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Dave Wheeler

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Did You Know?



The **cooling properties of turf** are so effective that temperatures over turf surfaces on a sunny day will be 10 to 14 degrees cooler than over concrete or asphalt.

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Winner of a national magazine award for the fourth year in a row



HERE'S WHAT'S ONLINE – golfcourseindustry.com

OTF INFO

Read about what was presented at the various seminars during the Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show in Columbus, including the Ohio Golf Summit.

AWARD WINNERS

To read profiles about GCSAA award winners Mark Esoda and Monroe Miller, who will be recognized at the Golf Industry Show in February, visit golfcourseindustry.com/09awardwinners.

RELAX

Preventing stress on the greens is the easy part. Take a moment to learn how to keep yourself from flaring up in tense situations.

EXTENDED HOURS

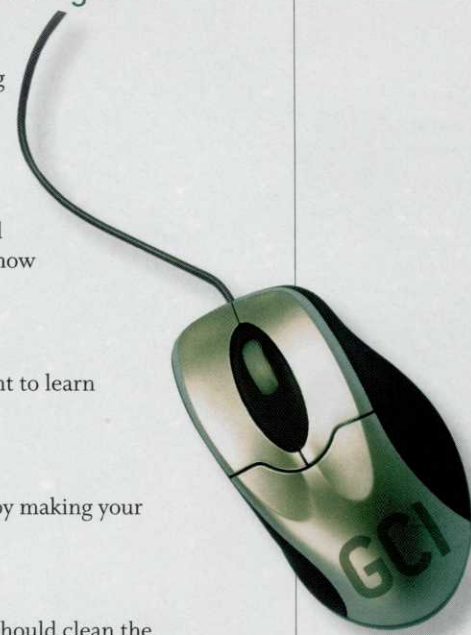
Newer mosquito control methods can help increase revenue by making your course and outdoor areas pest free for longer periods of time.

PONDER CLEANER WATER

Learn about the benefits of pond cleanup and how often you should clean the water features on your course.

EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:

Golf Course Industry reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those professionals responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset.



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John Walsh
Editor

DO YOUR PART

At Golf 20/20's annual forum last month, Joe Steranka, CEO of the PGA of America, left attendees with a thought-provoking question about growing the game: "If not us, who?"

The golf industry – the World Golf Foundation, the PGA of America, the PGA Tour, the Golf Channel, and equipment companies on the business and consumer sides of the industry, to name a few – knows it needs to reinvigorate the game. That's why, at the eighth Golf 20/20 forum, industry big-wigs put their minds together and presented a player development program called Get Golf Ready in 5 Days.

You've probably heard this before. The Play Golf America program the PGA of America launched several years ago is one that comes to mind. The Get Golf Ready organizers spent time explaining how this program is different from other programs launched in the past. In short, the program centers on a five-lesson package for the suggested price of \$99, plus an introduction to the rules and etiquette of the game. The World Golf Foundation will provide a \$1,000 stipend to participating facilities. (For more details, read the news story, "A course for action," at golfcourseindustry.com/acourseforaction.)

They've put thought into the program and have addressed the two biggest concerns facility operators have – retention and accountability. They have plans to keep new entrants to the game coming back to golf after their initial involvement with the Get Golf Ready program. Industry executives are serious about raising money to get this program up and running quickly. At press time, they've raised \$2.2 million, on their way to a goal of \$4 million in three years and \$7 million in five.

Joe Barrow, CEO of The First Tee, was the best speaker at Golf 20/20 because he was the most passionate and inspiring. He sparked a fire in the eyes of attendees, explaining how important this player development program is. He's driving the fund-raising efforts. It's clear he wants companies to donate money to the cause, but he's also confident about being held accountable for the money that's raised and how it's spent. The return on investment for this program won't happen for a while. Nonetheless, the investment is needed to help develop a base for the next generation of players, which is the future of your business.

Collectively, these organizations will make an impact on the industry that won't be seen or felt for years to come. But, they're acting now. They need to. They don't have much choice. The game, and the business, need a growth spurt.

However, the faction of industry executives can only do so much. The other faction is you – the people managing individual facilities throughout the country. Do you have a successful player development program at your facility? If you do, how effective are you at retaining new golfers? Is this an area of the business that's receiving the effort and attention it needs? Are all of the facility's employees and friends and family encouraged to golf? Jim Singerling, CEO of the CMAA, estimates 70 percent of employees at private clubs don't golf. That's about 190,000 people, or a quarter of Get Ready Golf's goal to develop 700,000 new golfers by 2013.

Superintendents might say player development isn't part of their job description, but the bottom line is that everybody at a facility needs to have the same mindset about constantly mining new golfers, getting them started and keeping them playing. This mentality will complement what the big boys are doing on a grander, national scale. Actually, if you think about it, your involvement is more important than the big boys' efforts because you're the ones executing their plan.

Top industry organizations are doing their part to grow the game. You have to do yours, too. Growing the game is a business-threatening issue industry leaders are taking seriously. How seriously are you taking it? **GCI**

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard.



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EDITORIAL

GIE Media, Inc.
4020 Kinross Lakes Pkwy, 2nd floor
Richfield, OH 44286
Phone: 800-456-0707
Fax: 330-659-0824

John Walsh

Editor
330-523-5361
jwalsh@gie.net

Marisa Palmieri

Senior editor
330-523-5375
mpalmieri@gie.net

ONLINE

Cindy Code

Director, interactive content
330-523-5331
ccode@gie.net

Heather Wood Taylor

Associate editor, interactive content
330-523-5348
htaylor@gie.net

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG
Golf Agronomy International

Raymond Davies, CGCS
CourseCo

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The Old Collier Golf Club

Laurence Hirsh
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Joe Livingston, CGCS
River Crest Country Club

Matt Rostal
Interlachen Country Club

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Need for optimism

I just got around to reading Pat Jones' October column, "Bummed out," on page 66. Talk about timing. Right after reading it, I had a meeting with my golf operations chairman that covered the very need for optimism and aggressive posturing now while the market (industry) is down. The column makes such good points that I took a copy of it to him for our meeting.

Mike Brown, CGCS

Starmount Forest Country Club
Greensboro, N.C.

Right on

Cheers to John Walsh and GCI. His recent editorial, "Lose the ego," (on page 6 in the October issue) hit the nail right on the head.

Paul DiBattista

Regional sales manager
Professional Turf Products
Belle Vernon, Pa.

Slow play

When I read Donn Hess' letter to the editor, "Slow play," on page 8 in the October issue, two things occurred to me that might help his, and others', slow-play issues. From our experience at Province Lake, rethinking and rebuilding our sets of tees to fit our players and then insisting they play the right sets of

tees kept our round times to about 4.5 hours, even on days that we had 220 to 240 people on the course. Our play actually had lower round times when we went from eight- to nine-minute tee time intervals. One of the courses in our area did even better with 10-minute times.

Arthur Little

Former owner
Province Lake Golf
Parsonsfield, Maine

Hard work pays off

Heather Wood's article, "Climbing the 'corporate' ladder," (<http://www.golfcourseindustry.com/corporateladder>) was a great article. I feel the same as Bill Davis does. Work hard. It does pay off. I wish some of the younger folks would listen to the old guys.

Bob Littleton

General manager
Elk River POA
Banner Elk, N.C.

Clarification

Golf course superintendent James Brown and his assistant Larry Wilk apply Pond Champs black dye at Purgatory Golf Course in Noblesville, Ind. The product information was unclear in the article "Limbo on the lakes" on page 68 in the August issue.

CALENDAR

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GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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SALES

GIE Media, Inc.
4020 Kinross Lakes Parkway, 2nd Floor
Richfield, OH 44286
Phone: 800-456-0707
Fax: 330-659-0823

Kevin Gilbride

Group publisher
330-523-5368

Amee Robbins

Account manager, West Coast
310-546-6060

Dave Szy

Account manager, Northeast
330-523-5338

Russell Warner

Account manager, Southeast
330-523-5385

Bonnie Velikonya

Classified sales
330-523-5322

Debbie Kean

Manager, books
330-523-5341

Maria Miller

Conferences manager
330-523-5373

GRAPHICS / PRODUCTION

Mark Rook, Creative director
Andrea Vagas, Managing art director
Helen Duerr, Production director
Samantha Gilbride, Production coordinator

CORPORATE STAFF

Richard Foster, Chairman and CEO
Chris Foster, President and COO
Dan Moreland, Executive vice president
Jami Childs, Director, business resources and IT
Kelly Rook, Manager, accounting department
Melody Berendt, Circulation director

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