bradley Klein, Carlone ushered the club through its most recent renovation in 2016-17.

Carlone is a golf enthusiast – "I don't know how you can do this job and not play golf," he says – in his 23rd year as Meadow Brook's superintendent. Even on the soggiest of Sundays, he offered a high-energy tour of the course, explaining the history, maintenance and strategy behind holes. The renovation ensures Meadow Brook will remain competitive in an ultra-competitive private club market.

Long Island lesson: Play golf and stay connected to what's happening at neighboring facilities. The combination can help a superintendent strengthen a golf course for future generations.

Marvelous in May

New York State officials agreed in 2013 to host a PGA Championship at Bethpage State Park in August 2019. The PGA of America significantly altered the plan, announcing in 2017 it would be moving the championship to May beginning in 2019.

Led by director of agronomy Andy Wilson and Black Course superintendent Mike Hadley, the Bethpage turf team flawlessly handled the change. They adjusted programs, most notably the aerification schedules and native grass management, to provide terrific early-season conditions and aesthetics.

Instead of dwelling on potential pitfalls such as winter damage or cool temperatures stalling a spring green-up, they emphasized how May is a great time to putt on *Poa annua* greens in the Northeast. A mild winter increased optimism as the tournament approached, although Bethpage experienced a few 30-degree scares in late April. Decisions made before this spring set the foundation for Bethpage presenting a robust Black Course to the world.

Long Island lesson: Reinforce positives when the schedule changes and don't cram for the big event.

Shinnecock Hills savvy

The terrain and people who maintain Shinnecock Hills Golf Club are inspiring.

From signage on the exterior urging proper visitor protocol to meticulously stacked laundry shelves, the maintenance facility exudes professionalism. The facility also exudes pride, evidenced by walls filled with annual team pictures, images of crew members using equipment, and flags of universities represented on superintendent Jon Jennings's talented team. The spectacular upkeep of the facility promotes camaraderie and creativity.

The maintenance facility rests on a prominent spot of a storied property. Visitors of all ilk pass it. Anybody who enters the building quickly realizes Shinnecock Hills is a place where employees are driven to provide a world-class experience.

Long Island lesson: Maintaining an organized workspace and taking team pictures boost professionalism, morale and productivity. Neither tactic requires a Hamptons-sized budget. **GCI**



Guy Cipriano
Guy Cipriano
Editor
gcipriano@gie.net

GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Vol. 51 No. 6

GIE Media, Inc.
5811 Canal Road
Valley View, Ohio 44125
Phone: 800-456-0707
Fax: 216-525-0515

PUBLISHER

Dave Szy
dszy@gie.net

EDITORIAL

Guy Cipriano

Editor gcipriano@gie.net

Matt LaWell

Managing Editor mlawell@gie.net

Pat Jones

Editorial-at-large pjones@gie.net

Terry Buchen

Technical Editor at-large

GRAPHICS / PRODUCTION

Jim Blayne

Creative Director

Caitlin McCoy

Advertising Production Coordinator

SALES

Russell Warner

National Account Manager
rwarner@gie.net • 216-393-0293

Lucas Coleman

Account Manager/Classifieds
lcoleman@gie.net • 216-393-0223

CORPORATE

Richard Foster

Chairman

Chris Foster

President and CEO

Dan Moreland

Executive Vice President

James R. Keefe

Executive Vice President

Christina Warner

Audience Development Director

Michelle Wisniewski

Production Manager

Maria Miller

Director, Conferences and Events

Kelly Antal

Accounting Director

Irene Sweeney

Marketing Director

Kevin Gilbride

Business Manager, GIE Ventures

Golf Course Industry is a member of:

Golf Course Superintendents

Association of America

National Golf Foundation

Golf Course Builders Association of America

The Irrigation Association

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment





JOHN DEERE
GOLF

Control comes to a new
category of fairway mowing.



With our 6080A, 6500A, and 6700A PrecisionCut™ Fairway mowers, you'll be amazed at what comes with these 24.7 hp¹ units: our passcode-protected TechControl display, allowing you to control mow speed, turn speed and transport speed, to name a few. LoadMatch™ for excellent cut quality in tough conditions. And our direct drive eHydro™ traction system, electronically controlled with no belts or linkages. Plus all three units are built on a true fairway mower frame.

Don't settle for less. Call your local John Deere Golf distributor for a demo today.

Trusted by the Best



Official
Golf Course
Equipment
Supplier

1. Engine HP at Gross SAE (99% Rated at 3000 rpm, displacement 77.3 cc (4.73 x 267 L)
74673

JohnDeere.com/FairwayMowers



◀ The Black Course at Bethpage State Park blends championship golf with natural characteristics of the park.

Island. High-energy, high-productivity personalities such as Azzaretto are entrusted with doing what they deem fit to lure visitors to the park. A Long Island native, Azzaretto worked as a teenager in Bethpage's clubhouse, then joined the golf course maintenance crew, and later earned a horticulture degree from nearby SUNY-Farmingdale. His bosses created the horticulturist title, satisfying Azzaretto's desire to work with plants while boosting golf course and park aesthetics. "This is a nice hidden gem," he says. "You can learn a lot here."

A hidden gem? In a county with 1.3 million residents? At a major championship venue? The rise of the Black Course as a fabled American golf venue represents a small sliver of Bethpage's busy existence.

Daily green fees and PGA Championship tickets come with visual perks carefully cultivated by the Bethpage staff. Broomsedge adds fire and color to the golf courses, with the plants being grown by the thousands each spring in a greenhouse Azzaretto manages near the Green Course. The periphery of the Black Course boasts dozens of birdboxes, providing audible escapes from subway rumbles, car horns and jet engines.

Park ecologist Yael Weiss says tree swallows, bluebirds, warblers, red-tailed hawks and great horned owls are among the birds spotted on the Black Course each spring. The

INSIDE THE MAJOR SPOTLIGHT

Guy Cipriano learns about Bethpage State Park's greater purpose from the people responsible for managing its golf courses, plant species and ecosystem.

Hello. Great to meet you. Let's start walking and talking. Bethpage State Park horticulturist Victor Azzaretto and I dash through the maintenance facility and down a steep hill referred to as "Pike's Peak." We stop briefly at a spot called "Victor's Valley," a former dump-turned-garden parallel to the Black Course's fourth fairway.

Azzaretto talks excitedly, waving his arms and hands describing how his role managing plant species fits into the greater mission of the five-course park. A gallery marches along the right side of the hole and Dustin Johnson, the world's top ranked golfer, struts between the gallery and the temporary stopping point. Neither of us has much to discuss about Johnson's prospects at the 101st PGA Championship.

Bethpage fascinates because it offers 1,368 acres of public greenspace — including a major championship golf course and four other soothing tracts — within a crowd slice of Long



▲ Bird boxes are placed throughout the five golf courses at Bethpage State Park.



▲ Victor Azzaretto is the enthusiastic and longtime horticulturist at Bethpage State Park.

park collects data on its wildlife as naturalist Jim Jones serves as a part-time employee responsible for studying hawk and owl activity. Weiss hopes golfers are inspired to become citizen-scientists and contribute to the digital community of photos and observations.

"Before I got this job, I didn't even know Bethpage State Park had a public area that people could go to," says Weiss, a graduate of nearby Hofstra University. "I thought it was only for golf. It was a new world. It's an open classroom and there's so much that you can learn here. If this golf course wasn't here, this would be developed. It would be a mall or something. People will say it's a golf course and they use pesticides and all of that, but there's so much untouched area between all the wooded areas and all the pollinator gardens and rough areas that serve as wildlife refuge. There's so much greenspace here. It's an important part of Long Island."

The Black Course starter's hut, a spot thousands of spectators pass during a major championship, displays signage promoting Bethpage's status as a Certified Audubon Sanctuary. An extensive study with Cornell University examining reducing inputs makes Bethpage a frequent topic in industry research papers and conference

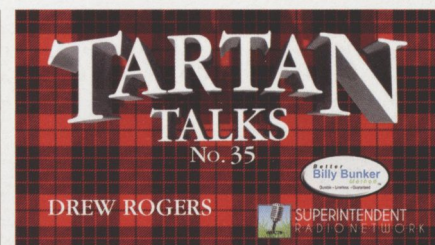
presentations. But the park's best ambassadors and educators are its employees, many of whom are self-starters such as director of agronomy Andy Wilson and Black Course superintendent Mike Hadley. Even well-traveled tournament veterans such as PGA of America chief championships officer Kerry Haigh notice employees' zest for the park. "Their passion for this venue, for their golf courses," he says, "is second to none."

Creating repeatable course conditions over the years has allowed Bethpage to extend its outreach efforts, and Wilson and Hadley openly talk with anyone willing to listen about their maintenance practices and management philosophies. Wilson, who grew up in Bethpage, and Hadley, a western Pennsylvania native entrenched on Long Island for two decades, maintain turf that takes a pounding (the five courses combine for more than 225,000 annual rounds) yet keeps flourishing. Their team includes multiple employees who migrated from Bethpage only to return, a sign of the park's enduring pull on talented people seeking lasting fulfillment.

State bureaucracy, golfers of all skill levels, taxpayer money, ecology, horticulture, Northeast intensity, televised tournaments and predatory birds could be a toxic mix at some places. But it all meshes at Bethpage.

Azzaretto continues our walk, stopping in the woods twice, including once on the way up "Pike's Peak" to showcase blooming pink lady's slipper, the only orchid found in the park. The people who care deeply about Bethpage are always moving, stopping and explaining. Creating connections to a park, whether it's via golf, horticulture or ecology, requires unyielding enthusiasm.

It's a major undertaking.



Tartan Talks No. 35

Drew Rogers restores classic courses in cool-weather regions. He also enhances modern courses in South Florida.



▲ Rogers

Rogers joined the Tartan Talks podcast to discuss a busy decade executing projects in divergent regions. His growing portfolio since launching his own firm JDR in 2010 includes steady work in Florida snowbird meccas such as Naples and Palm Beach. Closer to his Toledo, Ohio, home, Rogers has executed work on courses designed by Golden Age architects such as C.H. Alison, Harry Colt, Donald Ross and Willie Park Jr. Rogers often finds himself wondering how the venerable architects would handle Florida's flat terrain and demanding club memberships. "I think they would be forced to be very responsive in very similar ways as we are today," he says.

If you listen to the podcast closely, you'll also receive tips on the art of listening from Rogers and hear him offer thoughtful praise to superintendents everywhere.

Enter bit.ly/2HGvAw into your web browser to hear the podcast.

THE (RELATIVE) CALM BETWEEN THE STORMS

For 30 glorious minutes, Shane Omann reclines in a plastic folding chair inside the grounds crew meal tent at Quail Hollow Club in Charlotte. His sunglasses provide him with a shield to rest his

eyes as director of green and grounds Keith Wood explains the rigors of championship golf to dozens of guests. The industrial air conditioner in the corner is blowing enough of a gust in his direction to chill a glass of sweet tea.



▲ Shane Omann and Keith Wood lead the golf course maintenance team at Quail Hollow Club in Charlotte.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF HIGH QUALITY BERMUDAGRASS

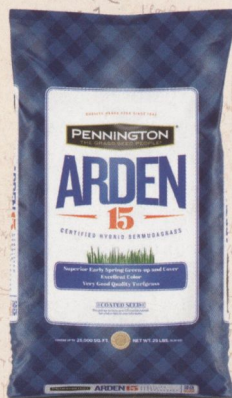
If you liked Pennington® Princess®77 Bermudagrass Seed, you will love Pennington® Arden 15 Certified Hybrid Bermudagrass Seed:

- Excellent turf quality
- Significant cold tolerance (great for transition zones)
- Early spring green-up
- Fine leaf texture



Revered turf-grass researcher and scientist Dr. Arden Baltensperger bred this cultivar to deliver a quality stand at a reasonable price—all backed by research and confirmed with NTEP data.

Dr. Arden Baltensperger



PENNINGTON
ARDEN
15
CERTIFIED HYBRID BERMUDAGRASS

pennington.com

Pennington is a trusted manufacturer and distributor of grass seed since 1945

Pennington, Pennington with design, and Princess are registered trademarks of Pennington Seed, Inc. ©2017 Pennington Seed, Inc. PT72

After this rest, he is ready for another long afternoon of work.

Omann is the golf course superintendent at Quail Hollow Club, which is famous for playing host most springs to the Wells Fargo Championship. That would be more than enough responsibility for most clubs. Two years ago, though, it also provided the backdrop for the PGA Championship, and two years from now, it will open its gates to the Presidents Cup. Championship golf runs through its history.

Quail Hollow Club will likely never double up in the same calendar year — the Wells Fargo Championship moved across the state in 2017 to Eagle Point Golf Club in Wilmington, and it will head north in 2021 to TPC Potomac at Avenel Farms in Maryland — but that clustering of headline events still provides professional and personal challenges for Wood, Omann and the grounds crew filled with 20-somethings just out of turf school. Long hours. Demanding players. Tens of thousands of fans trampling their art.

“We don’t get much of a break in how we work,” Omann says. “We’re going to

Maximum Productivity Solutions from Billy Goat®!



Course clean-up just got easier!

X3000: 6500 CFM
627cc Vanguard® V-Twin (pictured)
Z3000: 8500 CFM
993cc Vanguard® V-Twin

HURRICANE™ **Zero Turn Stand On Blower**

From parking lots to cart paths, areas around the clubhouse and course clean-up, the Hurricane™ doubles down on productivity.



MV Multi-Surface Vac **for versatile clean-up!**

29" gobble door adjusts between hard surface, turf or hose applications. 40-gal. top-loading bag



Billy Goat Hydro Drive Sod Cutter offers effortless operation!

- Set & Forget™ blade depth adjustment to 2.5"
- Laser clad cutting blade for precision cut and 3x blade life
- Knobby wheels for shallow cut, softer touch bent grass



Take the chore out of the chore with Billy Goat!

POWERED BY
VANGUARD

POWERED by
HONDA

For more information call
1-800-776-7690

or visit www.billygoat.com

www.billygoat.com



BERNHARD
TURF HEALTH SOLUTIONS

GREAT SPORTS SURFACES GROW FROM A DEEPER KNOWLEDGE

Bernhard and Company is a specialist in sports turf technology, committed to providing leading turf care solutions to golf course and pitch care specialists worldwide. From blade sharpening systems, sports surface air movement and moisture control to supplementary lighting, we will provide you with the solution to achieve the best turf quality and playability.

bernhard.co.uk



SHARPENING SOLUTIONS

NOTE BOOK



▲ The maintenance facility at Quail Hollow Club during Wells Fargo Championship week.

grind all the time.”

How does a club so tied to an annual PGA Tour event shift gears? How do Wood and Omann keep morale high during the inevitable valleys between the weeks when cameras and crowds fill the grounds?

For more about how the Quail Hollow crew handles events of all sizes, enter bit.ly/2X3qy5H into your web browser.



INDUSTRY **buzz**

Jan Bel Jan is the new president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, the second woman elected to the position after the late **Alice Dye**. Bel Jan is a registered landscape architect, certified arborist and former assistant superintendent with dozens of projects in her portfolio. Bel Jan says she wants to carry on the mission of the office: “Thoughtfulness for our clients so we may continue providing the best product, helping show a better economic way to do things and greater recognition for the work of ASGCA members.” She will serve through fall 2020.

The Toro Company recently finalized an 11-year equipment and tournament support agreement with **Hazeltine National Golf Club** in Chaska, Minn., extending a working relationship that started when the club opened for play in 1962. The deal will include support for the 2019 KPMG Women’s PGA Championship, 2020 USGA Junior Amateur, 2024 USGA Amateur and the 2028 Ryder Cup. Toro distributor **MTI Distributing** is also a part of the deal.

More than 300 industry leaders gathered in Washington, D.C., for the 12th annual **National Golf Day** — a banner event for the industry highlighted by a record-high 244 meetings with members of Congress. “We are here to educate our elected officials that the golf industry is made up of many small businesses that contribute to our national economy,” says **Jay Karen**, CEO of National Golf Course Owners Association and Chair of the WE ARE GOLF Board. “The importance of fair and good taxation policies is paramount to the success of our businesses.”

© MATT LAWELL



PUT MORE MUSCLE IN YOUR DISEASE CONTROL.

Make Manzate Pro-Stick your tank mix partner, and boost performance from tee to green.

Make your golf course stronger and healthier with Manzate® Pro-Stick™ from UPL. When used as a tank mix partner, Manzate Pro-Stick enhances your disease management program by providing broader spectrum disease control. Manzate Pro-Stick is effective against a wide variety of diseases, including brown patch, gray leaf spot, and dollar spot, as well as algae. And, with its multi-site activity, there is very low risk of building disease resistance. So, this year, put Manzate Pro-Stick to work for you. To learn more, contact your UPL distributor or sales representative. Visit us at upi-usa.com.



Always read and follow label directions and precautions. Manzate® and UPL logo are trademarks of UPL NA, Inc.
©January, 2019. UPL, 630 Freedom Business Center, King of Prussia, PA 19406. www.upi-usa.com.



Still Having Fun?

The other day I bumped into someone at my club. No, he's not someone any of you would know. He's a former member who dropped his membership a few years back when his family moved farther outside the city. He's still close friends with a few regulars and they invited him to stop by for lunch. I was happy to see my old friend and we hugged it out like guys do.

His background is in engineering. He graduated from Georgia Tech and he owns a construction company. He was trying to entice me to join the group for lunch, but I mentioned I had other things to do, plus I was scheduled to meet a young man about a job working for us. My friend uttered, "Good luck with that!"

It was the tone of his voice that turned me around. You too, I exclaimed. He said, "Matthew, I am a general contractor. I cannot hire subs right now because the subs do not have any qualified laborers. Business is awful. If you don't believe me, ask one of the members in commercial real estate, they'll tell you."

I shared with him how difficult it has been to find, let alone successfully hire help, and with the seasonal staff's arrival still in delays it was getting dire. I told him about my recent trip to Capitol Hill for National Golf Day and how that was a major talking point in all my meetings with congressional legislatures. I then jokingly suggested he share his plight

“

I've enjoyed every minute of my 30-plus years in this business, and I've earned a good living while providing for my family. But I can also say I've witnessed a lot of change in those years.”

with his friends over lunch, and to feel free to not keep his voice down. I figured if others overheard maybe they would better understand the labor issue is not a Carolina Golf Club issue, or a Charlotte area golf course issue, or a golf course issue in general; it is an issue affecting all parts of society.

A few days later, I read the piece in last month's *Golf Course Industry* by Rick Woelfel describing how a couple of courses in Maryland are getting creative to attract and retain help. And it got me to thinking: Are we still having fun? What I mean by that is when I first started in this business, I was told I could play all the free golf I wanted. In fact, it was not uncommon for my boss to come find me on the course and stop me from working because I was late for the afternoon game. "You can finish that tomorrow," he would say. "We're waiting for you on the tee."

Fast forward 30 years, and those days are very distant

memories. The business has evolved with the ever-rising expectations and now we're all too busy, or perhaps fearful to take a few minutes to enjoy the fruits of our labor. Which gets me to thinking, if

we're not having fun, how can we expect newcomers to find what we're doing appealing

and consider being a golf course superintendent as a viable career option?

I asked that very question to two elder statesmen of the business at a recent local meeting. When interviewing potential interns, AITs or assistants, I always ask how they got interested in turf because I didn't go straight from high school to university to pursue turf. I found my way there a little later down the road by primarily having fun working at Lake Bonaventure Country Club.

I don't have the answers. I'm merely pondering aloud. I've enjoyed every minute of my 30-plus years in this business, and I've earned a good living while providing for my family. But I can also say I've witnessed a lot of change in those years. From my vantage point, this is as difficult a time as any.

But I also know golf course superintendents are the most resourceful and creative people on the planet. I have faith in each of us to continue our evolution and adapt to the new normal, whatever it ends up being. I just want to remind you golf is a game and games are supposed to be fun, and so is being a golf course superintendent. Caring for Mother Earth and God's creation is something special with way more pros than cons, so let's all see if we can show the next generation how much fun it can be. In fact, like a good friend with the GCSAA told me, "some people get to call this work!" **GCI**




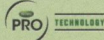


MATTHEW WHARTON, CGCS, MG, is the superintendent at Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte, N.C., and President of the Carolinas GCSA. Follow him on Twitter @CGCGreenkeeper.

TURF FUEL G™



A family of products that are designed to offer a wide range of performance solutions, meeting the most diverse and demanding requirements of professional turf managers.

	0-0-16	8-8-8	16-0-11	24-0-11
Sizing	75 SGN Dispersible	75 SGN Dispersible	75 SGN Dispersible	150 SGN
Homogenous	✓	✓	✓	Dual
Nutrifense			-	
Technology Platform	Dispersible Granular	Dispersible Granular	Dispersible Granular	POWERED BY  TECHNOLOGY
Slow Release	-	14%	23%	100%
Release Mechanism	-	MU	MU	MU, PCU
Humic Acid	-	3%	3%	-
Seaweed Extract	✓	✓	-	-
Secondary Nutrients	Ca, Mg	Ca, Mg	Mg	-
Micronutrients	Fe, Mn	Fe, Mn, Zn	Fe, Mn, Zn, Cu	Fe



Nutrifense® technology includes the latest plant health components available that helps reduce turf decline from drought, high heat, disease, poor water quality and even prolonged ice coverage.



A family of Professional Turf Products powered by Scotts® PRO Technology, that are designed to offer a wide range of performance solutions, meeting the most diverse and demanding requirements of professional turf managers.



Contact us to learn more | info@target-specialty.com

target-specialty.com/tfgranular |





A photograph of a golf course at sunset. A red flag on a green is visible on the left. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the landscape. In the background, there are rolling hills and a line of trees. The sky is a mix of orange and blue.

THE THRILL OF THE TURF

THEY LEFT. THEY RETURNED.
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS DESCRIBE WHAT LED
THEM BACK TO DAILY LIFE ON A GOLF COURSE.

By **Matt LaWell**

Stacy Baker caddied his first round when he was 13 years old. Since then, he has worked a couple Colorado summers at Boulder Country Club and a couple seasons at Wellshire Golf Course in Denver. He has designed a tee, a green and a trio of par-3 holes for a wealthy South Korean business owner. For years and years, he has traversed the Pacific Northwest, first climbing the proverbial ladder at Riverside Golf & Country Club in Portland and Tumwater Valley Golf Club near Olympia, then heading down to California's Table Mountain Golf Club in Oroville and Peach Tree Golf & Country Club in Marysville. Until January, he worked as the director of agronomy for Morton Golf, overseeing all maintenance of the MacKenzie Course and Arcade Creek at Haggin Oaks in Sacramento.



And for much of this year, he has rolled out of his Northern California bed as early as ever to walk Amber, his beloved Chesapeake Bay Retriever, and Sadie, his rambunctious Labradoodle-German Shepherd, before embarking on another day.

These days, though, are not filled with course work. Not right now, at least.

After Baker returns home with Amber and Sadie, he instead heads back out for some more miles, running seriously for the first time in his life. Then he practices yoga. Then he sits down and writes another thou-

sand or so words of his novel — a not-all-that-autobiographical story about a golfer and her relationship with a greenkeeper-turned-caddie whose wonderful working title is *Off the Green* — first by hand in the mornings, then pounded out in the afternoons on a 1950s Smith-Corona typewriter he discovered at an antiques store. He's even carving out time to finally earn his pilot's license.

Baker is living his best life, exercising his mind and body, spending more time with his girlfriend — a high school English teacher named Sherry Fortner who's editing his manuscript — and pressing the refresh button on a turf career creeping toward the end of its third decade.

"You have to be able to find something away from the golf course," says Baker, 48, who previously stepped back from the industry in 2012, when he opted to play golf and bass fish for the better part of a year, and for three years early in his career, when he op-

FLEX APPEAL



A FAST ACTING DUAL-ACTION GRANULAR THAT TREATS AND PREVENTS LOCALIZED DRY SPOT

The **AQUEDUCT FLEX** contains an exclusive dual-action formula specifically designed to give turf care professionals superior performance with flexible options for dealing with stressful conditions, including water repellency and localized dry spot.

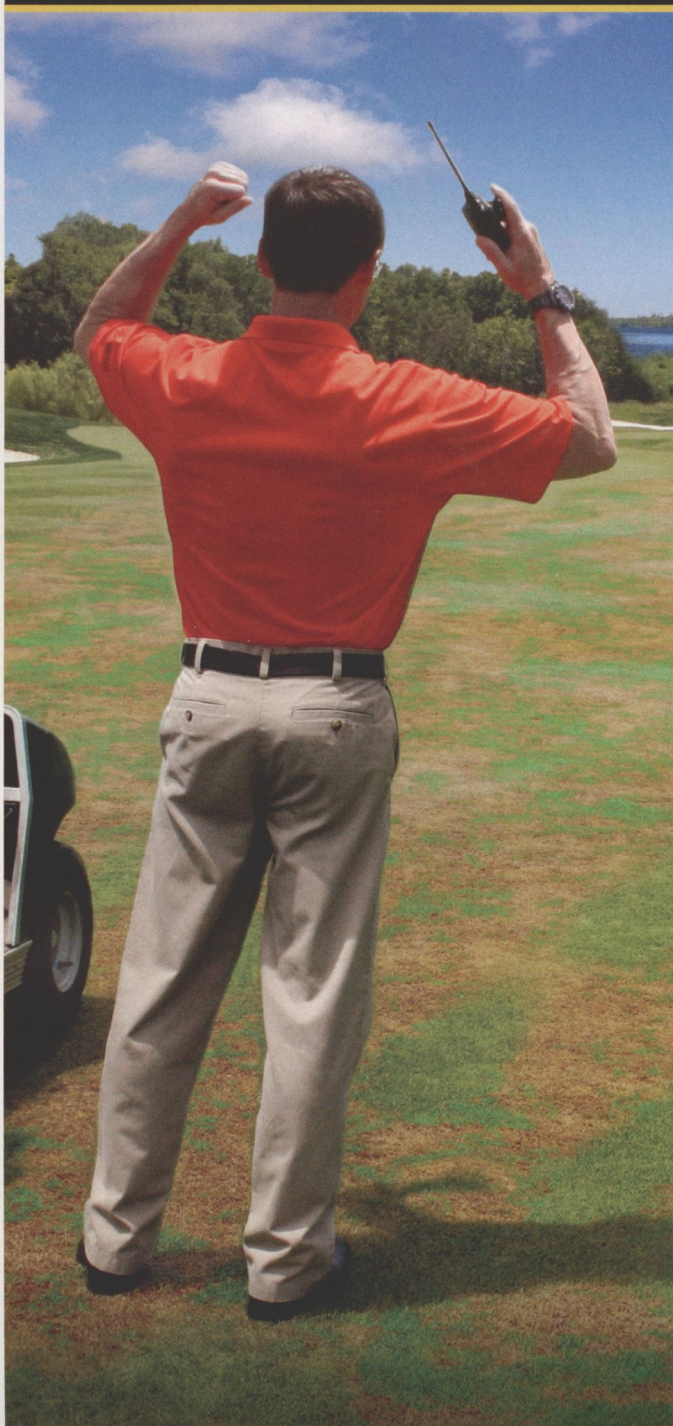
Benefits of Aqueduct Flex:

- ✓ Provides rapid recovery of stressed turf with visible results in as little as **3 DAYS** when used at the treatment rate
- ✓ Provides up to **30-DAY PROTECTION** against the development of localized dry spot when applied on a monthly basis at the preventative rate
- ✓ Safe to use on all turf varieties



www.aquatrols.com/Flex

PYTHED OFF?



COVER STORY

erated a division of his father's Eagle Snacks company before Anheuser-Busch peddled it off to Frito-Lay in October 1995. He says he plans to return to the fold — he might be back already by the time you're reading this story — but his sabbaticals are a sort of necessity and a benefit.

"I always tell people, you never know if you're going to make it to retirement," Baker says. "You have to take these little breaks, and then have faith that somebody's going to give you another chance."

Baker's story is anecdotal, of course, but it's far from an anomaly. Eight superintendents and directors across the country shared their experiences of time off the turf for this story. A couple were fired, but the rest walked away on their own. Some cited family as the driving force behind their decision, others said salary and benefits were the keys. More than a couple mentioned differences with leadership — though they requested details and attribution not be included here, for obvious reasons of keeping bridges sturdy rather than incinerated. Mental health popped up again and again.

No two experiences are the same. The one constant, though, for Baker and everybody else, is the lure of the turf. You could be gone for a week, a month, a year, a decade, and it's still there, somewhere deep inside, all but impossible to shake.

"It's nice to at least have a year of retirement," Baker says. "Then you get the bug again, pulled back into this crazy industry."

'I HAD DOORS SLAMMED IN MY FACE'

According to a 2016 survey published by the nonprofit Families and Work Institute, more than half of all American employees reported feeling "overworked or overwhelmed at least some of the time" and almost three-quarters said they "often dream of having a different job." Few if any of those surveyed likely worked in turf, and there aren't any firm numbers for the industry — we here at *Golf Course Industry* have asked about firings in recent State of the Industry surveys but not about what prompts somebody to leave — but plenty of folks have walked away.

Kevin Sunderman, for one. Currently the golf course superintendent at Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club in St. Petersburg down in Florida and a member of the GCSAA board of directors, he shifted from sunrises to stocks, working as a broker for Edward Jones for about two years to better financially support his young family.

Jeff Eldridge, too. The director of agronomy at the Clubs of Cordillera Ranch near San Antonio and Austin, he stepped out for about three-and-a-half years, first for "a great opportunity" to become an H&R Block franchise partner, then to enter

COVER STORY

the sales fray for Bayer to get back closer to golf.

And Adam Deiwert. An assistant superintendent at The Cliffs Mountain Park near Greenville, S.C., and a recent assistant at PGA Tour stop Trinity Forest Golf Club in Dallas, he pressed pause early in his career because of a handful of challenges, including the strain long hours placed on his young marriage, switching gears to work for a local lawncare company, then the third shift at a warehouse distribution center.

"Coming home, just not seeing each other, we kind of expected that," Deiwert says. "But she also wasn't expecting that complete shift in attitude over to how I was acting. It was taking a pretty good toll on our marriage and we'd only been married for three years at the time, so we were still kind of getting used to each other."

That early stop out of turf school "wasn't really working out," Deiwert says, "but there weren't any other openings in the area, so I was sticking it out as long as I could. It finally got to the point that we were getting ready for the second summer and I told my wife, Acey, I don't care what it is, I'm just going to start applying for everything turf in the area."

Eldridge wrestled with the transition from spending his days almost exclusively outdoors — he had

most recently worked as the superintendent at Nicklaus Golf Club at LionsGate near Kansas City — to almost exclusively indoors, and while the course did share more traits with tax preparation than you might imagine, "it just wasn't a good fit," he says.

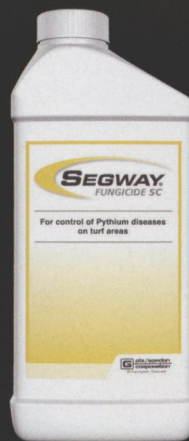
"That whole period of time, from January through April 15, is fairly similar to what you can expect from a golf course in the Midwest June through August, a lot of hours and all that," Eldridge says. "I don't mind that. It was just different getting used to it at that time of year. But the stresses are equal. I think I started realizing when the weather started turning nice again that first year, that, 'Man, I want to be out there.'"

Sunderman arrived in Florida around the turn of the century with his wife, Melani, their toddler son and their soon-to-be-born daughter, only to find that his new employer had not approved his promised salary. Instead, he received about two-thirds of what had been quoted. "We had bought a house based on that amount," he says. "We did it for a while, but we were struggling to make ends meet. Now we had two kids and a mortgage, and not seeing any great golf opportunities on the horizon, I said, 'Man, I need to do something else.'"

DON'T BE!



Don't let Pythium disease ruin your day.
Stop it with **Segway® Fungicide SC**.



Segway delivers outstanding protection against Pythium disease, including:

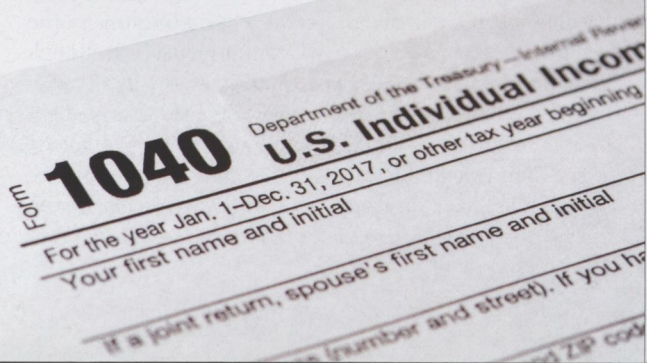
- Pythium blight
- Pythium root dysfunction
- Pythium damping-off
- Pythium root rot

Segway lasts up to 28 days, and has no known cross-resistance with existing fungicides, making it ideal for your rotation program.

PBIGordonTurf.com

G pbi / GORDON
CORPORATION
Employee-Owned

Always read and follow label directions. Segway® is a registered trademark of Ishihara Sangyo Kaisha Ltd. 5/19 05671





THIS WAS RIGHT AFTER THE TECH BUBBLE BURST, SO A LOT OF PEOPLE HAD JUST LOST A LOT OF MONEY. I HAD DOORS SLAMMED IN MY FACE. I WAS CALLED A CROOK. I WAS BITTEN BY A DOG. THERE WERE TIMES I WOULD PARK MY CAR AT THE END OF THE STREET AND THROW UP ON MY SHOES.”

— Kevin Sunderman

After talking with his brother, Mike, a fellow agriculture buff who landed with Edward Jones, Sunderman interviewed with the company, learned the finance industry and started walking neighborhoods to establish face-to-face conversations. “This was right after the tech bubble burst, so a lot of people had just lost a lot of money,” he says. “I had doors slammed in my face. I was called a crook. I was bitten by a dog. There were times I would park my car at the end of the street and throw up on my shoes.” Sunderman pushed through and was on track to earn close to \$100,000 his second year — more than three times his last turf salary — but he missed being on the course and building things with his hands. He missed the sunrises.

‘HARDER THAN HELL TO GET BACK IN’

Americans switch jobs about a dozen times over the course of their working life, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the median tenure checks in at a whopping 4.0 years for women and 4.3 years for men. Eldridge has eight stops under his belt. Baker has seven. Sunderman has six. So does Deiwert. Some of them might hit a dozen professional changes, but if they do, every new job will almost definitely be in the turf industry.

They’ve ventured out, tested the waters and returned to what they love.

Sunderman scoured classified sections — still relatively robust back in 2004 — then leaned on what he describes as his “meager network” to land an interview at TPC Prestancia in Sarasota. “I basically laid it all out for them,” he says. “I miss it desperately, I want to get back into this business, and I’m giving up a lot to do it, but I like getting

my hands dirty.’ And the thing that got me the job is that they had a terrible irrigation system. In

an interview, you say whatever will get you the job, so I said, ‘Oh, yeah, I love irrigation’ — which I did, but I had no idea the extent of the irrigation work on that property.”

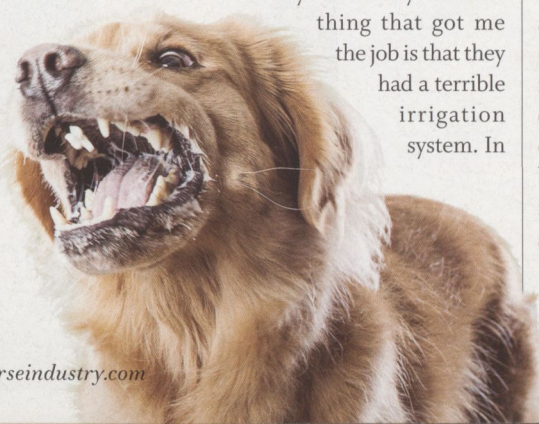
Eldridge loved his two years as an area sales manager for Bayer, but the travel proved too large a hurdle to continue, every week on the road, especially with a 10-year-old son and 14- and 16-year-old daughters at home. He landed at Lake Quivira Country Club near Kansas City, where he worked for about five years as the superintendent and grounds manager, armed with new appreciations for chemistry and sales. “You’re spending a lot of time with Ph.D.s with that Green Solutions Team,” he says of his work with Dr. Frank Wong, Dr. Rob Golembiewski and Laurence Mudge, among others at Bayer, “and their knowledge is at a different level.”

Deiwert says he could have established a career at the warehouse distribution center — “The people were great people,” he says. “Great job, paid well, the benefits were fantastic” — but after about a year out of turf and about two years out of golf, he wanted back in. He landed at Trinity Forest Golf Club, working under director of grounds Kasey Kauff for just shy of the next four years before returning to South Carolina last year for family reasons.

After a couple years outside golf, Deiwert says he started to focus more on “just finding the good things about each day. I didn’t do a good job of that earlier. I just focused on the negatives and all the things I didn’t like about each day. ... Find even the tiniest thing that’s good about getting to work, even if it’s just the five minutes you happen to be on a hole by yourself.”

Perhaps reading this story has sparked your desire to step away for a stretch. “Before you make that move,” Eldridge says, “you have to realize it is harder than hell to get back in.” One reason is that your course is your resume. “If you don’t have that for them to go physically look at, that’s a challenge. ‘I was the greatest grass-grower in the world two years ago. You’re just going to have to take my word on it.’ Well, what are you doing now?”

Or perhaps you’re already outside the industry and ready to return. “Lean on your network and the (GCSAA),” Sunderman says. “Those are the opportunities you have to meet the people who can help open doors for you. The GCSAA will provide you all kinds of educational opportunities, especially if you’ve been out of it for a number of years. All of a sudden, if you can somehow find a way to take advantage of some of the webinars they offer, or the certificate programs, these are ways to maybe increase your current knowledge base.” And yes, the GCSAA



PERFECT THE TRADITION MONITOR THE OPERATION

FAIRWAYiQ has been most helpful in our operation from an accountability standpoint of knowing where employees are, how long each assignment is taking to complete and then obviously auto populating times into taskTracker. I can communicate with individual staff about performance expectations and show them time metrics - it helps out in a performance review setting. We're a facility with a budget less than \$1M for 27-holes in the Mid-Atlantic, so we have to stretch every dollar possible."

Tyler Bloom
Superintendent
Sparrows Point Country Club

Jeff Martins

Greensmaster 3120 #4
ASSET

Greens Mowing
TASK

Hole 6
LOCATION

00:02:19
TIME IN AREA

-00:05:31
BENCHMARK



FAIRWAYiQ

Helping Superintendents find & reallocate an average of
2,275 additional task hours per year

www.fairwayiq.com | 781-227-4548



THAT WHOLE PERIOD OF TIME, FROM JANUARY THROUGH APRIL 15, IS FAIRLY SIMILAR TO WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM A GOLF COURSE IN THE MIDWEST JUNE THROUGH AUGUST, A LOT OF HOURS AND ALL THAT. I DON'T MIND THAT. IT WAS JUST DIFFERENT GETTING USED TO IT AT THAT TIME OF YEAR. BUT THE STRESSES ARE EQUAL. I THINK I STARTED REALIZING WHEN THE WEATHER STARTED TURNING NICE AGAIN THAT FIRST YEAR, THAT, 'MAN, I WANT TO BE OUT THERE.'"

— Jeff Eldridge

does offer an inactive membership for reasons of unemployment, illness or other adversity.

"We want to be inclusive," Sunderman says. "We want to look for ways to help people in these types of situations."

'I'M A GROWER'

A couple years ago, a Spanish travel company called eDreams surveyed more than 12,000 people in the European Union and the United States. More than half of the American respondents said that a planned strategic pause in their working life would improve their mental health. Few companies anywhere in the country offer sabbaticals, either paid or unpaid — about a quarter of Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For offer a sabbatical, and McDonald's, believe it or not, is credited with starting the country's first corporate sabbatical program in 1977. Not many clubs can offer a break from the grind. If you want a sabbatical, you'll probably need to schedule it yourself.

You need to take care of yourself, too. Not long after Frito-Lay purchased Eagle Snacks from Anheuser-Busch and pushed him toward unemployment on a Friday afternoon, Baker realized there is little loyalty in business.

"Things can just change like that," he says. "I've always been a little

leery of security, and knowing this business, no matter how good you have the golf courses looking, management or ownership or membership, they can turn on you overnight. That's what I learned at Eagle Snacks. Nobody seems to have any loyalty in this business. There are very few guys I know in this industry who have been a superintendent at their same course for 30 years. It's not that type of an industry. Superintendents are expendable."

A couple weeks after Baker embarked on his current sabbatical, his girlfriend, Sherry told him she didn't care how he filled his days, "but you have to do something." He started his novel days later, then added running and yoga, then started the pursuit of his pilot's license, inspired by his father's and grandfather's past aerial exploits.

According to that same 2017 sabbatical survey, the reasons cited most often by Americans dreaming of an extended career pause are an escape from the stresses of working life (53 percent of more than 2,000 U.S. respondents) and the aforementioned improved mental health (52 percent). Improved physical health (40 percent), family travel (39 percent) and learning new skills (19 percent) check in third, fourth and seventh on the list, respectively. Baker has them all covered. He keeps his phone in a drawer until at least noon most days and spent two weeks with his family back in February.

"I never would have had those op-



COVER STORY

opportunities to just spend that much time back home if I was working crazy hours every day," he says. "I did that the last time I took off, too. Spent about three weeks at home, got to golf, fish, spend some real quality time with my dad. You never know how long he's going to be around, you know?"

When Baker interviewed superintendents or assistant superintendents, he would always ask, whether they were a grower or a mower. Responses were split about down the middle. "Some guys would say, 'Oh, I can stripe up a fairway,'" Baker says. "I don't care about stripes on a fairway. I care that there's grass out there we can mow. The mow is the hassle part of it. I'm a grower.

"That's what I'm kind of doing now, whether it's just in my back yard with my tomatoes and peppers and all the plants that I'm growing, whether it's a few landscapes I'm working on for other people. It's just that whole mentality, I just want to continue to grow. That'll never leave me."

There are no guarantees in this life, of course. Paychecks and benefits can vanish in an instant. Hearts pump blood for only so many years. The prospect of retirement remains just that until that last walk on the course. In the end, business will remain business and loyalty will remain a mirage far more often than not.

The thrill of the turf, though. No matter how long or how far you wander, the thrill of the turf will almost always pull you back. **GCI**

Matt LaWell is GCI's managing editor.

**STANDARD
GOLF** COMPANY
EMPLOYEE OWNED



Spread top dressing with a soft, smooth touch. Smaller, lighter-weight mat makes it easy for one operator to use.

Two different sizes for different needs and budgets:
3' x 5' & 4' x 6'

10' (3.0 m) chain hooks up to any vehicle.

Tough, resilient fibers
1 1/4" (3 cm) bond to vinyl-reinforced backing.

New stronger backing keeps fibers intact and will not pull off during use.



CHECK OUR OUR DRAG BRUSH

Gently, evenly works top dressing material into green and helps control thatch when used before mowing. Extensions available for bigger jobs; hinged and weighted to help manage contours and uneven areas.



facebook.com/standardgolf
twitter.com/standardgolf
www.standardgolf.com
866-743-9773



The A Word

In our business there's sure to come a time when an upgrade to the golf course, maintenance facility or something else on your watch becomes necessary. Which means you'll soon be hearing the "A-word" — assessment. The dreaded A-word causes hackles to rise and chatter to run rampant. And it puts you in the cross-hairs as members wonder why you're putting your hand into their pockets.

Face it: You are. But if your club has come to realize that work is necessary (and, consequently, money needs to be found to pay for it), your job is about to change. Understand that early and get out in front of the project or else your job won't only change, it could disappear.

Here's how to turn a pain-in-the-assessment situation into an asset.

First and foremost, remember that you are the expert. You manage the property, you know it best, you are the person most concerned with making sure it's in tip-top condition. The members get to play the course — expecting it to always be in great shape — but they have no idea how that happens. You do and, without being arrogant, you need to make sure they remember that.

Always know exactly what needs to be done, why, what it should cost, how long it should take, and be able to articulate this information to members whenever they ask. And trust me, they'll ask.

Their first questions will be about two things — money and ego, which are really the same things: What if we don't do this? What if we do? Will the grass grow back? What's in it for me? Can we wait a few more years? Will this make our club better than the one down the street? You get the drift.

While it might seem logical that residents/members should know that an assessment is a responsibility of living in a golf

community or belonging to a club, it never ceases to amaze me how much resistance arises whenever there are questions regarding the care, maintenance and improvement of the very amenity that brings them the most enjoyment.

Mention assessment and older members become even more money-sensitive ("Hey, I'm on a fixed income!") so it's harder to make the case to secure the club's future for the next generation. Younger members will tell you how expensive it is to send Junior to college, or the price of a new Lexus.

I strongly advise not getting into financial discussions with these people. Let other members, especially those on the committees that put the proposal in front of their peers, deal with that. If someone complains to you about the costs, gently suggest they talk to the committees. Remind them your job is to make sure they have the best course possible.

Sad truth? Many members would happily go as long as they can without fixing the problem. They'd rather wait for the roof to cave, the kitchen to catch fire or the irrigation system to flood the property. They think that if they wait long enough, someone else will pay for it.

Again, you don't want to be in those discussions. So, develop some stock, yet nice, polite, tactful responses. And suggest they talk to someone else.

Depending on the work that needs to be done, anticipate another problem: Members are less annoyed if the assessment is going to something they

can see, like the clubhouse, landscaping or bunker sand. Unfortunately for us, it's the things that members neither see nor fully understand that are often the most expensive and hardest to fix.

Infrastructure isn't sexy, but irrigation and pumping systems, drainage, cart paths, maintenance facilities and so on are vital to the well-being of the golf course. A clubhouse renovation? That's a different story, something you can brag about. But even though the sub-surface profile of a green or a new bunker-liner method can really improve their playing experience, it's going to take them a while to get it. No "artist's renderings" are going to help. And unless you can honestly say that it's what they did at Augusta National, don't say anything.

Also be prepared for the fish-eye from the chef, tennis pro and dining-room manager, all of whom can think of much more important ways to spend the assessment — and for a lot less money, too. What you can say, to anyone who will listen, is that this is what the golf course needs and why. My suggestions:

- Don't be arrogant. Do not have the attitude, "This stuff is for me so I can do my job better."
- Do be a good advocate for your course. Don't get into fights but be ready to stand up and explain the why, how, when, where and how much. Your job is to keep their course current, attractive, *continues on page 56*



TIM MORAGHAN, principal, ASPIRE Golf (tmoraghan@aspire-golf.com). Follow Tim's blog, Golf Course Confidential at www.aspire-golf.com/buzz.html or on Twitter @TimMoraghan

SUPPORTING SUPERINTENDENTS, BUILDERS AND ARCHITECTS WITH TIMELY TESTING AND HELPFUL DATA FOR OVER 20 YEARS.

Testing programs for maintenance,
renovation and construction.
Our services provide insight and
guidance for:

- Bunkers
- Greens
- Rootzone Mixes
- Topdress Sands
- Fairway Capping
- and much more



Turf & Soil Diagnostics

Contact us at 855-769-4231 or
Visit our website at www.turfdiag.com

Managing Stress in the Heat of Summer



By Paul Giordano, Ph.D.,
Green Solutions Team
Specialist, Bayer

Summer's here, and it's brought the toughest time for golf courses – and superintendents – across the country. For many, the tolls of summer stress on turf are already apparent. Whether general chlorosis, poor vigor, reduced density, diminished root systems, increased disease activity or overall inferior turf quality, the symptoms of stress won't let up anytime soon.

Most superintendents take the necessary steps months in advance to protect and prepare turf from summer heat, drought, and the most difficult to manage stresses like shade and traffic. However, even the best preparation can't fully prevent the inevitable effects of biotic and abiotic stresses.

So how do you manage the stress once it's arrived? The good news is, it's not too late.

Cultural Practices

There are several cultural tactics that help mitigate the most challenging mid-summer stressors. Encouraging sufficient air movement by pruning/removing trees and installing/using fans, spoon feeding nutrition, reducing moisture extremes (too wet or too dry), and directing foot and mechanical traffic away from vulnerable areas can all help mitigate abiotic stress.

There are also measures that can help turf bounce back faster. These include raising the height of cut and alternating mowing and rolling to accomplish the effective increase in mowing height while still maintaining green speeds. Raising mowing height is one of the single most helpful strategies for improving turf quality by encouraging more leaf surface area to drive photosynthesis, carbon metabolism, cellular development and root growth.

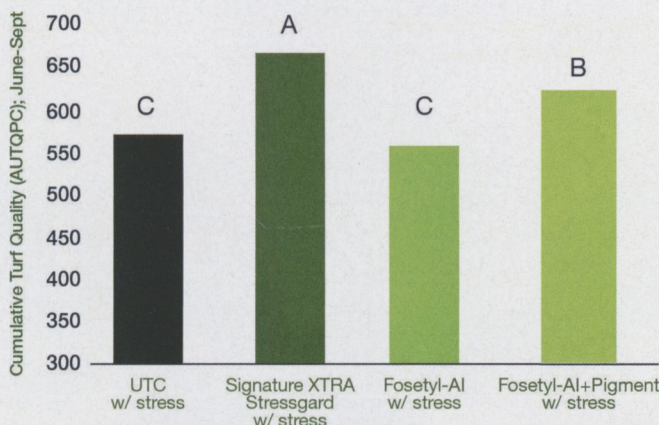
More Than Disease Management

Most turf diseases are opportunists that take advantage of a compromised plant. Disease can often be the "final straw" that takes a stressed plant to the point of no return. A robust, preventive fungicide program that covers the bases of both fungal and oomycete pathogens can help combat disease and ensure better survival during times of elevated stress.

However, in the brutal heat of summer, superintendents need more than disease management. Stressgard® fungicides from Bayer deliver benefits that extend well beyond disease control, as they're specifically designed to increase turf's tolerance to, and recovery from:

- Heat
- Drought
- Traffic
- Shade issues and light quality
- Oxidative stress

These benefits are evident in recent research on heavy shade and traffic stresses. The research, conducted by Dr. Bingru Huang at Rutgers University, studied the impact of Signature™ XTRA Stressgard from Bayer, which includes the active ingredient (a.i.) fosetyl-Al. Over the course of 3 months, Signature Xtra Stressgard showed significantly improved turf quality under high stress conditions compared to a generic fosetyl-Al and fosetyl-Al tank mixed with a pigment.



All treatments were applied at commensurate labeled rates (4 oz per 1000 sq ft.) on a 14 day interval. Means followed by different letters are significantly different according to statistical analysis.

The Bottom Line

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The best way to combat summer stress is to implement cultural and chemical practices aimed at improving root growth and photosynthesis throughout the year.

Combined with the versatility, consistency and satisfaction that Stressgard brings, superintendents can feel confident their turf can survive the dog days of summer. That may mean less hand watering or lower run times, less scouting or babysitting problem areas, a higher comfort level when using plant growth regulators, greater peace of mind during heavy periods of play, and more time to do things other than worrying about summer turf stress. Bottom line: your summer just got better with Stressgard.

For additional guidance, visit es.bayer.us/stressgard or send me an email at paul.giordano@bayer.com.



Mike Dachowski
*Golf Course Superintendent,
Shelter Harbor Golf Club*

Extraordinary
is Your New Ordinary



Willow
Best Friend



Stressgard®

When you can count on your turf to be at its best, others can count on you to be at yours.

Your golfers want a greener course. You want a little more time in your day. Stressgard goes beyond disease control to deliver both – allowing you to maximize your potential on and off the golf course. So whether that means finding time to be a better Superintendent, or to spend time with your best friend – Stressgard delivers.

For turf you and your golfers can count on in conditions you can't, look to Stressgard.

See the science behind the extraordinary at es.bayer.us/stressgard

ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Bayer Environmental Science, a Division of Bayer CropScience LP, 5000 CentreGreen Way, Suite 400, Cary, NC 27513. For additional product information, call toll-free 1-800-331-2867. environmentalscience.bayer.us. Not all products are registered in all states. Bayer (reg'd), the Bayer Cross (reg'd), Stressgard®, Signature™, Interface®, Tartan®, Exteris® and Fiata® are trademarks of Bayer. ©2019 Bayer CropScience ES-219-SGFT-50-A-R1



VAST, MAJESTIC AND PLEASANT

By Guy Cipriano

Maintaining appealing shades of green add to the unique vibe at **Shelter Harbor Golf Club**.

Snow masked splendor when Mike Dachowski first visited Shelter Harbor Golf Club. Dachowski knew something special rested beneath the white blanket. But how opulent was this slice of Charlestown, Rhode Island, golf land?

Before he understood how the turf tones meshed with the charming surroundings, Dachowski noticed hundreds of unimpeded acres on his maiden Shelter Harbor stroll. "I quickly realized how big it really is," he says. "I almost got lost out there."

Shelter Harbor is a place where a newcomer becomes disoriented in the grandeur of a 500-acre, 27-hole facility. Everything and everybody at Shelter Harbor seems, well, pleasant. Dachowski's visit in late 2009 as part of a job interview resulted in him landing a coveted position and becoming a mainstay at a club where transience and

permanence converge. The bulk of the membership lives elsewhere and only uses the golf course in the summer as June, July and August bring familiar faces striving for a fascinating golf experience and escapism from big-city life.


"They definitely expect conditions as high end as you can get," Dachowski says, "and we try to exceed that for them. It seems to work. Everybody is coming here to their beach home and they're in a good mood. They're not coming here to work. The overall club feeling is a lot different. The membership is awesome here and the club as a whole functions really well with all the department heads. Everyone gets along very well. It's kind of a unique situation rather than the norm."

Awakening the courses – Shelter Harbor has an 18-hole Michael Hurdzan- and Dana Fry-designed championship layout and a 9-hole short course with coastal views – for

summer sojourns requires a coordinated and calculated agronomic effort. The summer crew hovers around 30 determined workers, including 11 employees possessing turf degrees. The staff has enormous responsibilities. Dachowski's team maintains 5 ½ acres of Velvet bentgrass greens and 48 acres of Seaside II bentgrass fairways.

The bentgrass requires year-round attention, and the Velvet can initially stun a newcomer. Shelter Harbor's Velvet turns purple in winter before returning to an attractive green as temperatures warm. Learning the nuances of the variety represented one of Dachowski's first tasks after becoming the club's superintendent in early 2010.

"There's not a lot of research on it," he says. "You find out that it's low fertility, but there's not a lot of information or a guide to steer you in the right direction. It took a good two to three solid years to

A full-page photograph of two men walking on a golf course. The man on the left is wearing a dark jacket, a cap, and khaki pants. The man on the right is wearing a white shirt, a dark vest, and khaki pants. They are walking on a green, with trees and a sand trap in the background.

Superintendent Mike Dachowski works closely with Bayer's Brian Giblin on creating reliable programs for Shelter Harbor Golf Club.

get used to it. But once we figured it out, we learned it's a great grass."

The grass requires less summer mowing than other bent-grass varieties. Dachowski says his team mows greens a "maximum" of three times per week in the middle of summer. Through daily rolling and a spray program created in collaboration with Bayer experts, members enjoy consistent, slick and disease-free greens, no small feat considering coastal climatic challenges such as fog, intense sunlight and warm evenings.

"When you're in school for turf and they teach you about the Temperate Oceanic Climate, you never know what that means (until you experience it)," Dachowski says. "That's what we are. You can go from one extreme to another. We can be very mild, or you can go through real warm periods through the summer to very warm in the winter to kind of mild and miss a lot of the snowstorms in the winter. That's probably the biggest thing here compared to other places I have lived and worked. There are

more extremes here."

Dachowski, who previously worked at Merion Golf Club, Quaker Ridge Golf Club, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club and the The Cliffs at Keowee Falls, found the New England turf community eager to share information about climate-induced maintenance challenges. Dachowski worked with Bayer technical experts, establishing a program based upon climate history to combat "high dollar spot pressure."

Cooperation from inquisitive superintendents such as Dachowski helped Bayer

MAKING EXTRAORDINARY YOUR NEW ORDINARY

Sponsored by Bayer

launch its Green Solutions Team, a group of technical experts who conduct research to support superintendents. "We brought Bayer Green Solutions Team to Shelter Harbor to start doing modeling with the weather," says Brian Giblin, a Bayer sales manager who covers New England. "Going to a place like Shelter Harbor, where they have such extremes and short windows, helped us determine how to best lay out a spray and preventative disease program looking at the weather."

The collaboration yielded reciprocal benefits. Dachowski developed a reliable spray program, while Bayer received data on new products, including additions to its Stressgard line.

Dachowski uses Signature, Interface and Tartan on greens. In addition to helping Shelter Harbor avoid dollar spot, the program allows the Shelter Harbor to promote fast and firm conditions while de-

Interface, Tartan, Exteris and Fiata. Moisture meters guide irrigation decisions on playing surfaces, and frequent rolling has further enhanced fairways.

"We balance things pretty well," Dachowski says. "We will still be green, but we are not a vibrant obnoxious green. We're just kind of a subtle green. The leaf blades are very thin because of the low fertility. You still get the green color. The Stressgard helps us get a good green color, but it's not a fake green. When we spray one of the Stressgard products, particularly on fairways, we get good color on those for two weeks (and beyond)."

Dachowski's relationship with Bayer, and particularly Giblin, continues to strengthen. Dachowski uses parts of the par-3 course, which features the highest humidity on the property because of proximity to the ocean, to test products. Dachowski then shares the results with Giblin and fellow superintendents. "Having the scientific data is big," Giblin says. "Mike has that relationship with his peers where they talk back and forth. Tapping into that group of people who talk about what they are seeing goes a long way for the both of us."

Tweaks to the program will be minor in 2019, Dachowski says, because of repeated success avoiding disease and unpleasant aesthetics. Shelter Harbor often records nighttime temperatures surpassing 70 degrees throughout the summer, which contrast milder nighttime weather at Dachowski's past Northeast stops. But a proven program means a coastal calm permeates the crew. "It gives you peace of mind knowing we are

covering our bases for what could be popping up," Dachowski says. "You don't stress out about what's going to pop up out here because you know what's going to happen."

People who fret about anything,

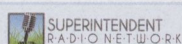
From the field

Bayer area sales manager Brian Giblin, who works with superintendents in New England, says resorting to agronomics basics can help golf courses in cool-weather environments achieve desirable results as they try to present quality early-season conditions and aesthetics:

"Don't try to add a million and one things to your turf. Sometimes overdoing it can push things in the wrong direction. When you have a balanced approach, you're going to know your soil conditions and your levels, and what's available so the plant is only getting what it needs. Stressgard is an input that provides benefits beyond disease control. It's more than just a fungicide. Everybody has fungicides and we all expect them to be successful and prevent disease. But adding in Stressgard helps superintendents dial things back a little bit and keep turf healthy."

especially work, are an uncommon sight in Charlestown, a small town that experiences a population boom each summer. Convenience to activities such as fishing, boating, swimming and paddling are part of the reason Shelter Harbor attracts an abundance of turf talent. Dachowski strives to provide opportunities for employees looking to experience Rhode Island's summer offerings. For Dachowski, summer life away from the course involves watching his four children play sports. Beaches and ballfields are even more enjoyable when Shelter Harbor's turf remains consistent through proven practices.

"I stress every day, 'Let's do something better, let's get better, let's improve the place,'" Dachowski says. "I think, in turn, that makes the course better every year. The feedback I get from members is that it's a little better than last year – and it was great last year. That's what our end goal is. At the same time, we're big on balance. I want our team to enjoy the area. It's not just work, work, work. We try to balance everything, and it works out good." GCI



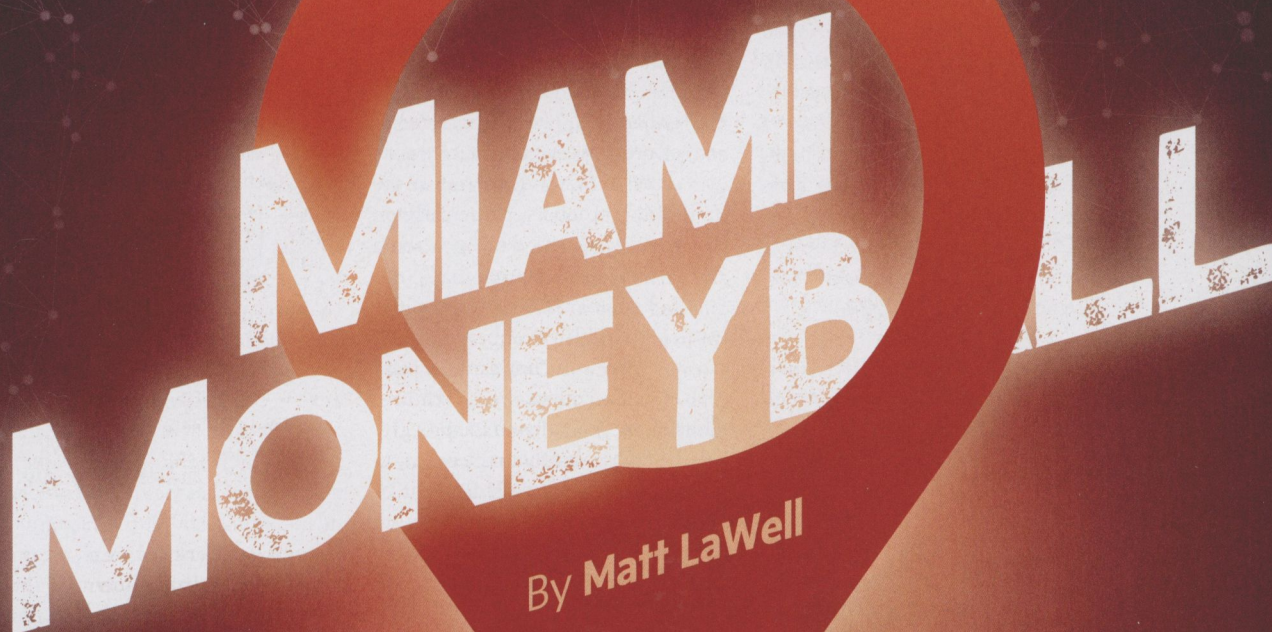
In his words

Mike Dachowski joined Superintendent Radio Network to discuss how his team manages Shelter Harbor Golf Club. Enter bit.ly/2YYoHzU into your web browser to hear the podcast.



Shelter Harbor superintendent Mike Dachowski, second from left, with assistants Greg Hunkins, Cody Woods and Victor Faconti.

playing what Dachowski calls "lean" irrigation tactics. Greens are treated weekly from May to September. The program extends to Shelter Harbor's fairways, which are sprayed biweekly using a rotation that includes



MIAMI MONEYBALL

By Matt LaWell

SOUTH FLORIDA GEM CRANDON GOLF TURNS TO GPS TRACKING, HEAT MAPS AND DATA ANALYSIS TO CUT BACK ON ITS ENORMOUS WATER BILL.

For years, Steve Jablonowski searched for a solution to drop water consumption at Crandon Golf at Key Biscayne in Miami.

He considered constructing a water treatment facility near the course, and even designated a plot of land for it, but figured out after almost four years that it fell short of the solution. Not long after that, he researched whether watering less turf could provide an answer to grab some more control over the irrigation. He was even ready to dive into charting the location of every golf cart for a month before realizing it would most likely “be a lot of snake winds” and show next to no value.

Jablonowski normally works with an annual water budget somewhere between \$900,000 and \$1.1 million at the 18-hole course — a figure as eyebrow-raising for him when he arrived in 2011 as region manager, golf and destinations, for Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces as it might be for you right now — but that figure is unsustainable for so many reasons. Water is a finite resource, of course. So is money, especially when it comes from taxpayers rather than club members.

He needed some sort of relief.

And then he talked with John Sanford about heat maps.

A PAST PRESIDENT of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Sanford has designed or renovated more than 80 courses during a career well into its fourth de-

cade. He is a veteran who has remained nimble, always learning about implementing new technologies. Heat maps are one of them.

Sanford dived into heat maps — and the GPS trackers that help produce them — during the 2018 Golf Industry Show, when he talked with USGA representatives about their new Facility App. The app involves clipping a GPS tracker on every golfer who uses a course over a week or so. The tracker is then shipped back to the USGA, which analyzes the data in-house and turns around colored maps indicating what areas of a course are trafficked and, in contrast, which are not. More accurate than golf cart GPS and its plentiful aforementioned “snake winds,” they allow the data to sift into the crannies and rough. “A light bulb went off,” Sanford says. “I thought this would be a great way for us to hone in on where we really need grass and where we don’t need grass.”

In order to help Jablonowski finally trim

Crandon Golf’s water bill, Sanford proposed repurposing 29 acres of turf, some of it near the course borders that often flood thanks to Key Biscayne, and most of it nostalgic Bermudagrass, a relic of another era of Florida course construction. Crandon Golf has been ranked the best municipal course in Florida and was attractive enough that Donald Trump attempted to wrangle a 99-year contract to manage the property in 2015, but like most courses, it is not perfect. Any potentially productive tool is worthy of consideration.

Jablonowski approved the use of the trackers, which he says cost a couple thousand dollars to rent — the equivalent of “about a day’s worth of water.” The decision, which Jablonowski calls a “no-brainer,” has yielded 177 tracks and more than 600,000 data points, according to Scott Mingay, director of product development for the USGA. Neither Jablonowski nor superintendent Robert Montesino, who handles those duties at all six county courses, say they recall a single player objecting to wearing a tracker.

“When we got



- Proposed turf reduction areas (21.37 acres)
- Existing tidal impacted areas (9.44 acres)
- Combined turf reduction/tidal impacted areas (5.23 acres)

the heat map,” Sanford says, “what was really cool about it is there were some areas where we had originally proposed to take turf out, but then we saw some traffic in those areas — not large areas, probably three or four small areas — and we saw we had to have turf in those areas because that was where people were hitting the ball.”

But thanks to the heat map analysis, Sanford identified plenty more areas originally off his almost-liter-al radar, bringing the total of proposed repurposed turf not to 29 acres but 42. The difference between those two proposals is equal to about one-tenth of the area of the whole course.

This is what data can do in 2019.

Data is not new, but the deep dives available for architects and superintendents are. Where once you were limited to, say, revenue per round, or round length, now you can investigate the analytics of any measurable metric. “Moneyball” is more than a Michael Lewis bestseller and an Oscar-nominated Brad Pitt passion project.

“We try to use data any way we can,” Sanford says. “In our business, it’s physical data. We always use what we call base information — topographic maps, vegetation maps — that’s our improvement plan we use to make decisions as golf course architects. That all comes from my background and my associate Dave Ferris’s background in landscape architecture. Data to us is information about what’s on the ground — soils, vegetation, topography and, in this case, traffic patterns. I would not call myself much of a data guy, but any time we can get empirical data, base information to help us make decisions, we’re gonna take advantage of that. ... It’s kind of just a logical thing to do, you know?”

“We have to be salesmen going up to leadership,” Jablonowski says. “Leadership could be pol-

iticians, parks professionals, budget and finance folks up on the 20th floor of the building with no windows, and data is what you have to have to show them return on investment and why we’re doing this, to put it into terms that audience understands. Without data, you don’t have a chance.”

That data has already helped yield about \$150,000 in savings, with a projected net reduction in annual water costs of about \$350,000.

“This shows the importance of communication with the architects, with superintendents and with the professional group in the front office,” says Montesino, the superintendent. “Everybody has come together for this project, and we all have a great understanding of it. One of the main things was communicating what we were trying to do to all the golfers and everybody was on board. We didn’t get any negative feedback. It highlights what we can accomplish if we’re all on the same page.”

The more considerable savings might be realized when Jablonowski and Crandon Golf receive funding for the turf repurposing project that will transition those 42 acres of relatively untrafficked turf into crushed limestone, crushed aggregate and pine straw — improving aesthetics at the same time they improve the bottom line.

THOSE 42 ACRES OF TURF are still turf, though. Because the course is public and one of six owned by Miami-Dade County, challenges contrast those at a private course where boards and members call shots and determine budgets. Funding is, unfortunately, far from a sure thing.

“Public golf is not the easiest animal to take for a walk, but you can be successful if you collaborate and if you know what’s coming every year,” Jablonowski says. “It’s not rocket science but there are an awful lot of



WE HAVE TO BE SALESMEN GOING UP TO LEADERSHIP. LEADERSHIP COULD BE POLITICIANS, PARKS PROFESSIONALS, BUDGET AND FINANCE FOLKS UP ON THE 20TH FLOOR OF THE BUILDING WITH NO WINDOWS, AND DATA IS WHAT YOU HAVE TO HAVE TO SHOW THEM RETURN ON INVESTMENT AND WHY WE’RE DOING THIS, TO PUT IT INTO TERMS THAT AUDIENCE UNDERSTANDS. WITHOUT DATA, YOU DON’T HAVE A CHANCE.”

— *Steve Jablonowski*

moving parts to what we do.” The proposal is one of a handful Jablonowski included for consideration in the 2019-20 county budget, which will total around \$8 billion. “We’ve got to get to finance people and get them to authorize the plan,” he says. “We’ve put a nice proposal in place, showing savings over a five-year period, and we can pay for it. ... At least we’re at the table.”

The total probable cost is a little more than \$2.6 million, with a three-year implementation planned through 2021. “Let’s hope the county gives them the money,” Sanford says.

Because while we live in a world driven by data, cash is still king. **GCI**

Matt LaWell is GCI’s managing editor.



Substance over style

In the old west, big talkers who didn't deliver on what they promised were described as "All hat and no cattle." Simply put: more image than substance.

None of us wants to be thought of in those terms. We all want to deliver the goods as promised. Doing so, while often challenging, is more achievable when you take these important steps:

1. Develop your strategic plan carefully because that's where you lay out your promises in the form of goals and objectives. Stephen Johnston, the founder of Global Golf Advisors, often explains the importance of strategic planning by saying, "The lack of a strategic plan is not as dangerous as not having fire insurance, but it's certainly playing with fire."

The key components of a sound strategic plan are: (a) market analysis; (b) operational review and comparison against performance benchmarks; (c) financial measurement — especially of the sources and uses of funds; and (d) clear-eyed evaluation of governance practices. These four components assure that you have a plan that states clearly your goals and objectives and establishes a broad understanding of expectations.

Remember that an effective strategic plan answers the question: What? The business plan provides the details behind How? When? Who? and Where? The tactical plan outlines the steps that will implement the strategy.

2. Put your strategy to work. Strategy is only as good as the execution that backs it up. Putting strategic goals and

objectives into action also requires a plan — one that describes in detail how you and your team will achieve the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

3. Make sure club leaders and managers understand the plan and how their functional areas are expected to contribute to its success. In 1962, President Kennedy declared, "We will put a man on the Moon in this decade and return him safely to Earth." Shortly thereafter, while on a tour of the NASA Space Center, the president came upon a janitor mopping the floor. When asked by the President about his job, the janitor responded, "Mr. Kennedy, I am part of the team that is going to put a man on the Moon." That is plan buy-in and real-life awareness. The lesson: Make believers of your staff.

4. Review your plan's success. No matter how well-intended a plan might be, careful evaluation and follow-up ensure that the plan remains relevant and purposeful. Another benefit of ongoing evaluation is evolutionary improvement and maximized understanding. Here are three steps to ensure that your plan is working at full capacity:

- Provide quarterly strategic plan updates. Report your accomplishments and missteps with equal openness. Quarterly updates keep strategy alive in the boardroom and assure members that their board

and club management are keeping their promises. Members support trustworthy leadership and trust is built on accountability in your actions.

- Post a strategic scorecard. After the quarterly update, post the results truthfully and without acclaim. No different that posting your golf score, this is a matter of open accountability for performance. Embrace accountability for your strategic plan's effectiveness.
- Produce an annual report. Tell your members what has been accomplished. Align the annual report, as any major corporation would, with the strategic goals and objectives for your business and report on progress toward those goals. Provide members and stakeholders with a succinct summary of the strategic effectiveness of your plan, your board and yourself.

Strategic plans are based on the notion of having a focused plan of action on which all can rely. This step helps to make you and your work more trusted while bringing focus to what makes your facility successful.

One of the more common concerns in many golf courses and clubs is the question of vision or what it really wants to be. A carefully developed strategic plan clearly states who and what you are and establishes a trustworthy foundation for achievements. It shows people that you're more than just a hat — it's evidence that you're bringing the beef. **GCI**



HENRY DELOZIER is a principal in the Global Golf Advisors consultancy. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Directors of Audubon International.

Always Looking Out for Issues Affecting Your **BUSINESS**



RISE Grassroots Network

When issues about pesticides and fertilizers pop up in your neck of the woods, you don't have to address them alone. Join the free RISE Grassroots Network at **pestfacts.org/grassroots** or scan the QR code below. Access resources you can use on the local, state and federal levels with customers, neighbors, community leaders and policy makers to communicate the benefits of

your services and the products you use. Keep up-to-date on policy and regulations running the gamut from private and public pesticide property bans to specific restrictions on sales, use and display of fertilizers and pesticides. RISE is a national trade association of pesticide and fertilizer suppliers serving as a resource to help you keep these products in your toolbox and you out of the woods.

grassroots@pestfacts.org / pestfacts.org/grassroots / DebugTheMyths.com

RISE Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment®

1156 15th St., N.W. Washington D.C. 20005 (202) 872-3860



LESS IS MORE

After returning to a beloved course, Michigan superintendent **Craig McKinley** is learning how to *work smarter* and be a *better administrator*.

By Matt LaWell

Craig McKinley keeps a couple beehives on the grounds of Bucks Run Golf Club in Mount Pleasant, in the geographic heart of Michigan, but he avoids wearing the coverall suit so often associated with apiarians. “I like to think they know I’m comfortable, so they won’t sting me,” he says, “but that’s not always the case.”

Apparently not. Around the rest of his work as golf course superintendent at Bucks Run, McKinley dropped by the bees one morning late last month and, while depositing one of the hives back into its box, received a stinger right in the throat. This is life for one of the more resourceful superintendents in the Great Lake State.

“We are a high-end daily-fee golf course, a destination course, so our expectations are high and the conditions need to be excellent,” McKinley says. Funds are not unlimited, though. “We’re not a mom-and-pop shop by any stretch, but we’re budget-conscious. I try to run a pretty tight ship.”

Hence the bees, whose honey is harvested, jarred and available for purchase in the pro shop. The years-long investment in vermicomposting, too, turning over food scraps from the Quarry Grill kitchen and the crew into totes full of worms, whose waste is brewed in nylon, mixed with molasses, and sprayed on the greens. Oh, and the pair of Alpine Nubian goats — named Roy McAvoy in honor of Kevin Costner’s roguish Tin Cup protagonist and, uh, John Daly in honor of, well, you know — who control protected wetlands on the property, munching brush and maintaining protected areas.

McKinley arrived at Bucks Run in 2013, an assistant superintendent for two years under Jeff Sweet, then essentially the acting superintendent for another three years. He headed south for a year to The Polo Fields Golf and Country Club in Ann Arbor before returning in February, lured back by “the scenery, the views, the wildlife,” he says. “There’s something about the family company we work for — and this property in general — that I’m just really connected to, and I bonded with it. This place has always been special to me.”

The Jerry Matthews-designed course opened in 2000, a little more than a decade after the old gravel quarry that once filled the site shut down for good. The Chippewa River runs through six holes. The manmade Lake Fisher covers 35 of the property’s 320 or so acres. “It’s just a beautiful place with really great people to work with and work for,” McKinley says.

The budget provides a challenge, though, just like it does for so many superintendents around the state and the country. “Craig represents 90 percent of the guys I

◀ Bucks Run Golf Club is a popular golf destination in the competitive Michigan golf market.



Craig and Julie McKinley

call on,” says Adam Garr, a territory manager for Syngenta who has helped McKinley develop agronomic progs at both Polo Fields and Bucks Run. “He’s not part of that 10 percent of private country club guys who have buckets of money. He has to be smarter with the resources he’s given.

“For guys like Craig, he wants to use Secure, he wants to use Posterity, but maybe he can only do two applications instead of three or four. It’s all about finding where those two apps work best into his agronomic calendar so he gets the most bang for his buck.”

McKinley first used Secure fungicide on fairways during his year at Polo Fields. He returned to Bucks Run too late to fill out his own order for 2019 but fortuitously found it on the list — he has an application scheduled for early July, about two weeks in advance of the club’s member-guest tournament July 13 and charity tournament four days later — and plans to keep it for 2020. The applications will help McKinley control dollar spot, the No. 1 disease facing Bucks Run.

“I’d always been a generic kind of guy,” he says. Then he discovered newer products, like Secure fungicide, that would integrate for added control. “Secure was a new chemistry for me, and it’s a good one.”

In addition to Secure, McKinley keeps a handful of what he calls “bangers” on hand — “the big clean-up sprays,” he says, “things I know are going to finish it off or get me back to where I need to be.” He uses 12 to 15 ounces per acre of Trimmit

2SC growth regulator to knock back *Poa annua* on the Providence bentgrass greens. He uses Primo Maxx growth regulator on the PennLinks/PennEagle fairways, too, and mixes it with Trimmit on the greens just prior to tourna-

ments, “just to shut everything down.” Banner Maxx II fungicide is earmarked for fairways and tees. He used Posterity fungicide at Polo Fields — “I think I sprayed it down there September 4 and it made it clean all the way to the first week of November,” he says — and will return it to the rotation when he places his order for 2020.

McKinley also started to work with Daconil Action fungicide at Polo Fields, appreciating it for its effectiveness and its price tag. “The product’s good, the knockdown’s good, and the price is competitive enough where most golf courses can use it,” he says. “It’s not something that’s untouchable for most golf courses.”

“I see a lot of myself in Craig,” says Garr, who worked 12 years at Plum Hollow Country Club near Detroit, including the last six as superintendent, before starting with Syngenta in 2015. “I kind of inherited a program that had a lot of generics



**“WE’RE NOT A
MOM-AND-POP
SHOP BY ANY
STRETCH, BUT
WE’RE BUDGET-
CONSCIOUS. I TRY
TO RUN A PRETTY
TIGHT SHIP.”**

— *Craig McKinley*

in it and they didn’t work too well. I was constantly dealing with dollar spot flareups, particularly on tees. I just couldn’t get it to go away. It wasn’t until I was introduced to products like Secure that I learned I could

get two weeks of control out of something. I just needed to be educated that there were better options out there. I think Craig’s kind of living that out right now. His eyes were kind of opened last year and now he knows what to expect.”

Garr and McKinley have developed a friendship from their professional relationship, hanging out as often as can be expected of two turfheads separated by 150 miles of Michigan highways.

“Craig is just a great problem-solver,” Garr says. “I think he’s very responsible with the tools he’s given. He’s pretty resourceful, and I have a lot of respect for a guy who’s performing at that level — you know, maybe not having the budget of that high-end club. He’s the epitome of making it work with what he’s got and then some.

“He’s trying to do some new stuff. It’s just cool pulling into a place and seeing goats. It’s a good look.”

And during his second full year as a superintendent in both duty and title, McKinley is learning more about how to deal with problems on and off the course, how to make things work when they shouldn’t, how to push through and do a little more with a little less. “I’ve become a better administrator,” he says, “getting things to come together at the right time.”

Now if he would just protect himself from those bees. **GCI**

DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS for **dollar spot control**

Syngenta offers dollar spots alerts based on the Smith-Kerns prediction model developed by **Damon Smith, Ph.D.**, associate professor and extension specialist, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and **Jim Kerns, Ph.D.**, associate professor and extension specialist, NC State University. The tool helps superintendents maximize resources by optimizing the timing of applications based on recommended thresholds for dollar spot development. Superintendents can register for the free alerts by visiting <http://www.greencastonline.com/dollarspot>.

For more information about using data to control dollar spot, enter bit.ly/2Xz3hBI into your web browser to read insight from **Matt Giese**, Syngenta technical services manager, and **Paul Koch, Ph.D.**, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

His crop is turf

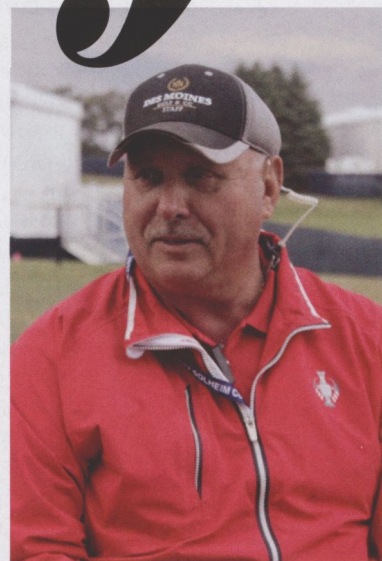
*Lessons from
small-town
beginnings helped
Rick Tegtmeier
land and keep his
dream job at Des
Moines Golf and
Country Club.*

By **Guy Cipriano**

Rick Tegtmeier held his first superintendent job before he could vote. To the benefit of hundreds of turf managers in Iowa and beyond, Tegtmeier has never lost the zest and resourcefulness he displayed as a 17-year-old making daily decisions leading a three-person crew at Rockford Golf & Country Club in Rockford, Iowa.

Shuttered because of another crop – “\$7 corn took that course out,” Tegtmeier says – teenaged lessons absorbed at the 9-hole course shaped one of the Heartland’s heralded turf careers. Tegtmeier, the director of grounds at Des Moines Golf and Country Club, became the seventh superintendent inducted into the Iowa Golf Association Hall of Fame earlier this year. His 13-year run as Des Moines G&CC’s turf leader includes the renovation of all 36 Pete Dye-designed holes and hosting the 2017 Solheim Club, the biggest golf event staged in Iowa.

Before he arrived in Des Moines, the state’s capital and largest city, Tegtmeier spent a childhood in Rockford (pop. 825), a small northern Iowa town once known for its brick and tile factory. Part of Rockford’s social life revolved around the golf course, which operated under the guidance of charismatic greens committee chairman Ed Batty, a local banker who lured numerous teenagers into golf course maintenance. A few of the club’s young



workers eventually became superintendents.

“Ed would say, ‘Hey, what are you going to do with your life? Did you know you can get into turfgrass management? Iowa State has a good program or Hawkeye Community College has a good program.’” Tegtmeier says. “He would help us get student loans by telling us where to

apply. He encouraged us.”

Nearly every career decision Tegtmeier made after graduating from Hawkeye Community College pointed toward becoming Des Moines G&CC's turf leader. The long-term ambition became a reality in 2006 when the club selected Tegtmeier

to replace Bill Byers, who held the head superintendent position for 49 years. Tegtmeier worked under Byers for seven years in the 1980s.

Tegtmeier has spent the bulk of

his 46-year turf career in Iowa, where he and his wife, Sherry, raised three children, Lynette, Nate and Eric. Nate is the superintendent of the Des Moines G&CC North Course. A superintendent with more in-state connections than Tegtmeier might not exist. His network even includes two-time major champion and Iowa icon Zach Johnson.

A principle imparted by Byers, also an Iowa Golf Association Hall of Famer, helped Tegtmeier establish a connection with Johnson while he served as superintendent at Elmcrest Country Club, the Cedar Rapids course where Johnson learned the game.

“I asked Bill Byers one time, ‘What’s the key to staying in the business?’” Tegtmeier says. “He said, ‘Treat every young kid like you want to be treated because someday he will be president of the club. And if you piss him off early, he’s going to remember that when he’s president and you’ll be gone.’ You have to treat everybody with respect.”

Whether it’s a member of Des Moines G&CC’s 48-member agronomic team, a committee chair, a major champion or a young golfer, Tegtmeier makes everybody associated with the game feel valued. Thousands of golf enthusiasts can

thank a banker for identifying this industry treasure.

How did you get involved with the industry?

I walked into the bank one day with my dad. I was 13 years old and Ed said, ‘Hey, we need some help laying sod. Do you want to come out and work?’ I must have been a good worker because the next summer he asked me back. We had a big rotary rough mower on a tractor that couldn’t get next to the trees. So I grabbed a lawnmower and a 5-gallon can of gas and went out and mowed around trees to get the grass down. I started weed eating and finally they started showing me how to mow greens, change cups, mow fairways, become a night waterman, etc.

What type of agriculture connections ran in your family?

My grandpa and his brothers were in agriculture. My grandpa sold the farm and he ended up running a local garden center. When I was a little kid, I would go to the grocery store and hang out with grandpa in the garden center. I always enjoyed listening to him talk to people about horticulture. That really spurred an interest in me early. In Rockford, you walked beans, you bailed hay, you did whatever around the ag community. I had uncles who raised chickens and we used to catch chickens. None of those things appealed to me as much as working on the golf course.

At what point did you realize golf course maintenance could become a career?

Probably when I was 16 or 17. (Former Hyperion Field Club superintendent) John Ausen was eight years ahead of me and I used to hear everything about John Ausen. He worked at Firestone Country Club, he worked at Field Club of Omaha. He was the go-to guy at the time for Ed. Ed would call John and ask, ‘What are you guys doing?’ And Ed

would bring those ideas back. It just started to appeal to me. I wanted to somehow be outside. It just seemed like a natural fit. By the time I was a senior in high school, that was what I was going to do.

Do you still think there are kids in places like Rockford, Iowa, who want to go into this business?

I definitely think there are kids out there in agriculture that want to hear about alternative agriculture. We approached Bill Northey, our Secretary of Agriculture in Iowa, and he said, ‘You guys need to get more involved with FFA.’ We had a really big push at the state FFA convention. I don’t do this, but my son Nate does this, and Tim Van Loo, who maintains the football field at Jack Trice Stadium, are involved when they come Iowa State. They bring in 100 kids, they have a barbecue and they talk to them about alternative agriculture, whether that’s sports turf management or golf course management. They take them out to a local golf course and show them what they do there. We have met with FFA instructors. One of the things you can do in FFA is turfgrass management. A lot of people don’t know about that and that’s why it’s important to get into these schools and talk to these kids.

I have gone to the Des Moines schools and talked to the FFA program and told them about it. We say, ‘Hey, there’s a business here where you can still participate in agriculture.’ My crop is turf. My yield is grass clippings. It’s measured every day. We don’t get paid for grass clippings, but it’s the same concept. There’s definitely a spot out there for these young kids, especially in Iowa – if you can connect with them early because there are so many different technologies. You have to let them know there is technology involved in growing grass.

You have been very successful at integrating technology into

Inspired by Iowans

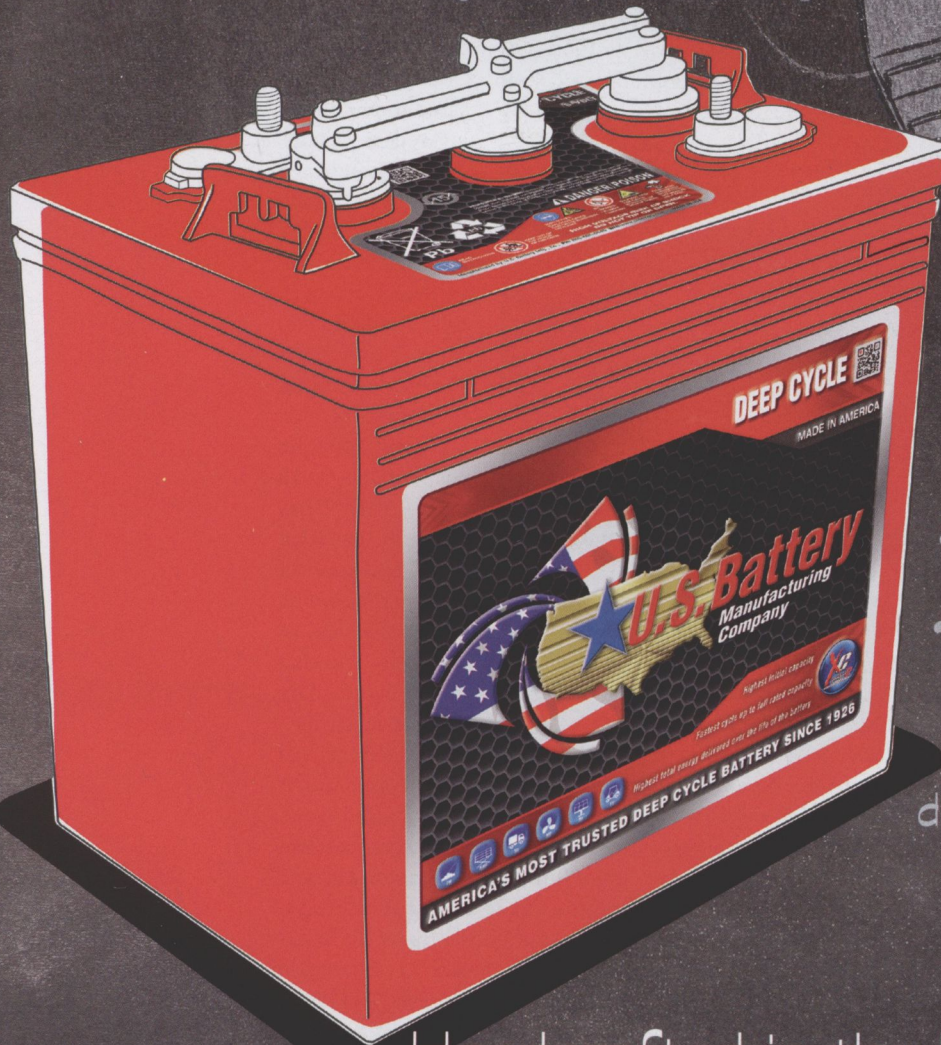
Golf Course Industry editor Guy Cipriano spent time in the Hawkeye State this spring visiting superintendents and other industry figures. Enter bit.ly/2VNwvhu into your web browser to learn a major regret from the memorable trip.

We Put The GO in Golf

XC2 High Density Paste
Maximizes Runtime and Battery
Life

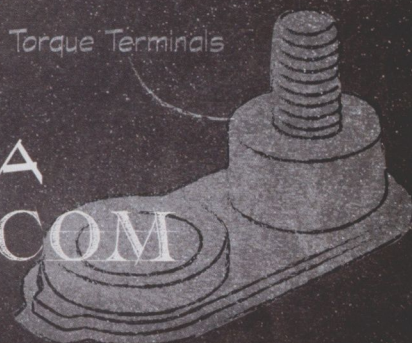
Heavy Duty Lead Plates w/
Heavy Duty Internal Connections

Tough Polypropylene Case Design



- Highest initial capacity.
- Fastest cycle up to full rated capacity.
- Highest total energy, delivered over the life of the battery.

High Torque Terminals



Handcrafted in the USA
WWW.USBATTERY.COM

your operation. What is the relationship between the crop you manage and technology?

When I went to Elmcrest Country Club in 1989, they had a computer. That was back when you would turn it on and it was MS-DOS. I thought you could turn it on and just start

old, and I'm talking to the 'biggs' in the turf world. That just evolved into more technology. To be honest, it's all self-educated.

Do you now have younger superintendents, assistant superintendents or students

I think it's great. It's where you share something and people criticize people that it becomes a problem. You have to learn in the technology field that every golf course is different and what works for one person might not work for the other people, but don't criticize them. You're not walking in their shoes.

What did you learn from Bill Byers?

I interviewed with Bill first in 1980. I interviewed at Des Moines and a little 9-hole golf course called Urbandale Country Club the same day. I interviewed at Urbandale first and they offered me the job on the spot. I said, 'I have to wait. I have to interview with Bill.' I came to Des Moines Golf and I had never seen an operation like this. I walked into the shop and they had a central hoist. They had at the time what I thought was a lot of equipment coming

◀ Rick Tegtmeier's team hosted the 2017 Solheim Cup following the renovation of Des Moines Golf and Country Club's 36 holes.



typing a letter. I quickly realized you can't. Nothing bugs me more than to have something in my possession and I don't know how to run in it. I kind of delved into the computer world, read books and taught myself how to run MS-DOS. Pretty soon I got involved with TurfByte, which was started by Duane Patton. That was a computer bulletin board at the time. I started to realize that you could use technology to communicate with other superintendents. I learned so much from guys like Jon Scott, Duane Patton and Garry Grigg. It didn't matter what age you were. Oscar Miles was on there. Here I am, a young kid at 29 years

reach out to you through technology?

A lot of people reach out to me on Twitter. Social media is the TurfByte that was out there 30 years ago. There are no 'biggs' out there. We are all the same. It's just how much do you want to share with people. You learn something new every day. I just saw the other day where somebody made a nozzle to spray under your spray deck out of black gas pipe. I sent somebody out to buy black gas pipe so I can make one of these nozzles to clean out the decks under mowers. As long as people are willing to share what they do and are not intimidated by it,

from a 9-hole course and I was just overwhelmed. I basically said that in the interview and Bill didn't hire me. I went to Urbandale, and while I worked really hard, I couldn't get that out of my mind. Des Moines Golf is just where I had to be. I talked to other people and a local superintendent said, 'Rick, you need to go to a big golf course. You have to get 18-hole experience and broaden your horizons.' He lined me up with a golf course in Chicago (Hinsdale Golf Club) and I went there as first assistant. I went there in March, I was 21 years old, and they fired the superintendent Fourth of July weekend.

DIAL UP PLAYABILITY.



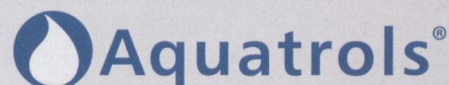
ZIPLINE[®] FOR FAST, FIRM, FINE TURF.

Turn up the playability and improve turf health with Zipline powered by AquaVita™ Technology – Our dual-action soil surfactant blend containing a unique mineral solution bio-extract that is specifically formulated for turf care professionals.

What Does It Do?

- ✓ Balances Hydration
- ✓ Improves Water Infiltration
- ✓ Enhances Mineralization
- ✓ Delivers Plant Health Benefits

Ready to find out how Zipline can positively impact conditions on your course?
Contact your Aquatrols Distributor or visit [Aquatrols.com/Playability](https://www.aquatrols.com/playability).



So, you're in charge at that point?

We ran the golf course the rest of the year and then in the fall they said, 'Are you interested in the job?' I said, 'No. I have to move back to Iowa.' I left in February of 1983. Bill had a superintendent on one of the golf courses named Steve Ladeburg. Steve got cancer and passed away. There was an opening and Bill hired me. From 1983 to 1987, that was the big kick in bentgrass fairways coming to the Midwest, and triplex mowers and five-gang mowers. We killed and overseeded our fairways to bentgrass in 1985, 1986 and 1987. We did nine holes a year and in 1987 we did 18 holes. That was a big turning point in golf course maintenance. Everybody just took it up a notch. You had bigger crews. At that time, we were mowing everything with triplexes. We started hand mowing greens. You had bentgrass fairways, you had better weed control products, better plant protectants, better fungicides, better insecticides. Turfgrass just got better. That was a big, big learning point for me working for Bill at that time. I'll never forget it, in one of my reviews in 1988, he said, 'Where do you want to be? What do you want to do?' I said, 'I want to sit in your chair.' He said, 'Leave. I'm still young. I'm going to stay here the rest of my career. You have to leave and go make a name for yourself, and someday when I retire, hopefully you can apply.'

How valuable and memorable were your 17 years at Elmcrest Country Club?

Everything that I did at Elmcrest I was trying to emulate what Bill Byers was doing. We converted to Pennncross fairways because that's what Des Moines Golf had. Why did I pick A-4 bentgrass for Elmcrest? Because that's what Des Moines Golf had. I tried to learn as much as I could and make things just as good at Elmcrest as they were at

Des Moines Golf. I tried to emulate everything Bill was doing or even do it better, because when my opportunity came at Des Moines Golf, I wanted to be the guy.

When I was at Elmcrest what Larry Gladson, the golf pro, was doing was infectious for everybody. His love of the game carried over into my crew. I went there thinking just about golf course maintenance. When I left there 17 years later, I thought about everything being a team. In the 1980s and 1990s, golf pros and superintendents didn't get along. And Larry and I got along great. We did everything together.

Larry would always invite me to talk to the junior golfers. There was a group of five kids that played together every day. You kind of gravitated toward them. You would see them, stop and say, 'Long drive for a candy bar.' Or I would give them golf balls. Or I would give them tees. All of them were good golfers. One of them was Brian Rupp, who ended up playing for the University of Iowa. And then there was Zach Johnson, who probably loved the game more than anybody and had more desire. His high school golf team won the state championship, but he wasn't quite recognized as a great player. He went to Drake University and the rest is history.

How fortunate have you been to spend most of your career in the state you care so much about?

It's a dream come true. I'm lucky that I have been at two clubs that have been forward-thinking and allowed me to do what I love. It was cool during my Hall of Fame induction that a ton of Elmcrest members were there, knowing you have that support 13 years later is special. It's been a great ride and it's so cool to stay here and identify with all these people and tell these stories over the years. It's been a great time to be involved with golf in Iowa and in the industry.

You're in the Iowa Golf Hall of

Fame. You've gone through the biggest of big renovations. You've hosted a major tournament. You've sent a lot of your assistants onto head superintendent positions. How do you want the next five to 10 years to go?

I'm not going to take my foot off the gas. If anything, we're stepping on it harder and shifting to a higher speed. I still think there are things that we can do here to improve. The day you can't improve is probably the day you should walk away. I look at the industry and how fast it's changing. I still want to be a part of that. I still want to do things that will improve Des Moines Golf and make it better. I don't want to leave here having people say, 'He rested on his laurels.'

There are a lot of superintendents in your situation. How do superintendents in their late 50s and early 60s stay motivated?

I told this story during my Hall of Fame induction. I made a joke about Barney Fife and not a single one of my guys laughed because they didn't know who he was. I thought, 'I'm surrounded by millennials.' You have to embrace what they are doing and understand what they are doing and learn how to get motivated by them and what motivates them. No matter what you do in this business, it's an evolution. You have to constantly reinvent yourself, all the time. Every day you have to look at it and say, 'What can we change to make it better for them as employees to want to work here? And what can we do to make it better for our golfers to walk in here?' My goal has always been that when a member pulls into Des Moines Golf and when they pull out, they have the same smile on their face. That's what motivates me. I don't want them to have a bad day. GCI



IT JUST SCREAMS, "FAST!"



TZone™ SE is the fastest triclopyr combo on the market.

Formulated for speed, and delivering twice the triclopyr per acre as most combination products, TZone™ SE Broadleaf Herbicide For Tough Weeds leaves the competition in the dust. The reduced-solvent ester formulation of TZone SE controls more than 60 of the toughest broadleaf weeds. And TZone SE does it with a fast visual response for fewer complaints and callbacks.

***Leave the lesser herbicides behind:
Choose TZone SE.***

PBIGordonTurf.com

TZone™ is a trademark and Checkered Flag® and ProForm® are registered trademarks of PBI-Gordon Corp. 11/17 05027

G **pbi/gordon**
corporation
Employee-Owned

IDEA

Innovation Never Stops:

THE REVYSOL® STORY

Part 3 The Superintendents

By Rick Woelfel

(Editor's Note: This year, BASF and GCI are working together to tell the story of how a new active ingredient is coming to life for the golf market. The idea is to help you learn the scope of the R&D, testing, investment and plain hard work that goes on behind the scenes of product development. The specific formulations are not yet approved by the EPA but indications are they will be available in 2019. This is part 3 of a 4-part series on the remarkable process of bringing new chemistry to your golf course.)

Roughly a decade ago, Revysol fungicide was a concept. In the years since, it has gone from a formula on a whiteboard, to the lab, to the field.

Now, superintendents are eager to see how BASF's new DMI subclass fungicide performs in "live fire," under real-world conditions, on turf with real golfers walking and riding on it.

Networking in New Jersey

Jamie Devers is the director of grounds at Canoe Brook Country Club in Summit, N.J., around 20 miles west of midtown Manhattan. He started working at the

club as an intern 19 years ago and has been there ever since. He assumed his present role in 2007.

Canoe Brook features 36 holes. The North Course dates back to 1901 while The South Course opened for play in 1924. Both have undergone extensive revisions through the years; over the last four-and-half-decades much of that work has been done by Rees Jones, working either alongside his father, Robert Trent Jones Sr., or on his own.

Devers is planning to do a test with the Revysol fungicide products at his facility beginning in late June, weather permitting. Prior to that, as is his custom with

a new product, he'll reach out to other superintendents in the region who have used it at their own clubs. "From the information we've heard and received, it's been something we are definitely looking forward to if the field studies and the research proves what they're hoping to get," he says.

Devers often works with Dr. Bruce Clarke and his team at Rutgers University, who have been conducting trials with Revysol fungicide.

"When this was presented to us, it wasn't a hard sell to help out, to get more real-world research on this product," Devers

says. "There's only so much you can do at a turf center, but when you get it on a golf course and seeing the different stresses that you have, it goes a long way as far as making sure the product is good, does what it needs to do, and what it's supposed to do. That helps us out in the long run."

Devers is looking forward to seeing how effective Revysol fungicide is against dollar spot and summer patch. Current research conducted by BASF and universities indicates excellent control of dollar spot, summer patch and anthracnose.

Devers plans to apply the product on two fairways, one on each course. "The fairway we're going to try it on (on The North Course) has notoriously been a very active dollar-spot fairway," he says. "It's interesting because it's only one hole out of 36."

Devers is going to apply in late June as he wants to see if Revysol fungicide lives up to the current research showing a clean record when it comes to not regulating or thinning turf. "Sometimes you can get into problems where if you have another growth regulator out there in the summer, it could be sometimes detrimental and sometimes nip the turf, if you will," he says.

Devers also hopes Revysol fungicide will offer an extended application interval. "We're looking to this as another chemistry that might be able to give us a possible 21- to 28-day spray interval," he says. "The less we have to be out there with the sprayers the better as far as applications, and with an operation our size, 36 holes, that will help us out, not only with hopefully disease suppression, but also just labor with spraying."

Obtaining information in Ohio

Rodney Robbins is the head superintendent at The Country Club at Muirfield Village in Dublin, Ohio. The 18-hole private facility is situated across the street from Muirfield Village Golf Club, the site of the Memorial Tournament. The golf course, which was designed by Jack Nicklaus, has been undergoing a renovation over the last five years that has included the reconstruction of every bunker on the course, the installation of a new irrigation system and the redefinition of several fairways.

Robbins, an Ohio native, is in his third year at the club after starting his career at Pinehurst and then spending a season at the Philadelphia Cricket Club, where he was responsible for, among other things, caring for some of the finest grass tennis courts in the world.

In his present position, Robbins is concerned less about dollar spot than resistance is-

sues. "They over sprayed here in the '80s and '90s, so I'm dollar spot-resistant to all DMI fungicides," he says. "They don't work here; I don't use them."

"So, we've had to use other products, more contact fungicides and the SDHI line of chemistries. It is fairly new, but it is being used a lot. But you can only do four (applications) of that a year and there are resistance issues."

Research at Purdue University with Dr. Rick Latin the past several years has indicated that Revysol fungicide might have a new advantage in controlling DMI-resistant dollar spot. More research is being done to confirm this in the field.

Robbins describes his thought process when he's considering adding a new product to his repertoire. "The first thing I think about is 'Do I have a problem that I need a new product to take care of?'" he says. "Right now, my program works. I don't have a lot

of disease issues at all. Dollar spot, anthracnose, Pythium, I'm covered. So, especially as a new superintendent, if it's not broken, don't fix it."

But Robbins says he's interested in learning more about both Revysol fungicide as a stand-alone (brand name: Maxtima®) as well as Navicon® Intrinsic® brand fungicide (a pre-mix blend of Revysol fungicide and Insigna® SC Intrinsic brand fungicide) because of the potential of achieving both disease control and resistance management with the same product.

He's hoping that Revysol fungicide will "reset the clock" and give him a fresh start when it comes to DMI fungicides. "This new line is another chemistry class," he says, "which is always important. There's not supposed to be any resistance to this line."

Robbins is also interested in finding out what application interval Revysol fungicide of-





encouragement of his employers in that regard.

"We were approached to be a real-world study for Revysol (fungicide)," he says, "and my greens chair and my general manager said 'Yes, let's go ahead and do it.' We've done research with Rutgers in the past and they are more than happy to try to help

fers and whether it is compatible with other products he's applying. "It's a big ordeal to set a spray up," he points out. "Can I mix this stuff in the tank with my other products and not have a compatibility issue?"

"I'll never put just one product in the tank, or very rarely. It's so hard to go out and spray that you want to maximize your time and put as much in the tank to cover insecticides, fungicides, fertilizers, growth regulators, wetting agents.

You're putting six or seven products in the tank."

product.

Robbins is looking forward to seeing how well it works.

"I'm on the list to get, I think, an acre's worth," he says, "so I will fit it into my program. I'll give them the back-nine tees or a section where, if I did have a disease break through, it wouldn't be that big a deal."

Robbins appreciates the support BASF provides if he has a question or needs help. "They're my first call every time," he says.

While Robbins, as noted above, is cautious about introducing new products into his protocol, he maintains an interest in learning about them.

"I'm always open-minded about new stuff, so I've got kind of an open-door policy with all my guys from all the different companies," he says. "It doesn't hurt to learn something new or to try stuff and when these products come out, they'll give me an acre's worth and I'll find an area on the golf course where I can apply this product and do the Pepsi Challenge compared to what I've got now. That's the best way to do it. Just put it out in the field and see what actually happens on your property."

Devers embraces the idea of giving back to the game of golf and to his industry. He has the support and

if it's going to be a product that can be used not only here at Canoe Brook but within the industry.

"With Rutgers running the study, Dr. Clarke and his staff, we're more than satisfied with how it's going to go and the help it can provide for golf courses, throughout not only the Middle Atlantic region and the East Coast, but hopefully throughout the country."

Devers notes if Revysol fungicide proves to be as effective as is hoped, it will provide a direct benefit to golfers.

"If we can get a DMI that has longevity in disease suppression along with the safety during the hot humid summers that we have in the Mid-Atlantic," he says, "it would be another great piece to the puzzle in order to supply the best conditions we can for our membership."

BASF

We create chemistry

NEXT UP:

Part 4 of our series will focus on the final stage of the approval process.

Note: Any sales of the products after registration is obtained shall be solely on the basis of the EPA-approved label, and any claims regarding product safety and efficacy shall be addressed solely by the label.

Revysol fungicide at a Glance

- The proposed tradename for turf is Maxtima®
- A second proposed turf product, Navicon® Intrinsic brand fungicide, includes Insignia SC (pyraclostrobin).
- The active ingredient is mefentrifluconazole
- Class of chemistry is DMI (azole)
- Strong potential as a resistance management for DMI-resistant dollar spot
- Primary diseases controlled: dollar spot, anthracnose, summer patch, spring dead spot and fairy ring
- Target EPA registration date: Summer 2019

Epilogue

Both Devers and Robbins are aware that by lending their experience and expertise to the study of Revysol fungicide they are not only enhancing the experience of their own members but also giving back to their industry by contributing to the ever-expanding knowledge base about the



A DECADE OF INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

Celebrating 10 years of Plant Health with a 10% rebate

It's the 10th Anniversary of our Intrinsic® brand fungicides. That's a full decade of broad-spectrum disease control, growth efficiency and stress tolerance. We're ready to celebrate by bringing you savings.

Holiday Spray Promotional Savings:

Get a 10% rebate from BASF on qualifying products purchased between June 1 and July 31, 2019.

Visit betterturf.us/HolidaySpray today for details





THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRACTICE FACILITY

Golfers are spending more time and money honing their games. **Anthony L. Williams, CGCS, CGM,** explores a part of a course where technology and social possibilities are converging.

Lately I have been involved in a lot of discussions with other golf industry professionals about practice facilities and the golfer's expectations for these facilities now and in the future. It is important to note that what we now know as practice facilities were once shadows of their current selves. Thirty years ago, we used terms like driving range or putting green and occasionally mentioned a practice bunker that was likely located at the side of driving range tee. The idea was to hit a quick bucket of balls and maybe roll a few putts and get on the course as quickly as possible. Those days are over.

We are now living in the age of the fully-appointed practice facility and savvy superintendents are raising the standard across the industry. Let's look at some of the latest innovations in the evolution of the practice facility.

TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED THE WAY GOLFERS PLAY AND PRACTICE

The epicenter of the need for the evolution from a simple driving range/putting green to a modern practice facility is technology. Expanding golf technology is the driving force behind changes in the average practice facility.

Do you need more proof? Picture (or Google search) a typical driving range from the 1980s. How many rangefinders do you see? Video swing and swing speed analysis stations? How about overhead and in-ground lighting, not to mention master-planned LED lighting? How many night golf events are on the calendar? What sort of irons and drivers do you see? Are the type of range balls you see still in use today? What does the average shot look like from a height and distance perspective?

"Technology enhancements that track shots for distance and accuracy are becoming more common every day," says PGA Master Professional Tim Cusick, who was recently selected as one of the top 100 golf instructors in the country. "My hope is that all facilities can enjoy these types of systems in 10 years' time."

These changes have fueled the evolution of the practice facility. The changes are obvious and show no sign of slowing down or stopping. The successful Topgolf business model has tapped into the blend of technology and golf ethos in a unique practice environment, and successful clubs are eager to find their own answer to the successful practice facility equation. It is time to rethink what is possible.

BIGGER AND MORE DURABLE TURF AREAS ARE ESSENTIAL

Now that we have established the number of practice shots struck and the shear distance the golfer is hitting the ball has changed, we can also see the deep impact on the design and maintenance budget required

to create the practice space.

Bigger tees, higher netting, more targets, defined hitting lanes, and designated chipping only and putting only areas are now expected at every level of a golf club. I have worked in

tee/fairway, rough and even green heights. When well designed and constructed, these modern additions are a great way to accommodate more play in less space.

Another regional use for these



the private, public and resort golf markets over the past 30 years, and while the end products and price points vary, the practice facility has become a value add at every level. Every designer and architect I spoke with told me they have never heard of a driving range tee project where the tee size was going to be reduced. In fact, most agreed that it was impossible to build a practice tee too big now and in the future.

It is also important to note that as we get new and improved turf varieties that recover quicker and pair them with even better agronomic programs (a great topic for another article) there is a limit to the number of shots that a natural grass tee can take and still hold the expected quality. Thus, some brave souls have integrated synthetic turf into their practice facilities. Technological advances in synthetic turf are proving a valued strategy in the modern practice facility. Many superintendents are using state-of-the-art synthetic turfs to take some of the pressure off the natural grass surfaces, especially in high-volume clubs. These new synthetics are more playable than earlier products, they can hold a tee, and are available in

tees and greens, especially in the Transition Zone, is for frost delays or rain events that may temporarily close natural turf tees/greens. The synthetic tees/greens allow for a more weather-proof experience. I built my first synthetic tee 15 years ago and we just opened the latest version last month. The new synthetic materials are amazing, and our membership could not be happier with the addition. We have improved our practice areas by blending tradition and innovation, thinking outside the traditional tee box.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE MODERN PRACTICE FACILITY ARE CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

The game of golf is also changing socially. It is an individual sport played in small groups, but now more than ever the golf club experience has an ever-increasing social expectation. It is even more important that a practice facility has a variety of social aspects and alternative uses that meet or exceed the golfer's expectations.

Our natural grass practice tee, for example, will host more than a dozen large social events ranging from formal dinners to concerts and circus-style attractions this year.

▲ Spacious practice areas with improved turf varieties are a customer demand at facilities of all levels.

Beyond special events, every part of the practice facility must meet or exceed golfer/user expectation such as restroom facilities, which must be adequately designed, sized and clean. Food and beverage services must be available and be equal to the club's food and beverage reputation. Hours of operation must be extended to allow early and late practice (time is a factor). This mandates quality lighting throughout the practice facility for both function and safety.

Junior programs must offer quality instruction and plenty of social engagement for the child and the parent. The Topgolf influence can once again be felt in this new level of expectation as every club evaluates how far to expand the practice facility as an added social space. Some new uses for the practice facility include mini-course layouts in the driving range floor, water features (for practice and aesthetics), multiple target greens that are visible from several hitting angles/locations, creative

range/distance targets, practice areas designed for small, medium and large groups, and private teaching areas catering to specific golfer needs. Covered and heated hitting bays are also a must for the fair-weather golfer. Even irrigation and drainage must be maximized to allow more hours of operation so that facilities are not too wet or too dry but just right.

Bob Scott, ASIC President of Irrigation Consulting Services in Georgia says, "We are now actually making a game out of practicing the game and we must customize every design element to maximize resources and minimize disruptions." That says it all.

COMMUNICATION AND CRAFTING A MASTER PLAN

How do we make sure that we make the most of our practice facility and that it continues to evolve with the times? The key is to communicate with all stakeholders to gather real feedback and develop a team of

experts that can craft a master plan touching all issues impacting success.

Technology, agronomy, instruction, tracking, social areas, personal service, facilities and alternative uses are all born-first as ideas. Then they must be examined and tested to see if they have merit within the business model and then brought into reality with a sense of urgency.

"Our master plan process is heavy on communication at all levels," says Steve Wolfard of W Golf Design. "Without that communication, it is possible that you will miss the mark and not create as many opportunities for it (the practice facility experience) to be great." That sums up the evolution of the practice facility. Expectations have moved from good to great and we must deliver every time a range ball takes flight.

PUTTING IT ALL IN PERSPECTIVE

The greatest part about the golf industry is that the more it changes, the more it stays the same. The evolution of the practice facility is no different. Golf is a great game in part because it allows for a variety of players to find their swing and create memories as a single, foursome or a tournament champion.

The industry has developed a new and growing revenue stream within the practice facility. Superintendents are committed to crafting to new designs and programs to maximize this evolving part of our properties. We remain the keepers of the green (practice or primary). We often interact with more members on these practice areas than anywhere else on the property. As you make your rounds and your budgets this season, take a hard look at where your practice facility is, where it could be and then join the evolution. **GCI**

Anthony L. Williams is the director of golf course maintenance and landscaping at the Four Seasons Resort Club Dallas at Las Colinas in Irving, Texas.

© ANTHONY WILLIAMS

▼ Practice areas provide space for a diversity of events that can help golf facilities generate interest among new audiences.



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.

FERTIGATION TANK FILLING QUICK & EASY

Both 1,000-gallon tanks were fitted with 2-inch diameter PVC pipes hung from the ceiling going through the pumphouse wall, with quick connects, labeled for tank 1 and tank 2 provided by Nutrien, the local liquid fertilizer distributor. The club has a highway-rated bridge leading to the pumphouse for easy filling up of the tanks, with a bulkhead for easy turn around by the delivery truck. There is a 2-foot high concrete wall surrounding the tanks for spill containment. It cost about \$300 for the pipe and fittings, about \$6,750 for the concrete pad outside the pumphouse and it took about five hours labor time. Bob Vaughey, CGCS, is the director of agronomy at the Rolling Hills Country Club in Rolling Hills Estates, Calif, where the existing golf course was replaced with a totally new one.



FORK LIFT TREE PLANTER

I was driving by a home under construction in southern Idaho where the landscaping in the backyard was being installed. The contractor was using a New Holland forklift to dig the holes for the evergreen trees that were being planted. The forks were simply moved to the center in a near 45-degree angle and the weight of the machine dug the hole. The soil is a sandy-loam type, spruce and firs were being planted, and the machine performed effortlessly. It took less than five minutes to dig each hole and the laborers fine-tuned each one of them.




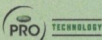


Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 41-year, life member of the GCSAA. He can be reached at 757-561-7777 or terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

TURF FUEL G™



A family of products that are designed to offer a wide range of performance solutions, meeting the most diverse and demanding requirements of professional turf managers.

	0-0-16	8-8-8	16-0-11	24-0-11
Sizing	75 SGN Dispersible	75 SGN Dispersible	75 SGN Dispersible	150 SGN
Homogenous	✓	✓	✓	Dual
Nutrifense	 NUTRIFENSE®	 NUTRIFENSE®	-	 NUTRIFENSE®
Technology Platform	Dispersible Granular	Dispersible Granular	Dispersible Granular	POWERED BY  TECHNOLOGY
Slow Release	-	14%	23%	100%
Release Mechanism	-	MU	MU	MU, PCU
Humic Acid	-	3%	3%	-
Seaweed Extract	✓	✓	-	-
Secondary Nutrients	Ca, Mg	Ca, Mg	Mg	-
Micronutrients	Fe, Mn	Fe, Mn, Zn	Fe, Mn, Zn, Cu	Fe


NUTRIFENSE®

Nutrifense® technology includes the latest plant health components available that helps reduce turf decline from drought, high heat, disease, poor water quality and even prolonged ice coverage.



POWERED BY  TECHNOLOGY

A family of Professional Turf Products powered by Scotts® PRO Technology, that are designed to offer a wide range of performance solutions, meeting the most diverse and demanding requirements of professional turf managers.

 **TARGET**
SPECIALTY PRODUCTS™

Contact us to learn more | info@target-specialty.com

target-specialty.com/tfgranular |





Case Study of the Target Specialty Products™ CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Ron Furlong

As more tailored fertility programs become available on the market, it's getting easier for golf course superintendents to settle on an exact program that perfectly fits their specific needs.

Three years ago, Alan Slaughter, superintendent at Eagle Landing Golf Club near Jacksonville, Fla., was recommended a program by one of his trusted sales representatives, Gary Morgan, with Target Specialty Products.

The basis of the new program Morgan was suggesting to Slaughter would be centered around three products from Target Specialty Products and their Turf Fuel line. Element 6, Photo Fuel and Quick Green represented Turf Fuel staples capable of fitting the specific requirement of Eagles Landing.

For Slaughter, who has been at Eagle Landing since the club debuted its Clyde Johnston-designed course in 2005, it all starts with spring green-up on the course's TifEagle Bermudagrass greens. "I really depend on the combo of these three products for the all-important spring green-up," Slaughter says. "We start applying the Turf Fuel program when the TifEagle breaks dormancy."

Element 6, fueled by exclusive Nutrifense technology, helps create very resilient plants on closely managed turf-like golf course greens. It also promotes exceptional root production.

Photo Fuel, a 12-0-0, which has Nutrifense technology along with two biostimulant components, is specifically designed to enhance photosynthesis.

Quick Green is a 14-20-0 high phosphate biostimulant that focuses not only on that all-important spring green-up, but also on new establishment, winter



EAGLE LANDING GOLF CLUB RECEIVES HEAVY USE ON ITS TIFEAGLE BERMUDAGRASS GREENS.

damage and aeration recovery.

"It's not just the spring green-up that we rely on these products for," Slaughter says. "It's also aeration recovery, and after that a weekly push during the summer. Following that initial spring green-up app, we apply weekly after aerification, usually Memorial Day through October."

Slaughter uses all three products in his Turf Fuel program at 4.8 ounces per thousand throughout the season on the TifEagle greens. "The combo gives me soluble N, P, K, Si, Mg, Mn, Fe, Cu and Mo," Slaughter says. "Also amino and fulvic acids."

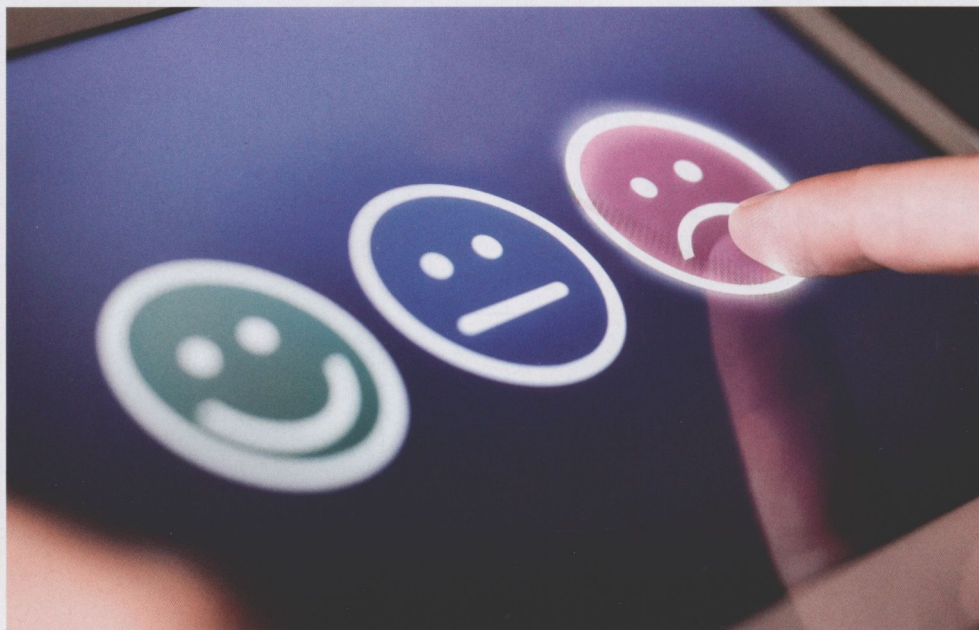
Turf Fuel products were designed specifically to enhance plant strength. A stronger and healthier plant can handle more extreme growing conditions and

the related stress that high quality turf surfaces must endure. Energy conservation is a big key to the success of the Turf Fuel products.

The philosophy behind the Turf Fuel products is simple: give plants the nutrients and stress-fighting components they need in the best raw material forms possible, thus creating exceptionally strong plants. Three years into his Turf Fuel Program, Slaughter displays enthusiasm about the results.

"With inconsistent winters and 50,000 rounds per year, we've found the turfgrass is retaining better color and the root mass generated is far more substantial," he says. "It's simply the best combination I have used to push and maintain TifEagle for consistent color and wear tolerance."

continued from page 24



"If someone complains to you about the costs, gently suggest they talk to the committees. Remind them your job is to make sure they have the best course possible."

safe, fun, challenging, and create a reason current members want to stay and new members want to join. The course is a financial asset to them: Make sure they understand its value.

- Have key information at your fingertips. Do the research and share it.
- Know the numbers — estimates, budgets, best- and worst-case scenarios. If possible, cite examples from at least two comparable clubs that have done similar projects.
- Don't dumb down the project. That could cost you your job. Find the middle ground between too much science and pandering. But if someone wants agronomic details, tell them.
- Listen for members trying to take shortcuts. Explain that while it will cost X to do the job right, it will cost a lot more to do it over.
- Be creative. If reconstruction of the greens means six months of closure, piggyback

other projects to minimize the disruption.

- Consider bringing in an outside consultant for an objective view of your situation and to lend support to a master plan.
- Speaking of a master plan, having one can be a very effective way to identify, justify and itemize the needs of the course. However, it can be harder to convince people to buy into an agronomic master plan because, frankly, it's boring.
- Prioritize the course's needs — and be willing to put off some projects until later. Compromise will help convince committees, members and fellow staff that you understand their concerns.
- Make your ideas become THEIR ideas so they will spend.
- You don't have to win every battle to win the war. Know when to put your ego aside. Consider and recognize other people's ideas. It's not just about the golf course, it's

about your job.

- Capital projects, in particular, should NOT come out of your course operations budget. Big project monies need to be set aside and planned for.

There's one more important point to remember: It's not your course, not your community. If, in the end, the members vote against the assessment or it gets so whittled down that you can't make real improvements, you might need to stop and think. Even though voting thumbs-down on your plan probably isn't about you, it may be an indication that you can't work at a place that doesn't view the course the way you do. I'm not suggesting you go all "pass the assessment or I quit," but if you're not going to be happy slapping Band-Aids on water pipes for a few years, it might be time to re-assess.

Since I don't want to end on a down note, the following should give you some laughs. I asked a few superintendents what members requested to help them feel better while

course-improvement projects were underway. If you've heard more, please send them along.

- Suspend club dues for the duration of the renovation.
- Free car washes to remove the dust and grime caused by the construction work.
- Rather than pay for everything, bill members "specifically" only for the amenities they use.
- Just fix the irrigation on the front nine. We'll think about the back nine!
- At a 36-hole facility, close nine holes and turn them into horse trails. Seems one member read a newspaper article that said rounds were down.

I've sat through many emotional meetings where members debated whether to spend on making their golf course better. Sometimes, the only way I kept myself from banging my head on the table was to remember one of my favorite lines from "Caddyshack." "Hey Moose, Rocco, help the Judge find his wallet." **GCI**

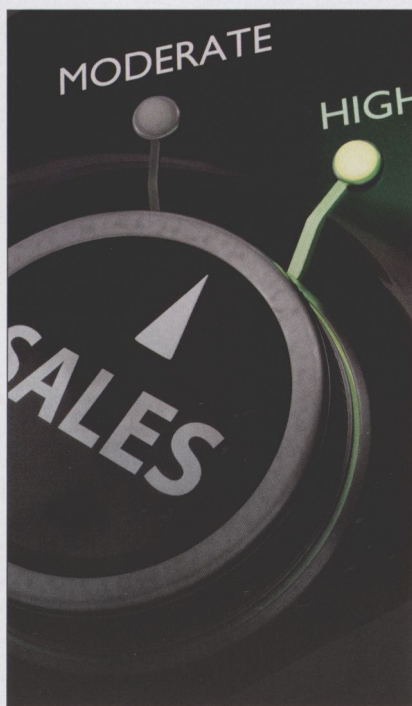
ADVERTISER	WEBSITE	PAGE
Aquatrols	aquatrols.com	17, 43
BASF Corporation	basf.com	46-49
Bayer	backedbybayer.com	26-30
Bernhard and Company LTD	bernhard.co.uk	10
Billy Goat Industries	billygoat.com	9
John Deere	johndeere.com/golf	5
Earthworks	earthworksturf.com	2
FAIRWAYIQ	fairwayiq.com	21
Jacobsen	jacobsen.com	60
Lebanon Turf Products	lebanonturf.com	59
PBI-Gordon Corp.	pbigordonturf.com	18, 19, 35*, 45*
Pennington Seed	pennington.com	8
Residex	target-specialty.com	13, 54-55
Standard Golf Company	standardgolf.com	23
Syngenta	syngenta.com	COVER, 36-38
Turf & Soil Diagnostics	turfdiag.com	25
U.S. Battery Manufacturing Co.	usbattery.com	41
United Phosphorus, Inc.	upi-usa.com	11

FOR SALE

Discount Small Engines & Parts

Small engines & parts from Briggs & Stratton, Kohler, Tecumseh, Robin and more.
www.smallenginesuppliers.com

Also, look up your own parts and buy online at
www.smallenginepartssuppliers.com



MAXIMIZE YOUR ADVERTISING DOLLARS

Place a GCI Classified Ad
 Contact Lucas Coleman
 at 800-456-0707
lcoleman@gie.net

GOLF COURSE
INDUSTRY

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

FOR SALE: Maple Hills Golf Club Wittenburg, WI

- Restaurant/Bar/Banquets
- New Course & Clubhouse Updates
- Ho-Chunk Casino Stay & Play
- Includes FF&E
- \$899,000 (Just Reduced)

Contact: Eddy A. Dingman
eddy@nationalgolfandmarina.com
 847-987-6626



NATIONAL
GOLF & MARINA
PROPERTIES GROUP™

MILLER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES

We work with buyers and sellers of
 GOLF COURSES IN
 THE SOUTH EAST REGION
www.mmagolf.com
brett@mmagolf.com
 828-775-7765

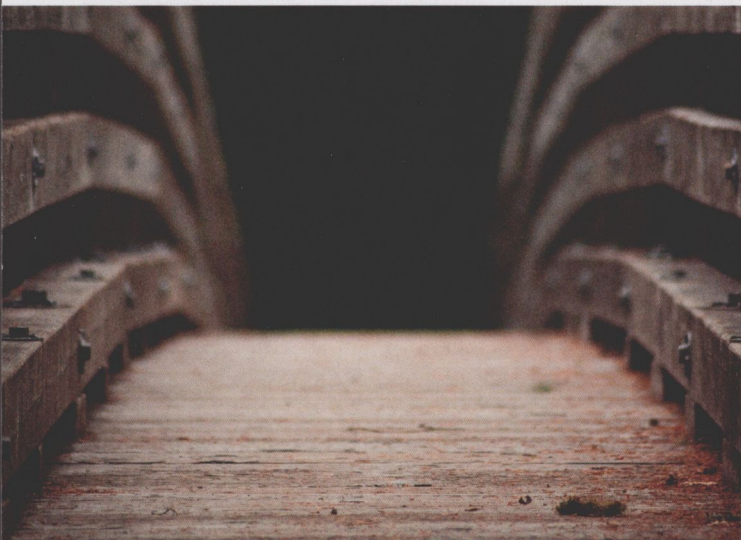
SEEDS

NATIVE SEEDS

Largest producer of native seeds in the Eastern U.S. Hundreds of species of grass and wildflower seeds for upland to wetland sites. Bioengineering material for riparian areas and erosion control. Contact **ERNST SEEDS** today.
www.ernstseed.com – 800/873-3321

READ THE DIGITAL EDITION OF GCI TODAY!

magazine.golfcourseindustry.com



The revolving door

I was intrigued by managing editor Matt LaWell's first *Golf Course Industry* cover story this month for several reasons. First, because it's an excellent examination of turfheads who leave the business and then come back. Second, he sources studies from outside of our industry in the piece, something none of us do often enough. Finally, he gets to the heart of the matter: some superintendents have a love/hate relationship with the profession.

The passion that attracts so many great people to the business is a double-edged sword. It motivates, stimulates and rewards ... but it also aggravates, infuriates and exhausts. Honestly, I'm surprised more people don't get burned out and leave for good. Plenty do bolt for something with less stress or more dollars, but many return. They are moths endlessly attracted by the flame.

Matt's story touches on several folks who did things outside of agronomy and then came back. In my experience, the revolving door between course management and sales is the most common example. Superintendents boil over like an unwatched pot on the stove and angrily decide to jump to sales where things are "easier," and you get weekends off and such. The only problem is sales comes with its own set of challenges.

I've always estimated that only about one in five turfheads who go into sales last five years. Sometimes they just miss growing grass or the job isn't what they thought it would be. But the most common reason is that they just aren't wired for it. Switching roles can cut to the very core of your self-image. We tend to define ourselves by our job and our peer relationships. When you change from being the hunted (customer) to being a hunter

(salesperson), it tends to be jarring.

It's relatively easy for a newly-minted superintendent-turned-salesperson to show up for chapter meetings, drop by with doughnuts and tweet about their new products. It's harder when the moment comes and you have to sit face-to-face with one of your former peers and slide an order across the table and ask them to sign it. That is where the rubber meets the road. Coffee, as they say, is for closers.

Also, let's be honest about the fact that our culture has historically treated salespeople as second-class citizens in the turf community. We're happy to take their sponsorship money for chapter meetings or go to the ballgame for free, but ultimately they're just "peddlers." I've talked to tons of superintendents who made the transition into sales and loss of identity is a big issue. Some deal with it and some do not.

Another thing to consider as you look longingly at the grass on the other side of the fence is that there are currently waaaaaaay too many people selling things in our happy little industry. The golf business has been in a slow deflation mode for 18 years and that's caused lots of musical chairs. The result has been more folks than ever hanging out a shingle to sell widgets and potions to golf courses.

Don't get me wrong: It's terrific to have educated, agronomic experts selling things. The problem for

anyone new to distribution is cutting through the noise and the clutter, and understanding that they're competing against top-notch professional salespeople with customer relationships that go back decades. And there's this: *Golf Course Industry* did a study about 18 months ago that showed most superintendents are intentionally consolidating their purchasing with three or fewer distributors. The days of "spreading it around" to keep a bunch of people happy are over.

So, people leave for more money, or better hours or less stress ... and then they come back. Because for some, the passion never really fades. It gets masked by the frustration and the anger and the hours. But it doesn't ever entirely get snuffed out.

As crazy as the job might make you, it also defines you and touches something primal inside you. You can hear everything growing on a warm spring morning. The smell of fresh-cut grass is heaven. You see Mother Nature's gifts right in front of you every day. You have amazing relationships with peers who share a common set of values. Your office is 150 acres of living, breathing beauty. Not an easy thing to give up, eh?

I hope you'll read Matt's piece and ponder on the lessons it contains. On those terrible, awful, very bad days when you want to chuck it all, remember there certainly is life off the golf course. The question is whether it's the life for you. **GCI**



PAT JONES is the editor-at-large of *Golf Course Industry*. He can be reached at pjones@gie.net.

PERFECT RELEASE OF NUTRIENTS

HELPS PRODUCE
PLAYING SURFACES

WITH IDEAL
CONDITIONS



Emerald Isle Solutions™

Count on Emerald Isle Solutions™ for economical liquid fertilizers that deliver results for all playing surfaces. The 18-3-6 and 12-0-12 products are easy to apply and provide a complete micronutrient package, including both quick- and slow-release nitrogen. You'll reduce labor time while achieving the conditions you want — all from a brand you know and trust! Learn more at LebanonTurf.com or call 1-800-233-0628.



Best of all Worlds®



EVERY BLADE COUNTS.

Choose Jacobsen® for a legendary cut you won't find anywhere else.

Jacobsen has been delivering the perfect cut for decades. That's because our professional turf equipment is loaded with industry-leading innovations that increase your productivity and ensure the healthiest turf possible. Like cutting systems that evenly follow terrain, technology that automatically adjusts the mowing speed when grass gets thick, and lightweight designs that protect your turf. It all leads to unmatched performance—the reason professionals choose Jacobsen.



GREENS

FAIRWAY

TRIM

ROUGH

Explore the lineup at www.jacobsen.com

JACOBSEN
Every Blade Counts.