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From big expectations for the New Year to disappointment with the current assistant superintendent pool, here's how readers see the state of the industry.



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How SNAG Golf and SNAG Futbol can increase young people's interest in golf.

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“Forget the golf economy. What are you and I going to do in 2015 to make the year a resounding success?”

SETH JONES, *Editor-in-Chief*

Controlling what I can control

Introspection isn't my specialty, but it seems like lately I've been doing a lot of it. ¶ It's surely the new year that has me pondering the past, present and future. Or, some might just accuse me of being a worrier — I had to earn all this gray hair somehow, right? Maybe it's because this issue is my 50th working as the editor-in-chief of *Golfdom*, a landmark I'm proud of. ¶ Or maybe it's our cover story, and one specific question: how do you feel the golf economy will be in 2015?

I called some heavy hitters in the industry to ask them their thoughts, and you can read all their responses starting on page 20 of this issue. It seems that not only are *Golfdom*'s readers optimistic for 2015, but the industry big-wigs I spoke with are as well.

But this got me thinking about 2015. And that got me worrying: What if 2015 is worse than 2014?

Then I decided, heck, I already know what will happen in 2015: Courses will open and courses will close, people will take up the game and people will quit the game, people will be hired and people will be fired.

And at the end of it all, if you're still a loyal reader of this magazine in 2016 (plan on it), if I'm still your loyal editor of this magazine (plan on it), then that will mean we survived another year working in this amazing business of golf.

And that, my friends, is a gift.

We have no control over what the national economy does, but we do control what we're trying to accomplish, and how we work toward that goal.

Forget the golf economy. What are you and I going to do in 2015 to make the year a resounding success?

I'll tell you a few of my goals I want to accomplish in 2015 to make it a successful year:

Go north. Recently I saw on Facebook a map of the U.S. where you can click all the states you've visited and share it with friends. I rarely post on Facebook, but I thought that sounded fun, so I clicked all the states I've visited. I realized that I've covered pretty much all of the U.S.... with the exception of Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota and South Dakota.

I need to remedy that, and I'm doing it in 2015. If you're in one of those states and think I should come to your

course, let me know, and I'll see if I can make it happen.

Even better: I need to hit a chapter meeting up that way.

Make more friends. As I roam around the country, I'm fortunate to meet a lot of cool, fun people. I love meeting new people, especially those with similar interests.

I hope to meet more of *Golfdom*'s readers and make some new friends along the way. I love it when I'm sitting at a nationally televised Kansas University basketball game and get a text from a superintendent (you know who you are) asking me if I'm at the game, and when we're going to catch a game together. Or being invited to a 40th birthday party (you know who you are.) Or getting an email with about a dozen exclamation points, letting me know you just got your dream superintendent gig (you know who you are.)

So, I want to make more friends. Laugh. Tell stories. And most important: make new stories.

Impress you. I want to have an issue this year that blows your mind. Maybe it's a big interview, or a business story. Maybe it's a course profile. I want it all to come together and have a story that elicits responses from around the country, gets a conversation going, gets people thinking, maybe even changing.

That's not too much to ask of myself, right?

What are your goals for 2015? Let's discuss, and soon.

Email Jones at:
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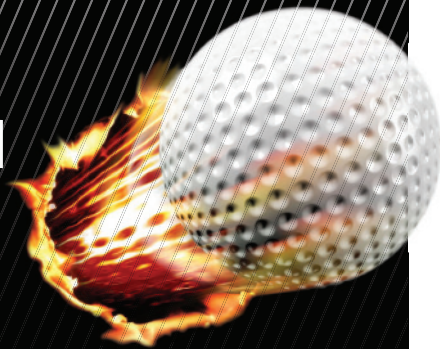


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Starter

NEWS, NOTES AND QUOTES



// A SUPER'S PERSPECTIVE



A group photo of attendees of the 2014 Syngenta Business Institute, held recently in Winston-Salem, N.C.

INSIDE THE 2014 SYNGENTA BUSINESS INSTITUTE

BY DAVID SOLTVEDT, CGCS, GIANTS RIDGE GOLF & SKI RESORT

➔ Superintendents from around the country were once again both treated and challenged at the Syngenta Business Institute, held at the beautiful Graylyn International Conference Center in Winston-Salem, N.C.

The program, developed and lead by the nationally ranked Wake Forest University School of Business faculty, was a rewarding experience for all attendees. Now in its sixth year, this interactive and discussion-oriented program is informative and provides a first-class learning opportunity that has become highly coveted within the golf course industry.

The event kicked off with Ken Middaugh, Ph.D., Director of the Executive Institute at the Wake Forest School of Business, teaching financial management and giving attendees a much broader view of club and course financial documents. The next session,

taught by Amy Wallis, Ph.D., was addressed challenges we face on a daily basis as we lead a generationally diverse team. The session was especially helpful for those with a multi-generational or culturally diverse staff.

Day two offered even more insight for the superintendents as the art of negotiations was addressed. Bill Davis, Ph.D., took attendees through two case studies where they were able to practice their newly learned skills.

"Tools for Managing Employees," gave attendees applicable examples of challenges faced along with practical solutions. Leading, versus managing, employees was also discussed.

It was a truly a special week for all involved. The bonds and relationships created among attendees coupled with the knowledge gathered prove this event is second to none within the industry.

// JOB CHANGES

GCSAA PARTS WAYS WITH COO

GCSAA posted on its website in mid-January that Matt Shatto, the Chief Operating Officer of the association, was no longer working for the association.

Shatto was with the association for only a year. GCSAA's previous COO, Richard Konzem, had a similarly short stint with the organization. As of press time, no further details, or future plans, were revealed in regard to the COO position.

// DREAM DESIGN

IF YOU BUILD IT...

Mike Keiser, the founder of Bandon Dunes Golf Resort, announced that David Kidd was hired to design the next course at his project in Northern Wisconsin, Sand Valley Golf Resort.

Kidd's design, the second of at least four at the resort, will break ground this Spring and is scheduled to open for play in Summer 2018. The Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw designed first course, to be named Sand Valley, is currently under construction and will open in Summer 2017.

This will be the first time Keiser and Kidd have teamed up since 1999 when they opened Bandon Dunes.

// NEW ADDITION

CONTROL SOLUTIONS ADDS SHIPP

Control Solutions, parent company of Quali-Pro, introduced Matt Shipp as their new vice president of Marketing. In his role, Shipp will be responsible for the marketing, product development and regulatory groups.

Shipp started his career as an R&D Scientist for Monsanto and later gained experience at positions with Evonik Goldschmidt and the Wilbur-Ellis Company. Most recently, he was business director for North America at Lamberti USA.

Shipp holds a B.S. in Agronomy with an M.S. in Weed Science. "With almost 20 years in the industry, his skills will prove invaluable to the organization," Mark Boyd, President and founder of CSI, says.



// AWARD SEASON

Vittum's voicemail

➔ Patricia J. Vittum, Ph.D., professor at University of Massachusetts' Stockbridge School of Agriculture, missed a call from Kimberly Erusha, Ph.D., managing director of the USGA Green Section, in late November. She was puzzled by the message. When Vittum returned the call, Erusha told her some exciting news: that she was to be honored with the United States Golf Association (USGA) 2015 USGA Green Section Award.

The award, presented annually since 1961, celebrates an individual's service to the game of golf through his or her work with turfgrass.

"I was in shock, I never saw it coming," Vittum says.

Vittum tells *Golfdom* that she was humbled that the USGA had recognized the importance of her research. "Anytime I get on email I see messages from people I haven't heard from in awhile. It's been like a reunion"

Vittum joined the UMass staff in 1980 and has been a professor since

2000. She has conducted research at the Stockbridge School of Agriculture on the biology and control of turfgrass insects and the effectiveness of biological-control methods. She also served on the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Committee from 2002 to 2008.

She is currently serving as the interim director of UMass Amherst's Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment, UMass Extension, and the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station. When she returns to research she will be focusing on the management of the annual bluegrass weevil.

"Dr. Vittum has the unique ability to be a hands-on researcher who can effectively communicate her work with practical advice for the field practitioner," Erusha says. "Her contributions to the study of turfgrass insects have helped to establish industry standards and best management practices."

// GREEN THUMBS

GCSAA, GOLF DIGEST NAME ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD WINNERS

The GCSAA and *Golf Digest* recognized 16 superintendents, with Gary Ingram, CGCS at Metropolitan Golf Links in Oakland, Calif., named the overall winner of the 2014 Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards.

Ingram, in his 12th year as director of agronomy for Metropolitan Golf Links, claimed the national public listing honor along with the overall award for his mastery of his modest budget. He removed 18.5 acres of maintained turf and created target greens on the practice range instead of wall-to-wall turf. Both of these decisions lead to a cut in the course's annual water usage by more than 17 million gallons.

Off the course, Ingram is president of the GCSA of Northern California and he sits on the board of a non-profit, the



Gary Ingram

Oakland Turfgrass Education Initiative (OTEI). OTEI introduces inner-city Oakland high school students to the game of golf through field trips and study tours, provides after-school programs and offers lessons on environmental science.

"I feel lucky. I am blessed to have the opportunity to make a difference and help others in this community enjoy this golf facility," Ingram says.

Mike Crawford, CGCS at TPC Sugarloaf in Duluth, Ga., was named the winner in the national private category and Rocky Ebelhar, assistant superintendent at TPC Louisiana in Avondale, La., took home top honors in the national resort category.

// SCHOOL IS COOL

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS TO FURTHER THEIR EDUCATION

Michael Scully, superintendent at Valley Crest Creekside GC in Modesto, Calif., and Daniel L. Rootes Jr., superintendent at Ponderosa Butte GC in Colstrip, Mont., were both awarded \$2,500 scholarships from Environmental Science, a division of Bayer CropScience LP, to learn more about plant health.

The Plant Health Scholarship is one of the various segments of the Healthy Turf, Healthy Tomorrow program Bayer developed for superintendents in collaboration with the GCSAA and the Environmental Institute for Golf.

//TEACH A MAN TO FISH

FIRST GREEN AWARDED \$112,250 GRANT FROM USGA

First Green has been awarded a \$112,250 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) grant by the United States Golf Association (USGA) for 2015. The grant is funded by the USGA's partnership with Chevron and designed to encourage students in science, technology, engineering and math disciplines through the world of golf.

"The goal of the Chevron-USGA partnership and our Eagles for Education funding is to make STEM more fun and engaging through the game of golf," said Dr. Kimberly S. Erusha, Managing Director of the USGA Green Section. "The First Green's educational and environmental outreach programs on the golf course have shown tremendous success supporting this objective, for which we are extremely grateful."

First Green has been providing STEM learning since 1997 and is an environmental education outreach program. Superintendents host field trips on golf courses as a learning lab for hands-on activities like testing water quality, collecting soil samples, identifying plants and assisting in streambed renovation.

In 2013 and 2014, USGA-Chevron grants — totaling \$255,750 — funded expansion of First Green to Oregon and the launch of First Green in Northern and Southern California. It also enabled First Green to respond to growing interest in the program across the country, as well as in Canada.

//GOLFDOM WISDOM

That sure didn't look like a third-string quarterback to us. Sorry, Ducks.

#golfdomwisdom #O-H-I-O

//MULLIGAN

A Two-Stroke Penalty

In the October issue of *Golfdom* we incorrectly identified Doug Bechtel, director of Audubon International, as Jim Coker of R&R Products. We apologize to both of you gents.

//THAT-A-KID

GOLFDOM EDITOR ADDS ANOTHER HONOR



Anthony Williams, CGCS, CGM, director of grounds at Stone Mountain (Ga.) GC, took home the Superintendent of the Year award from the Georgia GCSA. Williams, the Environmental Editor for *Golfdom*, was presented the award recently at the association's annual awards banquet.

Simply attending the ceremony was a success for Williams after facing personal

challenges throughout last year. He lost his older brother to a heart attack in August and then the following month his wife of 29 years, Phyllis, suffered a major heart attack. Just 18 days later, Williams himself collapsed and required emergency surgery to replace an aortic valve and repair an aneurysm.

"God was good and rehab went well for Phyllis and I," Williams told the group. "I have never been so blessed to be with you all and soak it all in."



Anthony and Phyllis Williams

Williams is a past-president of the Georgia GCSA and has held a seat on their board of directors since 2001. His achievements also reach a national scale. The GCSAA recognized him with their 2014 Excellence in Government Relations Award and the 2010 President's Award for Environmental Stewardship. In 2006, GCSAA and *Golf Digest* named him the overall winner of the Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards. He also authored the book, "The Environmental Toolkit," and has written several stories for *Golfdom*.

THEY SAID IT

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

To newlywed Army Captains Natalie and Edward Mallue, after apologizing that his play forced the couple's wedding to be moved from the 16th tee box at the Kaneohe (Hawaii) Klipper GC, according to ABC News.

"If I had skipped the 16th hole I would have shot a 79."

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Golfdom Gallery



1 Fancy flags We had these good looking flags on all 18 holes of the Palmer course at Reunion Resort. They'll look good framed in our office, too.

2 Big hitter, long *Golfdom's* digital media content producer Joelle Harms gives it a rip during the scramble tournament.

3 Colorado connection We met (L to R) Glenn Samuelson (CC of Colorado, Colorado Springs, Colo.), Derek Rose (Eagle Ranch GC, Eagle, Colo.) and Pete Tescher (Golf Granby Ranch, Granby, Colo.) while waiting in line for beers at Augusta National back in April. We liked their style so much, we brought all three of them to the Summit. Based on this pic, you can see why.

4 The gang's all here Work is so much easier when you work with friends. It was great to have *Golfdom* columnists Mark Woodward, Joel Jackson, Karl Danneberger, Ph.D., and Clark Throssell, Ph.D. (with *Golfdom* EIC Seth Jones, center) make the trip to the 2014 *Golfdom* Summit.

5 Barbecue buds Bob Cook (Disney's Magnolia and Oaks Courses, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.), Steve Nichols (Soil Technologies Corp.) and Josh Lewis (Chambers Bay, University Place, Wash.) share a laugh during the annual post-golf barbecue.

6 From the back tees, to the back porch Joel Jackson, CGCS-Retired, ponders his next column topic as his tee shot sails into the condos. That wasn't a *Golfdom* logo ball, was it, Joel?



PHOTOS BY: JOELLE HARMS (1, 4, 6, 10-12); SETH JONES (3, 7, 9)

Golfdom Gallery



7 Coffee break In-between sessions, Kyle Callahan (Victoria National GC, Newburgh, Ind.), Phil Desbrow (Lakewood CC, Rockville, Md.), Matt Powell (Muirfield Village, Dublin, Ohio), Jason Wolf (Lincoln Hills GC, Lincoln, Calif.), Brian White (Wichita CC, Wichita, Kan.), David Groelle, CGCS (Royal Melbourne CC, Long Grove, Ill.) and Ryan Bourne (Terradyne CC, Andover, Kan.), grab a cup o' joe.



8 Snow birds Turfco's Scott Kinkead and *Golfdom*'s Pat Roberts enjoyed the warm Florida weather as much as possible... after all, Minnesota and Ohio, respectively, is where these two call home.



9 Friendly neighbors Matt Neff (Wedgewood G&CC, Powell, Ohio) and Matt Powell are practically neighbors... but it takes an event like the *Golfdom* Summit to afford these guys an opportunity to actually kick back and hang out for a little bit.



10 Poolside drinks Brian White, Conrad Broussard, CGCS (The Clubs at St. James Plantation, Southport, N.C.), Ryan Bourne and Jackson Reiswig (Coral Creek Club, Placida, Fla.) interrupted trading Netflix suggestions for this photo. Broussard swears by the TV series "Lost."



11 Be Royal Mitch Leininger (Shingle Creek GC, Orlando, Fla.), Ryan Bockmuller (North Coast Media), Jones, Rickey Craig (Shingle Creek GC), Jim Rattigan (Schuylkill CC, Orwigsburg, Pa.), Steven Wright, CGCS (Boca Woods CC, Boca Raton, Fla.) were all happy that Seth finally got some good use out of that Royals jersey last year.



12 Putt for dough Our pal David Hay, CGCS (Indian Wells CC, Indian Wells, Calif.), helps his playing partners line up a putt.



"For many people hunting... is in their blood. Most superintendents will tell you the same thing about why they are a superintendent — it's in their blood."

MARK WOODWARD, *Contributing Editor*

Life away from the golf course

Most superintendents will tell you that one of the main reasons they got into the golf industry is because they enjoy being in the outdoors and not being confined to an office all day. To take this concept a step further, many also participate in outdoor activities like sports, hiking, fishing and hunting.

I know many superintendents who like to hunt. I asked my son Matt what it is that makes hunting so appealing, especially for people like superintendents who spend the vast majority of their time in the great outdoors on their golf courses. I asked him because he has taken his hunting to the next level in that he has become a well known full-time outfitter and hunting guide. Matt is a graduate of Penn State University's Turfgrass Management Program and a former superintendent.

He reminded me that all of us, whether we hunt or not, come from ancestors who had to hunt to survive or we wouldn't be here right now. For many people, hunting is something that lives in their souls, it's in their blood. Most superintendents will tell you the same thing about why they are a superintendent — it's in their blood.

In modern times we have

the convenience of going to the grocery store and buying our meats and vegetables, but do we really know where our food is coming from? Most people don't even think about this.

Hunters and farmers have that knowledge.

People who aren't hunters or are against hunting get caught up in the actual process of hunting and killing. What they don't think about is that hunters are not the ones who decide who hunts in a particular region, or the number of tags issued or the species to be hunted in those areas of the United States. These decisions are made by the fish and game departments in each state.

And there are reasons for this. In many areas wildlife population management



Matt Woodward with a desert bighorn sheep he shot last month.

is critical for the long-term health of a particular species. Hunting a scientifically determined number of animals will actually make the rest of the herd stronger. And just like with superintendents and the environment, the vast majority of hunters have an immense respect for this pasture.

Another important benefit for superintendents who are hunters; hunting provides them a way to find the balance in their lives that I have preached about for years. As we all know, being a superin-

tendent has its share of pressure and everyone needs to have a way to take their mind off their job, even if it's just for a few days each hunting season.

My son tells me that he knew when he was 18 that he would never work in a job with a roof over his head. Many superintendents will tell you the same thing. His life as an outfitter is full of fantastic experiences that most people will never have the opportunity to experience. He is able to put himself in fantastic places around the U.S., Canada and Mexico as he does his job. Again, if you think about this concept, we as superintendents have jobs that also put us in fantastic places (golf courses), and consequently we also have fantastic experiences that most people don't get to enjoy.

Hunting is just one outlet that superintendents enjoy away from their jobs. There are obviously many others. Just last year, this magazine ran a classic car on its cover as another example of an activity that provides superintendents with a way to enjoy themselves off the course.

My point is, superintendents should partake in a wide variety of activities away from their golf courses to maintain that precious work-life-family balance.

Mark Woodward is a senior vice president for OB Sports, principal of Damarco Golf, president of Mark Woodward and Associates and a contributing editor for *Golfdom*. He can be reached at mwoodward@obsports.com.

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"I feel there may be a crisis coming every time I post an open position. It sometimes takes months to fill a spot, and many times we don't get any replies to open positions."

STEVEN WRIGHT, CGCS, director of golf course/landscape operations, Boca West CC, Boca Raton, Fla.

Help wanted... again

Here I go again, writing another job description for an assistant superintendent. It's a constant event, done multiple times in the last year or two. I guess it should be expected at a private 72-hole country club.

Over three decades I've worked primarily at private clubs in Florida and South Carolina. I work with a great group of guys managing four courses, two designed by Palmer, two by Dye and a Fazio layout.

Each of our courses employ a superintendent, assistant, second assistant and supporting staff. The club's commitment to excellence requires this type of staffing. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Our current position was created when a young assistant decided it was time to leave the business. He was a good one with a great future. We turned to the second assistant and he gladly accepted the job. A week later came his resignation letter. He's off to work at another course

for a bit more in salary but a shorter drive. Poached again! This has happened often during my 12 years in this position, mainly because a couple hundred golf courses are nearby.

Before I post a position I check out the various job boards: GCSAA, Turfnet and the Carolinas GCSA. Between these three sites there were 159 open position announcements for assistants, second assistants and assistants-in-training. I'm not sure if this number is higher than normal, but it's disturbing.

I found only 30 résumés on one of the sites, and many were posted in multiple locations or for all three positions. Where are the assistants? And where will the next group of golf course management

leaders come from?

I feel there may be a crisis coming every time I post an open position. It sometimes takes months to fill a spot, and many times we don't get any replies to open position announcements. (*Editor's note: for more on this, see page 24.*)

Not long ago the industry was concerned about too many students in turf programs and not enough jobs. Our concerns were valid then, but have things shifted too far the other way? Obviously the economy caused a significant adjustment. Universities dropped their turf programs or took them online. Many students chose a different path.

Maybe the problem is salary. Many superintendents believe that assistants aren't

paid enough. Let's face it; anyone with a four-year degree has the debt that goes with it. The highest salary I found on job boards was \$47,000 to \$53,000. Pretty good, if you have the skill set required.

The lowest was \$25,000 to \$27,000. Obviously, the location of these jobs has something to do with these salaries. With this said, are these wages enough for the long hours, weekends, holidays and other issues that tend to plague our industry?

Are there other reasons? Perhaps assistants feel disconnected from the profession. Can we do a better job helping them see the bigger picture of this career? Working without continuing education opportunities, networking with peers and a life away from work is a recipe for disaster.

Many industries have had to make big adjustments to remain competitive, and we know our industry can't rely on the Internet to get our job done. These problems point to a need for some necessary adjustments by clubs and superintendents regarding key staff members. I've heard of a few clubs exploring options and creating optimum opportunities for assistants. Superintendents should be on board with ideas and programs that can make a real difference to the next generation of superintendents.

Steven Wright, CGCS, is director of golf course/landscape operations at Boca West CC in Boca Raton, Fla. This is his first column for *Golfdom*. He can be reached at swright@bocawestcc.org or followed at [@wrightsteve19](https://twitter.com/wrightsteve19).



“Col. Morley... advocated for the title of golf course manager so as to put the greenkeeper on equal footing with the clubhouse manager in the eyes of the membership and the public in general.”

MATT NEFF, assistant superintendent,
Wedgewood G&CC, Powell, Ohio

What's in a name?

Head golf course superintendent, director of golf course and grounds maintenance, director of agronomy. First assistant, second assistant, senior assistant, junior assistant, assistant-in-training.

There are now dozens of titles used to describe the roles of superintendents and their assistants. Our job titles are limited only by our, or our employer's, imagination.

And to think that at the turn of the 20th century, when the game of golf was starting to gain momentum in the U.S., we were known simply as greenkeepers or foremen. The majority of our brethren in Great Britain and Ireland have retained the greenkeeper title in some iteration to this day. But in true American fashion, we decided we needed to improve upon it whether we needed to or not.

I've always wondered about this shift in job title, and inadvertently came across the answer while I was reading some articles from the 1930s on another topic on the Turfgrass Information File. (Right about now you're wondering what kind of dork sits

around on a Saturday reading 80-year-old turf articles. What can I say? I'm alarmingly one dimensional.)

The idea to transition from greenkeeper to superintendent seems to have started in 1930 or 1931. In the June 1931 issue of *The National Greenkeeper*, Col. John Morley, the founder of the National Association of Greenkeepers of America, which was the precursor to today's GCSAA, wrote an editorial on the topic. In it he stated that he had, “received a number of letters from several of (the association's) leading greenkeepers relative to the advisability of changing the name of our profession from greenkeeper to that of superintendent of golf courses.”

He goes on to say that while he was in favor of changing the title to “a more appropriate scientific word,” he was not in favor of the

term superintendent. He ends up advocating for the title of golf course manager so as to put the greenkeeper on equal footing with the clubhouse manager in the eyes of the membership and the public in general.

Several officers and district vice-presidents of NAGA weighed in with their opinions in the July 1931 issue of *The National Greenkeeper*, with the majority being against the change in terminology for various reasons, but most of the arguments essentially came down to tradition. Huge shocker, right? Reticence to change in golf based on tradition — hard to believe, but it's apparently happened.

While there seems to be a slight increase in the use of the term “superintendent” after this editorial, “greenkeeper” still appears to be the term used most often in industry publications and the

mainstream press until the late '30s.

In 1938, the NAGA changed its name to the Greenkeeping Superintendents Association. A cursory review of the literature from 1937 through the early '40s shows a pronounced increase in use of the term “golf course superintendent” but “greenkeeper” is still the prevalent term.

Many local chapters were approving the switch in terminology, but according to editorials from the period, it was a somewhat divisive issue and may have even prompted the newly renamed National to choose a name that would appease both sides.

By the early '50s, it appears from the literature that “golf course superintendent” and “greenkeeping superintendent” were the commonly accepted terms. Reflecting this change in popular terminology, the GSA, after having changed its name again in 1949 to the National Association of Greenkeeping Superintendents, changed for the final time in 1951 to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Whatever you want to call it, the job remains the same. It's amazing how similar the issues and challenges of the 21st century superintendent are to those of the 1930s greenkeeper.

One thing is for sure: 80 years later we're still all cut from the same cloth regardless of what we call ourselves.

Matt Neff (mneff4@yahoo.com) is assistant superintendent at Wedgewood G&CC in Powell, Ohio.

The Golfdom



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Forecasting what could impact the immediate and long-term future of golf is not an uncommon concept for this publication. ¶ In the January 1975 issue of *Golfdom*, Jerry Claussen, a consultant for the National Golf Foundation's Rocky Mountain Region, took a stab at what he thought were 10 substantial developments in the game of golf at the time. ¶ Forty years later some are still being debated and others are no longer relevant, from the fight against slow play to the automation and mechanization of golf operations. ¶ If we look 40 years into the future of golf, will any of these still be relevant to the industry? To read Claussen's full article and see how many of his 10 trends are still relevant, visit golfdom.com/exclusive.

The next 25 years

BY JERRY CLAUSSEN, NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION CONSULTANT, ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

Whatever happened to colored sand in bunkers, synthetic grass for greens and lighting of full-length courses?

These were ideas in past years presented by persons in the golf industry that did not, for one reason or another, get far. But there are plenty of new trends and ideas that are changing the business of golf every day.

We see signs everywhere. The PGA Tour competes with tennis for TV time. The price of fertilizer and chemicals has doubled this year. Russia will soon have its first golf course.

There are only a few clues to what is happening. Here are some of the major trends in golf course development and operation that are significant.

Fighting slow play. A strong movement is spreading to find a remedy for slow play that has been choking our business courses for years.

The National Golf Foundation made slow play a high priority about six years ago with a humorous promotion campaign using "Speedy" and "Mrs. Speedy," depicted by rabbits.

A starting time system to utilize

all of the course for more hours, with maximum time for playing each nine, was sent to every course. The attempt was commendable, but the results not very noticeable. Then, one by one, golf industry leaders started trumpeting the need for speedier play. Finally, the idea is catching on. Even PGA officials have been tough as they threaten and occasionally levy penalties on slow players.

Many public course operators have picked up ideas for faster play. Most now have 150-yard markers for faster club selection, start nine-hole players from the 10th tee when it is open, use rangers and teach rules and etiquette to beginning classes.

More are using realistic spacing of starting times to avoid jam-ups, reminder signs in the pro shop, on the course, and even on the scorecards suggesting how much it should take to play each hole, nine and 18.

An example of a sign is on the seventh tee of Brookhaven Country Club, a 54-hole club near Dallas: "Par for playing time to this tee should be one

hour and 33 minutes. How is your score today? Everyone enjoys the game more when play moves on time. We appreciate your help. Thanks... Your Board of Directors."

A more expensive game. Golf has been called the "game of a lifetime." It may be open to almost anyone of any age, but at what price? Inflation is hurting the business.

Private membership clubs have been trying desperately to keep ahead of cost increases. Many are raising dues, imposing house minimum charges, assessing members for losses, raising prices for food, beverage and other services, and/or seeking more outside party business. Increases in the minimum wage, higher costs for food and other services, plus rising taxes, have forced these increases. We have seen monthly dues go from \$70 to \$90 at one club, \$38.50 to \$45 at another, and the imposition of a \$20 per month house minimum charge at another in the Denver area.



Golfdom Summit

2014
Highlights

"I had an absolute blast and learned more at the Summit than at any other sort of conference I have ever been to. The format of the event is spot-on."

—BRIAN PALMER, SHOREACRES, LAKE BLUFF, IL

"It was an honor to attend such a top-rate, first class function. The Summit had a great flow to it with the short, to-the-point boardroom presentations, the one-on-one vendor meetings and the interaction I was able to have with fellow professionals in the industry."

—TOM KAPLUN, NORTH HEMPSTEAD COUNTRY CLUB,
PORT WASHINGTON, NY



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BY SETH JONES AND GRANT B. GANNON

This is the year, it seems. The year the economy starts to really bounce back, the year golf's grow-the-game programs start taking hold.

But it's probably not the year you find the assistant superintendent of your dreams.

In late December and early January we surveyed our readers, asking 16 multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions. We learned a lot about the industry from the 591 responses we received. Here are the results of those questions, with a few stashed away for future use.

We learned that readers are confident that the national economy will grow in 2015 (see page 21),

that they don't believe oversized golf cups will help the game (see page 23) and that the ability to retire is their biggest concern (29 percent), trumping stress (18 percent) and job security (15 percent).

We were also excited to see another uptick in our own numbers: 54 percent of respondents said *Golfdom* was their favorite turf magazine. That's up from 45 percent two years ago, and 51 percent last year. Sure, it was our own survey, but we like the direction that number is going.

Read on to see how the most valued readership in golf sees 2015, from the economy to their most important tools.

2015: LET'S DO THIS

Confidence in the economy jumps, remains steady in the facility

Jeff Leuzinger, sales manager for Illinois-based Healthy Grow, travels the country to visit with superintendents. A former superintendent himself, he might call Illinois home, but his office is the road.



Jeff Leuzinger

And he likes what he's seeing out there. "I'm very optimistic for 2015. I see more activity and more rounds played and I see clubs more willing to spend money," Leuzinger says. "Not new courses, but the courses that are operating are looking to invest in their courses."

One key indicator he sees is in fairways hit. No, not a driving statistic, but as an application area. The fairways are back in play, he says. The survey seems to echo that sentiment, with 29 percent of respondents saying their maintenance budget has increased for 2015.

"I see more superintendents interested in using our products on fairways," he says. "That hasn't been the case in the last couple years."

It seemed that everyone we talked to — and 50 percent of our readers — are optimistic that the national economy will

improve in 2015. That's up from only 31 percent last year.

Tim Kreger, executive director of the Carolinas GCSA, was enjoying a five-course meal when we contacted him to ask the question.

"Five-course" as in five golf course maintenance crews celebrating the holidays together with a barbecue. Clearly, his mood was jovial, perhaps a combination of the biggest Carolinas Conference and Show ever, along with the fun atmosphere of getting so many maintenance workers together.

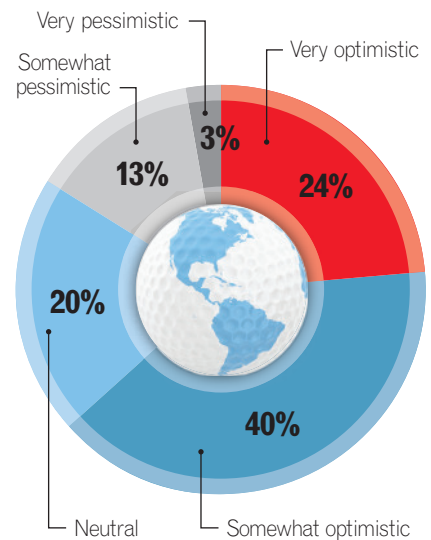


Tim Kreger

"Things are looking pretty positive — I feel like all the Tier 4 decisions have been made and are done with, I think rounds are headed upwards and there's some reconstruction and a couple new course constructions in our area," Kreger says. "And mostly I'm looking forward to a good spring in 2015."

Incoming GCSAA president John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, director of golf course management, Preakness Hills CC, Wayne, N.J., says he's also optimistic, sensing more money available at clubs for more

OVERALL, HOW OPTIMISTIC ARE YOU ABOUT THE ECONOMIC HEALTH OF YOUR FACILITY?



capital improvements.

"There are a lot of initiatives that the allied (golf) groups are working on, a lot of programs dedicated to the growth of golf that are gaining traction," O'Keefe says. "As far as GCSAA, I don't see an increase in membership, maybe a slight decline, but we're almost flat. The important thing is we've leveled out."



John J. O'Keefe

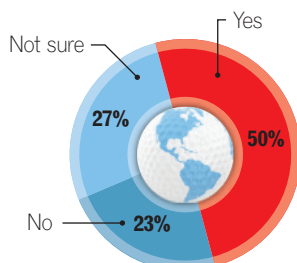
At GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans says he'd check the "somewhat optimistic" box in our survey.

"I do look at things glass-half-full," Evans says, "but I think there are going to be some opportunities out there in 2015."

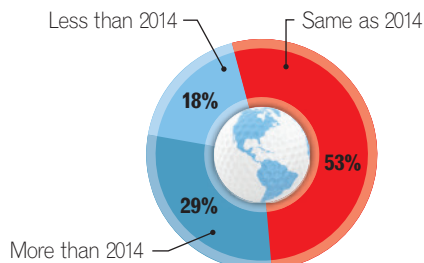
One of those early opportunities for

Continued on page 22

DO YOU THINK THE NATIONAL ECONOMY WILL IMPROVE IN 2015?



WHAT DOES YOUR MAINTENANCE BUDGET LOOK LIKE FOR 2015?



Continued from page 21

Evans and the GCSAA will be the 2015 Golf Industry Show, which hits San Antonio for the first time since 1978. (For more on his expectations on the 2015 GIS, see sidebar.)



Rhett Evans

"We certainly are going to be met with our fair share of challenges... I don't see the amount of rounds and traditional golf picking up, but I do think golf pros are having some clubs adopt the initiatives that are under way — whether that be changing the way their business model looks, junior golf leagues, catering to families, etc.," he says.

David Withers, president of Jacobsen, was on his way to the Sports Turf Managers show in Denver when we reached him. He counts himself as "slightly optimistic."

"If the U.S. economy continues on its path of recovery and we can get a nice early spring as we did in 2013, we could see more money being allocated for maintenance equipment," he says. "The possibility of a resurgent Tiger Woods could also have a positive impact on the industry, with his success typically bringing more people into the game."

Steve Mona, CEO of the World Golf Foundation, says he's optimistic. In typical Steve Mona form, he gives three reasons why: a better spring, a better economy and a nicer news media.

"The chances are pretty much in our favor that we'll have a better spring (golf weather) than we did in 2014," Mona says.



Steve Mona

"In 2014 much of the country had a terrible spring, which really set us back from a participation standpoint.

"Another reason is we had a really tough media cycle in 2014, in the way the media portrayed the health of golf. That may not have any direct influence on the success of a facility, but I do believe perception influences behavior," he says. "A negative media cycle didn't do anyone any good, trust me on that.

"The third one — and this is hard to judge, I'll admit... but we've been on a good run, from an overall economy standpoint. Look at the stock market. Look at the price of gas," Mona says. "Generally speaking, the economy will be favorable toward golf. A lot of golf participation gets fueled by how people feel about their general economic condition."

Healthy Grow's Leuzinger, who recently attended the 2014 *Golfdom* Summit, says he feels strongly that 2015 will be a good year based on what his clients are telling him.

"I ask (superintendents) the same question you're asking me: how does your 2015 look?" he says. "They say the same thing I'm saying... they think 2015 is going to be a good year."



David Withers

BIG EXPECTATIONS FOR SAN ANTONIO GIS

Is everything bigger in Texas?

The GCSAA has something special, it hopes, with the Golf Industry Show returning to San Antonio. It'll be the first time since 1978 that the show has been there, bringing an element of freshness. And the association is excited that the hotels are within walking distance of the convention center, which will make it easier for networking, GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans says.

"Our biggest indicator of how the year is going to be is the Golf Industry Show, it sets the stage for 2015," Evans says. "Right now in December (2014) I already have an indicator of what 2015 will look like."

Everything in Texas is bigger, and Evans is hoping that will include the GIS... but it will be close. That indicator shows currently a GIS that will rival the size of the 2014 show in Orlando.

Still, the fact that the 2015 GIS is nearing the size of the 2014 Orlando show is a good sign.

"Orlando is always our high-water mark, and San Antonio is rivaling that," Evans says. "We recently increased our square footage goal from where we started. We're currently only slightly below Orlando. We're extremely excited about that."

Incoming GCSAA President John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, says he believes there's a positive buzz about this show.

"Our numbers are tracking great. People are going to love this show," he says. "Everything is centrally located, so no bus service will be needed... everyone will be together."

Evans says that hotel bookings are ahead of where they have been in recent years. But the key indicator, of course, will be how many people actually make the trek to San Antonio.

"We're close to having 12,000 people, like we've had in the past," Evans says. "We've got a lot of good feedback that San Antonio is a city people want to be in — it's easy to do business there, it's easy to network and it's fairly inexpensive."



ANY LUCK WITH BIG CUPS?

Readers remain skeptical about alternative-size cups

In the November 2014 issue of *Golfdom* we took a close look at how superintendents were handling oversized golf cups, from 6-inch to 15-inch holes, on their courses. When the question was posed to our readers, a whopping 70 percent said the larger cups would not help grow the game.

Jay Neunsinger, superintendent at Tilden Park Golf Course in Berkley, Calif., is a rare breed. He's one of the 11 percent of our respondents who have used oversized cups on his course and has seen success with them.

"I do think there have been some positive results with cups that have helped grow the game of golf," says Neunsinger.



Jay Neunsinger

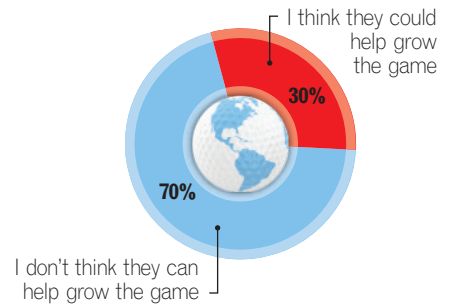
"Some of the demographics that are a little bit younger and have higher handicaps enjoy using them because it's more enjoyable for them."

Neunsinger's success has not come without its drawbacks. The majority of monthly pass holders are not using the oversized cups at all, and an unexpected challenge for golfers has arisen when greens have both sized holes open.

"The only problem I see with the big cups is (if) we put them in the back of the greens, (for) the people who are not playing those cups, if the big cup is in their putting line, they wonder what the rule is and if they can move their ball," Neunsinger says.

Pete Tescher, superintendent at Golf Granby Ranch in Granby, Colo., agrees with the majority of readers that golf will not be grown through oversized cups but says they can serve a purpose.

OVERSIZE GOLF CUPS... GENERALLY SPEAKING, WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?



"I think they're fine for fun novelty occasions," Tescher says. "People like the one (oversized cup), but not nine of them."



Pete Tescher

Tescher cites the amount of labor it takes to cut and maintain two sets of cups as the reason why he, like 81 percent of readers, has never used the larger holes before.

Tom Kaplun, superintendent at North Hempstead CC in Port Washington, N.Y., says the larger cups are not feasible because the tradition of the game is too strong. He has his own solution to grow the game. With his plan, changes happen off the course and not on the greens.



Tom Kaplun

"Courses really need to look at ways to maximize their facilities. For example, looking to add practice facilities," Kaplun says.

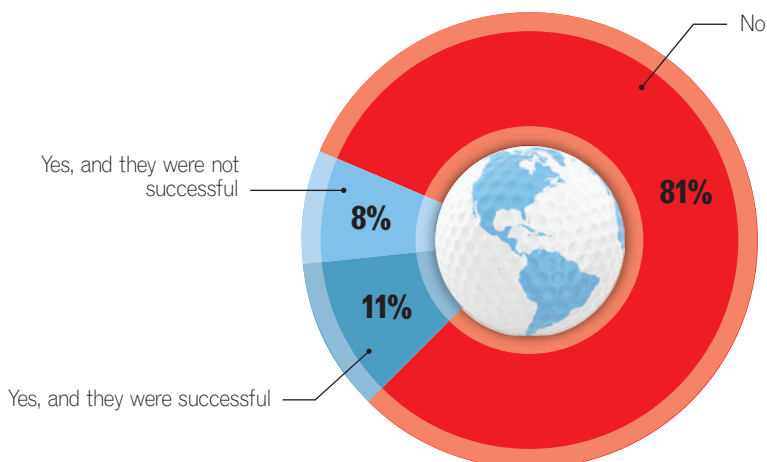
Kaplun thinks improved practice facilities will attract business to golf courses and more people to the sport because it allows beginners to build up their confidence. When people spend time at a course's practice facility their comfort level grows, and they play more rounds.

Tescher shares a much simpler way for the sport to increase in popularity again: "Golf needs a new Tiger Woods," he says.

Some things are easier said than done.

Continued on page 24

HAVE YOU TRIED OVERSIZED CUPS AT YOUR COURSE?



HELP WANTED

Survey shows an interesting trend: good help is getting harder to come by

Tom Bolon, superintendent at Lake Forest CC in Hudson, Ohio, is in need of a new assistant superintendent and looks over the résumés he has received. Bolon advertised the position nationally and locally but only had a total of 25 applicants. He was not optimistic about the talent pool.

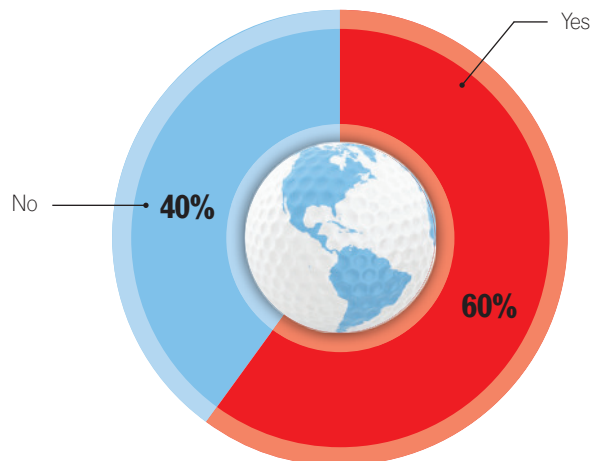
“It is hard to find someone really ready and willing to put in the time and effort,” Bolon says. “When I was an assistant superintendent my job was to take as much as possible off the superintendents’ plate, and people are not willing to do that.”

Sixty percent of readers agreed with Bolon that it has become harder in recent years to find and keep good assistant superintendents. The amount of applications being received and work ethic are not the only problem seen by readers.

David Groelle, GCCS, has not encountered any issue retaining assistants, calling himself “blessed” that he has only had to hire two in his 14 years at Royal Melbourne CC in Long Grove, Ill. Still, Groelle noticed a difference in the candidates’ education the last time he hired a new assistant.

“Those (assistants) who hang in there and get promoted, they love it,” O’Keefe says. “You only get into this industry if you love it.”

DO YOU BELIEVE IT’S BECOME HARDER IN RECENT YEARS TO FIND AND KEEP GOOD ASSISTANTS?



“There aren’t as many applicants with full 4-year bachelor degrees. It seems to be becoming more of a trade, so to speak — where guys are learning on the job and getting experience in the field and maybe taking some classes on the side or going through programs online and getting an education that way,” Groelle says.

GCSAA’s O’Keefe usually retains three assistants at one time and he tries to provide a fair wage as they work their way through the ranks. But the current vice president of the GCSAA believes the cost of living is the reason it has been more difficult to find assistants in recent years.

O’Keefe, who will take over as president of the GCSAA at the 2015 GIS in San Antonio, says it takes the average assistant superintendent seven to eight years to attain

their first superintendent job. In those years, it can be difficult for assistants to work a lot of hours and make a living on \$50,000 a year while getting married and starting families.

“What I’ve found is that these guys are having to find a higher salary immediately, and they just can’t afford to work those eight years before getting that higher salary,” says O’Keefe. “And keep in mind, the eight years as an assistant is if you’re lucky.”

Those who make it through the years as an assistant are there because of the passion for the job, he says.

“Those who hang in there and get promoted, they love it,” says O’Keefe. “You only get into this industry if you love it.”

FROM THE SURVEY

GOLFDOM ASKS: WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST CONCERN GOING INTO 2015?

"FEDERAL OVERREACH INTO OUR INDUSTRY. ONE EXECUTIVE ORDER AND OUR INDUSTRY COULD CHANGE INSTANTLY."

"Trying to change the perception that golf is too expensive and takes too long to play."

"BUDGET CUTS, ROUNDS UP, BUT COSTS ARE UP MORE. AT THE CURRENT PROJECTIONS, BY THE TIME I AM READY TO RETIRE I SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING WITH ALMOST NOTHING AND STAY UNDER BUDGET AND HAVE THE COURSE LOOKING THE BEST IN THE LAST 50 YEARS, BUT OF COURSE I JEST! ...OR DO I?"

"Staying alive until March 10th so I can retire."

"MOSTLY MOSS ON GREENS. WORST I'VE SEEN IN MY 25-YEAR CAREER IN LONG ISLAND."

"Labor. Cannot find good assistants and the pay we offer just does not entice good candidates."

"NOT HAVING A JOB, HEALTH INSURANCE, LIFE INSURANCE. HOW'S THAT FOR CONCERNS? I'M THINKING MY GLASS IS HALF EMPTY..."

"Getting younger folks interested and playing golf."

"Obama and the left."

"How facilities will address the price erosion created by GolfNow."

A SUPERINTENDENT'S BEST FRIEND?

Sorry, course dogs. When it comes to getting the job done, you're in the doghouse.

Superintendents utilize numerous resources every day to make their jobs run smooth and courses looking great. These implements vary from employees, technology, vendors and pets. Each has a function throughout the day, but we asked our readers to pick just one that is the most vital to completing the job.

When it came to their most important resource, 56 percent of readers stood up for a superintendent's best friend: their assistants.

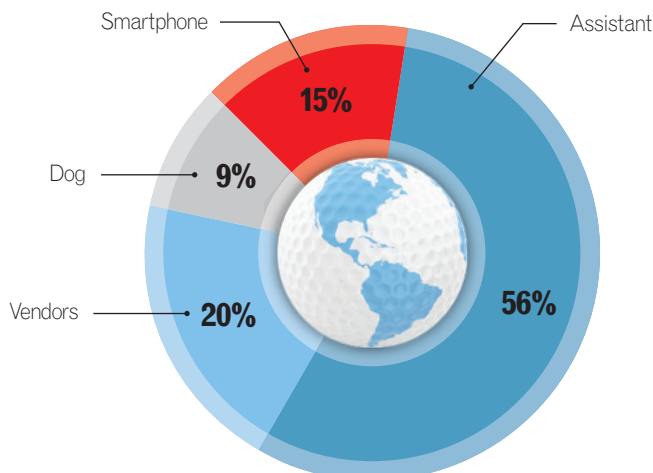
Vendors and their knowledge and help with products came in second place as the best resource, with 20 percent of the vote.

Smartphones allow superintendents to control their irrigation systems and track the path of the sun all from the palm of their hand. But it still came up in third place.



Border Collies like Tori, the course dog at Victoria National in Newburgh, Ind., are known as workaholics... but even they can't outwork assistant superintendents.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE: I COULDN'T DO MY JOB WITHOUT MY...



Andy Engelbrecht, superintendent at Rotonda G&CC in Rotonda West, Fla., was among the 15 percent of readers who said his smartphone is the most important tool he has.

"I do so much on my smartphone, I almost don't need an assistant," Engelbrecht says (but don't tell his assistant).

The companionship from a course dog, obviously a sentimental choice, only garnered 8 percent of the vote.

And what did we hear from our 3,000 followers on Twitter? That we left out the most important choice of all: the course mechanic. 

THE BEST OF THE REST

From future story ideas to social media advice, our readers know best

We hope our subscribers enjoy reading the *Golfdom* Report as much as we enjoy compiling it... because every year, our readers come through with some insightful feedback.

For example, we learned that some of you would like to read more stories on sustainability. And at least one of you wants us to write a story declaring the death of the term; that in no way could golf ever truly be “sustainable.”

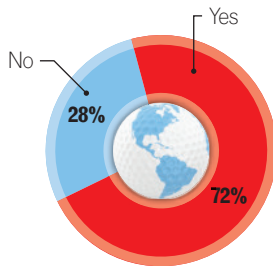
And we tip our cap to the reader who begs us to give up on the fad that is Social Media. After all, he writes — who the

heck has time to write and read all that stuff? (We often find ourselves asking the same thing.)

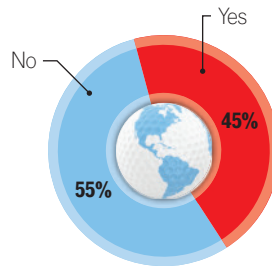
To close out this installment of the *Golfdom* Report, we share a few more results from our survey. Half of you still don't use Social Media for work. The GCSAA again gets an overwhelming thumb's up. And happily, most of you, if given a choice, would do it all over again.

We'll also do it all over again — in 2016. With your participation, it'll be another fun, and insightful, project.

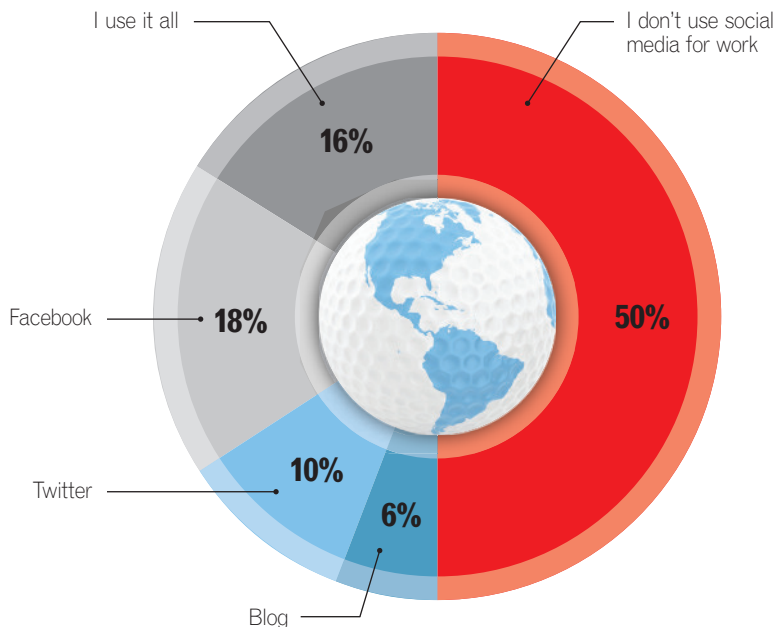
IF YOU HAD IT TO DO ALL OVER AGAIN, WOULD YOU STILL CHOOSE A CAREER IN THE GOLF INDUSTRY?



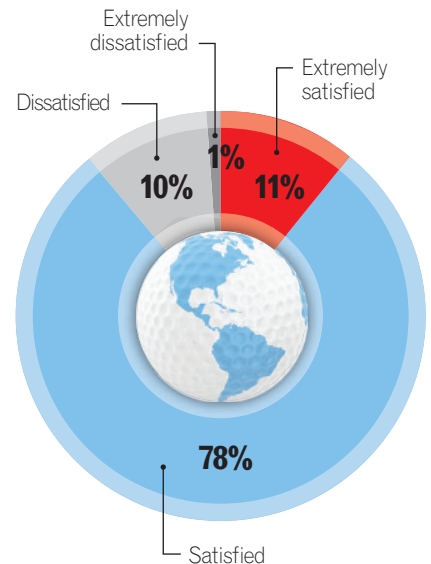
DO YOU THINK THE PGA OF AMERICA MADE THE RIGHT DECISION FOR OUSTING FORMER PRESIDENT TED BISHOP FOR HIS QUESTIONABLE TWEETS?



WHAT FORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA DO YOU USE FOR WORK?

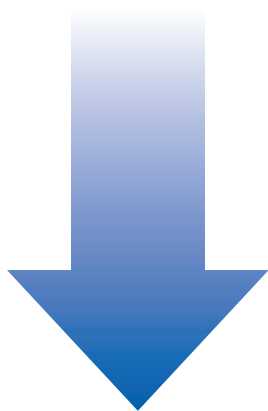


OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF THE GCSAA?



SNAGging more young golfers

BY IRA TIFFANY



How SNAG
Golf and
SNAG Futbol
plan to get
more kids in
the game.

One of my favorite old sayings is, “Be careful what you wish for.” It conjures up all sorts of ideas when applied to golf. We all wish for pretty much the same thing: more players. However, the method of getting those extra bodies onto courses is proving elusive.

Golf is suffering from a major player drop-out. Recent National Golf Foundation figures show that of approximately 23 million golfers, 19 percent are *over* 70 years old and 5 percent are *under* 30 years old. If you’re in the golf industry those may be two of the scariest stats you have ever seen.

Golf is beginning to awaken from the euphoria of past greatness, as evidenced by the recent arrivals of the new wave of “grow the game” initiatives such as Hack Golf, Golf 2.0 and now FootGolf. Golf officials are considering doing “something” as an industry but are just not sure about the right answer.

At first blush, FootGolf seems a bit goofy. You are now going to play FootGolf on a regulation golf course with a soccer ball and no clubs — you kick the ball. This requires the superintendent to cut 22-inch holes into the turf and create some tee boxes. The hope is that these non-golfers will suddenly fill tee sheets playing FootGolf — or maybe even real golf — in order to save golf, or at least produce some revenue.

This might not be such a bad idea if you look at how soccer has exploded in youth sports, the millions of tykes being chauffeured by “soccer moms” around the community and now the growth of Major League Soccer filling stadiums with thousands of rabid fans. Besides, some note, has anyone noticed just how much

soccer fans love to drink? Think of the food and beverage revenues!

What Is golf’s goal?

The first FootGolf data from the test sites is now in, and the NGCOA reports that rounds are being played, tee sheets are filling and FootGolf leagues are being formed. This is all good as some real money is being made. FootGolf has made an impact, and this is great news.

However, is this really our end goal? Is it our plan to save golf with a new game and a new class of players who just happen to occupy the same space?

It really comes down to business versus customers. Golf needs both, but one is purely short-term thinking and one is long-term survival. Which one is golf trying to achieve, and just what are we actually wishing for?

To create more actual golfers, is the sport betting that these pure soccer players will someday see the error of their ways, give up their favorite sport and just start playing golf instead? “After all,” the game of golf seems to be saying, “can’t they see how much better golf is than soccer?”

What’s likely to happen is that golf courses will gain incremental revenues, players will have some fun, but this model will not produce long-term core golfers. The 20-year-old

Continued on page 30



SNAG has piloted a program called "SNAG Play 6 & Kick 6," in which a player plays both a six-hole SNAG golf course and a six-hole SNAG Futbol course in a single round.

Continued from page 28

to 30-year-old age group that FootGolf appeals to is not going to suddenly convert to real golfers in the numbers needed to sustain golf.

The answer lies where it always has: youth involvement. *Get 'em young and keep 'em for a lifetime* — what a concept. Baseball does it, basketball does it, soccer does it, yet golf does not. We really don't want to see kids on our courses until about age 10, and for some locations that's stretching it. Many say 12 is a much better age.

The problem, of course, is that by age 12 kids have chosen other sports in which through years of practice they already excel. When a beginner starts to golf, regardless of age, they are simply “not good.” What kid wants to be “not good?” When you are not good and not wanted, it's not fun and you are not allowed to actually play — you simply quit. This is golf's problem today.



In the U.S., SNAG programs have reached more than 4.5 million children nationwide in parks and schools. In Kansas, it's in every grade school PE program.

Enter SNAG

Starting New at Golf (SNAG) has been around for more than 10 years and is a “first-touch” training system to learn golf. First developed by former PGA Tour

professionals Terry Anton and Wally Armstrong, SNAG is easy to learn, easy to play and is a ton of fun.

It has exploded internationally, with actual SNAG age-group national championships played in Japan. Europe and New Zealand are booming with SNAG programs, and the First Tee here in the U.S. is using SNAG and has reached more than 4.5 million children nationwide in parks and schools. Moreover, half of these kids are girls — a key target for growth in golf. Family participation is paramount to growth, but with kids not showing up at golf courses, none of these numbers are reflected in the current NGF stats.

In Kansas, the Midwest PGA Section has spearheaded its own “SNAG-A-School” program, which is now training 100,000 kids a year in every grade school physical education program to learn and play the game of golf. Having every child in a school district introduced to and taught golf in grade school PE is a true growth initiative.

SNAG can be played indoors or outdoors, in any open space. It teaches kids and adults the rules, concepts and basic strokes of golf in a highly successful and fun manner so the transition to an actual golf course is far easier. Using SNAG, the students are not just hitting balls, they are competitively playing holes.

As the school program grows statewide,

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don't be surprised if Kansas soon dominates the scene in Junior Golf. Better yet, those golfing boys and girls will someday become golfing parents who will raise golfing children.

And now, SNAG Futbol

SNAG sees FootGolf as an excellent idea, in fact outstanding, but needing a couple of key tweaks.

So enters SNAG Futbol, SNAG's version of FootGolf, which is and should be seen as a "gateway" sport, not a separate sport. SNAG Futbol is designed and taught from the onset as a precursor to learning the rules, strategy and basic strokes of golf. It's an ideal partner to SNAG Golf, especially in PE and with young players who have more physical capabilities with their feet than with a club and ball. Imagine 5- and 6-year-olds who actually claim and believe they are golfers — unheard of in today's system of developing golfers.

Just as a SNAG golf course can be set up in any open space, SNAG Futbol can also be set up instantly, as all the features, including water and sand bunkers, are all above ground, with no cups to cut. And the length of the holes are scalable to fit the demographic of the players for that day or event.

Regular SNAG has an above-ground 6-inch diameter FlagSticky, which, via a hook and loop material, allows the SNAG golf ball to stick and hole out. SNAG Futbol has a 15-inch diameter above-ground FootSticky and a special soccer ball that also "sticks" via hook and loop material. It plays exactly the same as a 22-inch permanent hole, yet with no agronomic damage.

The SNAG Futbol tee is a flat rubber mat with a large tee to elevate the soccer ball on the first shot, again, totally movable with no agronomic damage. The Foot-

"THE PROBLEM... IS THAT BY AGE 12 KIDS HAVE CHOSEN OTHER SPORTS IN WHICH THROUGH YEARS OF PRACTICE THEY ALREADY EXCEL."

Sticky is even slightly elevated so air can circulate underneath to protect the turf. These two tee and FootSticky features might seem minor, but they represent a huge yearly maintenance savings. Nine out of 10 superintendents will opt for no huge holes versus the above-ground FootSticky.

Play 6 & Kick 6

SNAG has now invested in and piloted a program called "SNAG Play 6 & Kick 6," in which a six-hole SNAG golf course and a six-hole SNAG Futbol course is created where the player plays both versions in a

single round. (SNAG is designed for 6 holes per side versus 9 holes.) Again, long-term thinking creates core golfers by teaching and playing golf and Futbol in a single round versus choosing a single playing method. A full SNAG Futbol course with all the needed equipment and balls is a one-time fee, can be set up anywhere and will last for years. SNAG is betting this is how golf reaps both ROI and long-term player benefits.

So, as we raise a glass and toast innovation, let's give a cheer to the lads of the pitch and welcome them to our links. However, the shrewd operator and owner will "be careful of what you wish for" and will keep one eye on the prize of actually wishing for more golf customers versus just a few more tee times, and will develop programs to do both. **G**

Ira Tiffany is a freelance writer who has written for *Pacific Northwest Golfer*, *Washington Golf* and multiple websites.

SUCCESS IN KANSAS

For an article on SNAG's success in Kansas and a video on SNAG from *Kansas Golfer*, the official publication of the Kansas Golf Association, visit: <http://hosted.vresp.com/1752227/55f13d6946/591484335/24e03272d4/>

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SuperScience

// COOL IN THE SHADE

QUANTIFYING LIGHT NEEDS FOR BERMUDAGRASS GREEN ESTABLISHMENT

By Benton Hodges

In the past decade throughout the Southeast and transition zone, golf courses have been converting their greens to new ultradwarf bermudagrass cultivars. Whether the conversion is from creeping bentgrass or is replacing an older bermudagrass cultivar, a major constraint will be the successful establishment and maintenance under reduced light environments because of the poor shade tolerance of bermudagrass.

No studies have been done to determine the light requirement for bermudagrass green establishment. The objective of this research is to quantify a

daily light integral requirement for successful bermudagrass green establishment. A daily light integral is the amount of photosynthetic light a plant receives each day, measured in moles of light per day ($\text{mols m}^{-2} \text{d}^{-1}$).

A field trial was initiated in June 2013 and June 2014 at the R.R. Foil Plant Science Research Center in Starkville, Miss. Four bermudagrass cultivars, Champion, TifEagle, MiniVerde and MS-285, were established under full



Establishment of Champion ultradwarf bermudagrass 11 weeks after sprigging, grown under various shade levels (full-sunlight, 30 percent, 55 percent and 80 percent shade).

sunlight, 30 percent shade, 55 percent shade and 80 percent shade using a neutral density polyfiber black shade cloth. Using quantum light meters, daily light integrals (DLI) were calculated for each shade level averaged across two years. Full-sunlight plots received $42.26 \text{ mols m}^{-2} \text{d}^{-1}$, while 30 percent shade, 55 percent shade and 80 percent shade received 31.92 , 22.04 and $13.48 \text{ mols m}^{-2} \text{d}^{-1}$, respectively. Percent cover was calculated 84 days after sprigging. Using statistical regression analysis, the amount of daily light required to reach 70 percent cover was then determined.

According to the model, DLI levels of 27.06 , 28.07 , 38.19 and $30.07 \text{ mols m}^{-2} \text{d}^{-1}$ were noted for Champion, MiniVerde, MSB-285 and TifEagle, respectively. MSB-285 is an experimental bermudagrass that has a more upright growth habit compared to the other bermudagrass cultivars, and this could be a reason for the elevated light requirement.

Benton Hodges, Christian M. Baldwin, Ph.D., Maria Tomaso-Peterson, Ph.D., James McCurdy, Ph.D., Barry R. Stewart, Ph.D., and Eugene K. Blythe, Ph.D. are at Mississippi State University. Hodges can be contacted at bphodges@gmail.com for more information.

NEWS UPDATES

GREYTOK NAMED NATIONAL SALES DIRECTOR OF MACRO-SORB AND SMS

Eric Greytok, former superintendent at Pebble Beach Golf Links during the 2000 U.S. Open and Winged Foot Golf Club for the 2006 U.S. Open, was named the National Sales Director for Macro-Sorb Technologies LLC, a provider of professional-grade amino acid products for the turfgrass industry, and SMS Additive Solutions LLC, a soil surfactants, spray adjuvants and tank-mix additives manufacturer.



"We are thrilled to have Eric join Macro-Sorb and SMS Additive Solutions," said Michael Kubinec, vice president for both companies. "His vast experience in golf course turf management will be invaluable to the companies as we increase distribution of our current products and introduce new solutions for the golf course industry."

As part of his new role, Greytok will direct sales activities for both companies, drawing from his experience as a superintendent to develop new products, executing agronomic programs and provide assistance and product training for golf course and sports turfgrass professionals throughout the country.

“IF THIS MISTAKE WAS IDENTIFIED AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO WASH THE PRODUCT OFF WITH IRRIGATION, AS 2,4-D IS MOSTLY FOLIAR ABSORBED.”

Matt Cavanaugh

(see story on page 34)

// GREENKEEPING GAFFES

Mistakes Happen: Part Dew

By Matt Cavanaugh

In the October *Golfdom* I wrote about several product application mistakes that superintendents potentially can make. These mistakes included an overdose of plant growth regulators, products used to correct said overdose, high rates of foliar fertilizer, and the dreaded issues caused by bug repellent sprayed on turf (I can see a perfect size 10 Footjoy on your tee now). If you know me, you know I have many more turf-related mistakes to discuss. So here we go again.

Mistakes often happen because we become too familiar or comfortable with the products we use. This can cause us to become complacent and take for granted subtle differences between products.

A good example from my checkered past: I had been using the original granular formulation of azoxystrobin for years at a rate of 0.40 oz. /1000 ft². Several years later I purchased a new liquid formulation. When it came time to apply the new

formulation I went into autopilot during the mixing process. Several days after the application I began to notice some unusual disease patterns on my greens. I became confused because I had just applied a great active ingredient only a few days prior.

Upon investigation I realized I had applied the 0.40 oz. /1000 ft² rate called for with the original granular formulation. However, I actually needed 2.0 fl. oz. /1000 ft² of the new liquid product. Needless to say, I was quickly back on the sprayer.

Mistakes like this happen when we go too fast, don't stop to think about the product we are using, and fail to read the label one more time. Here I highlight three additional mistakes from the 19 different demonstration treatments that were conducted at the Turfgrass Research, Outreach and Education Center, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn. These include issues arising from a herbicide application,

FIGURE 1

Three-way combination active ingredients and percentages used in this demonstration trial.

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS	
Dimethylamine salt of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid.....	30.56%
Dimethylamine salt of (+)-(R)-2-(2 methyl-4-chlorophenoxy)propanoic acid.....	8.17%
Dimethylamine salt of dicamba: 3,6-dichloro-o-anisic acid.....	2.77%
INERT INGREDIENTS.....	58.50%
TOTAL: 100%	

fertilizing incorrectly and against label recommendations, and applying a high rate of mineral oil. All “mistakes” were applied to a V-8 creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera* L.) putting green mowed at 0.125 inches six days a week.

MISTAKE NO. 1

The most commonly used post-emergent broadleaf herbicide on the market is a three-way combination of 2,4-D, MCPP (mecoprop) and dicamba. It's an extremely effective and economical combination on many broadleaf weeds. However, this three-way combination product produces an issue because of the sensitivity that creeping bentgrass, especially at greens height, has to 2,4-D.

2,4-D is a good active ingredient on many broadleaf weeds, especially dandelion

(*Taraxacum officinale*) and broadleaf plantain (*Plantago major*), but it's not recommended to apply broadcast applications of 2,4-D alone to creeping bentgrass greens. Spot treatments may be feasible, but injury may still occur with misapplication.

MCPP formulated alone is specifically marketed for use on creeping bentgrass putting greens. It has a higher degree of safety on creeping bentgrass and is effective on white clover (*Trifolium repens*), for which 2,4-D provides marginal control.

Dicamba also is formulated alone and labeled for creeping bentgrass, although the product makers give no direction for use on putting greens, and the label indicates injury may occur at rates higher than 0.50 lb. a.i./acre. Dicamba will provide good control of prostrate knotweed (*Polygonum aviculare*),

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Check all product labels.
- Check application rates, application volumes and calibrations.
- If a mistake happens, communicate with your superiors and staff.
- Seek help and advice on your problem.
- Be patient. The only thing turf does fast is die.
- Make sure the decimal point is in the right place.
- Seek two sets of eyes for all calculations

TABLE 1

Three different three-way combinations of 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba and their differences for use on creeping bentgrass putting greens.

	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3
Rate (fl. oz./1000 ft ²)	N/A	0.67	1.0
Volume (gal/1000 ft ²)	N/A	3.33	N/A
2,4-D (lbs. a.i./gal)	2.38	1.98	0.71
MCPP (lbs. a.i./gal)	0.63	0.53	0.44
Dicamba (lbs. a.i./gal)	0.21	0.21	0.18

which 2,4-D and MCPP have trouble controlling.

Aside from 2,4-D being injurious to creeping bentgrass, other issues with three-way combinations of 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba come up because there are many different formulations that may or may not have restrictions for use on creeping bentgrass putting greens.

The confusion is compounded more by the use of the same brand name for different formulations. Many products include 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba, but all have different restrictions and/or rates for use on creeping bentgrass putting greens (Table 1). There are, however, three-way combinations of 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba specifically designed for use on creeping bentgrass, even at greens height. Close inspection of the label will show a reduction in the amount of 2,4-D these products contain, often a reduced application rate when used on greens, and even different application volumes for some products.

PHOTO 1

2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba applied at 1.5 fl. oz./1000 ft² one week after application.

PHOTO 2

2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba applied at 1.5 fl. oz./1000 ft² three weeks after application.

All products warn against overdosing bentgrasses to avoid injury.

I applied the most economical three-way

product available containing 2,4-D, MCPP and dicamba (Figure 1) at the high rate, which is not labeled for creeping bentgrass putting

greens. Yellowing occurred within three days after application and was highly evident by seven days after application (Photo 1). Yellowing was still evident at three weeks after application (Photo 2).

If this mistake is identified at application it may be possible to wash the product off with irrigation because 2,4-D is mostly foliar absorbed. If this is not the case, the damage has been done as the product is already in the plant. A nitrogen and iron application may allow the plant to grow out of the product and may mask some injury symptoms, but do not expect miracles.

As many of us know, paint and pigments are popular and can help in this situation, or at the very least make you feel better. The product I applied should not kill turf under label recommendations, but it will be a setback for at least three to four weeks after application. Communication to the appropriate individuals is key to explaining the mistake and expected recovery.

MISTAKE NO. 2

It's easy to take fertilizer applications for granted. You look at the analysis, decide how much to apply and head on out, assuming you calibrated, of course. However, even though you may have purchased a product with the same analysis, manufacturing processes can alter the size guide number (SGN) of

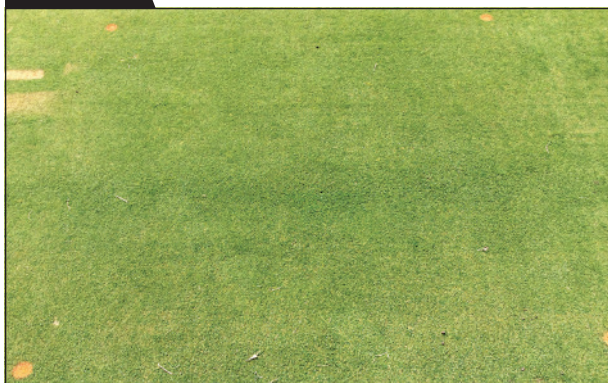
Continued on page 36

PHOTO 3



Light rate of a granular fertilizer, causing the turfgrass to show a mottled appearance.

PHOTO 4



1.0 lb. nitrogen /1000ft² applied to wet turf three weeks after application.

Continued from page 35
the product slightly. That happened to me, and a leopard look on my greens was the result (Photo 3).

We don't often think about a fertilizer application in terms other than the rate. However, I'm starting to see more fertilizer products bearing label cautions regarding what you should and shouldn't do.

One such caution causing superintendents trouble is, "Do not apply to wet foliage." This is interesting because so many of our applications happen in the morning, and dew

creates wet foliage. This causes fertilizer to stick to the plant. The fertilizer then begins pulling water out of the plant, causing desiccation and damage.

Some fertilizers do this so quickly that you will even see statements cautioning that watering after application to wet foliage may not help prevent damage. Even though mowing may remove much of the dew, it can continue to collect even after mowing and before the applicator gets to that green.

In this trial the product was applied early in the morning at the high label

rate of 1.0 lb. nitrogen /1000 ft² to turf that had a high amount of dew on the foliage. The product was watered 1 hour later with 0.20 inches. I did this treatment because a few years ago a colleague of mine suffered severe foliar damage with this exact application.

My replication was not as successful this time around. I did not see any of the foliar "staining" and leaf blight damage that happened to a fellow superintendent (Photo 4).

Unfortunately, if you are on the wrong side of this situation there's nothing you can do quickly to minimize damage. The hope here is that you applied the correct rate, in which case the turf should grow out of the damage soon enough.

MISTAKE NO. 3

Have you ever been on a sprayer so long that on the drive home you are still paying attention to the "phantom booms" on the back of your vehicle? It happens to me all the time. We can get too comfortable with our rigs, which causes complacency.

Many of the products we use can have detrimental effects when applied with too much overlap. Many now contain pigments that help us see what we are spraying, but also provide an opportunity for us to go on autopilot because we have the "tracer." I always pay more attention when I don't use an indicator dye.

In this demonstration

I applied a combo product containing a pigment and a mineral oil at twice the high rate to simulate a spray overlap (also note this high rate was for a snow mold application, which should not be used in the summer). The label clearly warns to not "over-spray" or "double-spray."

At two weeks after application the plot areas looked great. There was still a noticeable color difference because of the pigment, and the luster provided by the mineral oil was visible, but there were no issues with turf quality (Photo 5). By three weeks after application the pigment began to fade, as did the look and feel of the mineral oil, but the plots still looked good (Photo 6).

Although there were no issues with this application, this type of application in more stressful weather conditions may show different results. It also may be difficult to quickly remedy this situation as the product will be hard to wash off after the application has dried and does not quickly mow off, which was seen in this trial.

Keeping stress low is your biggest asset with an application like this, as it slowly gets removed from the plant. If you are lucky enough to have a GPS-guided spray rig you may disregard mistake No. 3 — and I'm jealous.

MANAGING MISTAKES

As I mentioned in the previous article, many a superintendent mistake revolves around the products

PHOTO 5



Pigment and mineral oil two weeks after application at 68 fl. oz. /1000 ft².

PHOTO 6



Pigment and mineral oil three weeks after application at 68 fl. oz. /1000 ft².

we use. However, comfort and complacency play big rolls. Taking for granted that products don't and will not change can quickly slap you out of your comfort zone. Labels and products can change quickly without you knowing it by virtue of the fact that there is just a better formulation available for a product you think you're familiar with. New product regulations may stipulate changes to applications or may have completely changed formulations. You may even find yourself reading a product label you've been using for

years and notice something new, like "Do not apply in the drip line of trees," which came to the forefront a few years back but has been on most broadleaf herbicide labels since day one.

Getting too comfortable with the equipment you use, not paying attention and thinking you can do two things at once can quickly come back and haunt you.

Matt Cavanaugh is a research scientist at the University of Minnesota, where he collaborates with fellow turfgrass scientists on a wide range of turfgrass research projects. Cavanaugh can be reached at mattc@umn.edu for more information.

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"Given that we have little control over the weather, which during the summer dictates the level of environmental stresses, our control over the pre-stress or post-stress routine is extremely important."

KARL DANNEBERGER, PH.D., *Science Editor*

The turf routine

I was at the British Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) in Harrogate, England, a year or so ago when I listened to a speaker talk about the golf swing. He identified three distinct aspects of hitting a golf shot — the pre-shot routine, the shot itself and the post-shot routine. After briefly describing each, the speaker asked the audience, "Which of the three aspects does a golfer have control over?"

The answer was the pre- and post-shot routine. The golfer has little control over the shot or swing itself.

Using the golf swing analogy, what aspect does a superintendent have the least control over?

The answer is the shot — but in our case the shot would be the weather. Given that we have little control over the weather, which during the summer dictates the level of environmental stresses, our control over the pre-shot (pre-stress) or post-shot (post-stress) routine is extremely important. In pre- or post-stress situations we are either trying to promote a healthy turf going into the stress or trying to facilitate turf recovery after the stress with the goal of getting to a healthy turf.

Given that two out of three of our "golf swing" components focus on producing a healthy turf, a fair question is, "what exactly defines healthy turf?"

Here I have listed five components of a healthy turf. By no means is this list all-inclusive; I believe we could

come up with some additional assessments. As a caveat, excesses/extremes with any of these components is detrimental.

1 Color. A green turf is a sign of a healthy turf. The green turfgrass plant color is due to chlorophyll. Active chlorophyll production is associated with efficient photosynthesis. Based on the turfgrass species or cultural programs, different shades of green exist and in some cases can be detrimental... a plant can be too green. However, a green turfgrass plant, or almost any green plant, is a healthy plant.

2 Growth. A healthy plant produces shoots and roots. Shoots intercept light, while roots provide the uptake of water and nutrients. In the case of growing roots, the soil conditions become extremely important. Under this component I would place a "healthy soil," which directly impacts root and shoot growth. For example, well drained, nutrient and

moisture sufficient, non-compacted soil contributes positively toward growth.

3 Turgid. Turgidity, or the water contained in the plant, reflects a healthy plant. A non-turgid plant is drought-stricken and most likely dormant or injured. Important factors in turgidity are the quantity and quality of the water present.

4 Metabolic activity. A healthy plant is actively producing and using amino acids, proteins, enzymes, carbohydrates, etc., which are used in thousands of reactions within the plant cells. A drop in activity may show, among others, an increased susceptibility to pests and environmental stresses. Nutrition plays an important role in that many of the components consist of the major elements.

5 Thrives/tolerant to intended use.

The turf is tolerant to the normal stresses associated with playing the game of golf. Here we would put tolerant to the given mowing height, and normal wear, given that mowing is a stress.

Using my five components, a healthy turf would appear green, hydrated, growing at a desirable rate and showing no visible injury.

Unfortunately, the superintendent's dilemma is not necessarily to produce a healthy turf, but one that is dictated by the game of golf itself. The desire to produce fast, firm conditions taken to the extreme where burned-out or brown turf exists is resulting in abandonment, erosion or continual changes in our pre- and post-shot routines.

A burned-out turf does not represent our best golf swing, but I guess in many cases it will have to do.

Karl Danneberger, Ph.D., *Golfdom's* science editor and a professor at The Ohio State University, can be reached at danneberger.1@osu.edu.

Getting the most from a Primo application

Dean Mosdell, Ph.D., is a technical manager in the Western U.S. for Syngenta. He has more than 25 years of golf course research experience with plant growth regulators and makes numerous golf course visits every year on behalf of Syngenta to assist superintendents. Mosdell can be reached at dean.mosdell@syngenta.com for more information.

Q Occasionally superintendents remark to me that they feel Primo applications are not as effective as they once were. Do you hear this comment?

I hear this comment on occasion as well. When I hear the comment I try to engage the superintendent in a review of their practices to try and determine why Primo (trinexapac-ethyl) is not performing as expected.

Q Where do you start the review process?

I start by asking the superintendent what has changed in their management program. In particular, I ask if they have changed the number or mix of products in their spray tank when they apply Primo. If the superintendent applies Primo along with several other products, I recommend that they apply Primo and water only to see if that solves the problem.

There are so many nutrient blends, stimulants and adjuvants, etc., on the market that a superintendent

may include in a spray application (that) it is difficult to determine how a specific product or combination of products may interact with Primo. By applying only Primo and water, a superintendent can focus exclusively on Primo performance.

THERE ARE SO MANY NUTRIENT BLENDS, STIMULANTS AND ADJUVANTS, ETC., ON THE MARKET THAT A SUPERINTENDENT MAY INCLUDE IN A SPRAY APPLICATION (THAT) IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE HOW A SPECIFIC PRODUCT OR COMBINATION OF PRODUCTS MAY INTERACT WITH PRIMO.

Q What's next in the process?

I discuss with superintendents that turfgrass plants are always producing gibberellic acid (GA) and the amount of GA produced by season varies with the growth of the plant. Cool-season grasses produce more GA in spring and fall and less in the summer, while warm-season grasses produce more GA in summer and less in spring and fall. It is important that superintendents adjust their Primo application program based on the growth and GA production

of the turf plants.

Q What about the application method itself?

Primo is foliarly absorbed, so it is important that a uniform spray application is made each time Primo is applied. The nozzles need to be checked regularly for wear and the sprayer calibrated to apply 1.0 to 2.0 gallons solution per 1,000 sq. ft., and avoid nozzles that produce very coarse droplet sizes.

Q If after reviewing all their practices associated with a Primo application the superintendent is still disappointed in its performance, then what?

The first step is increase the frequency of applications. For instance, on fairways, shorten the application interval from 4 to 3 weeks and on greens shorten the application interval from 14 to 10 or 7 days and see what happens.

After that if a superintendent is not getting the

desired response, I suggest increasing the Primo application rate by 10 to 15 percent.

Q Anything else you would like to add?

In early spring the first application of Primo to bermudagrass or Kentucky bluegrass/ryegrass roughs that are mowed at a higher height will sometimes cause a bronzing/off-color appearance. The bronzing is a result of reduced new leaf appearance. When new growth is slow to replace the senescing older leaf tissue, the turf appears off-color or a bronze color. It's much more noticeable at higher mowing heights. The older leaves may persist for a few weeks until the weather warms up and the turf starts to grow aggressively and the older leaves are replaced by the new green leaves.

To prevent this bronzing of the older leaves from occurring in higher-mown roughs, delay application of Primo until the weather is favorable for active growth or reduce the rate of Primo applied to mitigate any discoloration.



Clark Throssell, Ph.D., loves to talk turf. Contact him at clarkthrossell@bresnan.net.

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SELLING AT THE SUMMIT

WEREN'T ONE OF THE 50 SUPERINTENDENTS TO ATTEND THE 2014 GOLFDOM SUMMIT? FEAR NOT... HERE'S A LOOK AT SOME OF WHAT WAS ON DISPLAY FOR ATTENDEES.

BY SETH JONES // Editor-in-Chief

1. Oregon Cordless Tool System

"The **VL300 HANDHELD BLOWER** is new to our lineup. It's a tool that is suitable for all superintendents to have in the back of their vehicle for a quick touch-up," says Oregon's Craig Pfeifer. "It's convenient because it's only 5 pounds, the battery is good to go, there's no need to pull cords, no gas/oil mix, it's obviously quiet." The VL300 becomes available in April. Regarding battery life, Pfeifer says the blower will last 90 minutes at its low setting, 60 minutes on its high setting and approximately 8 minutes on the turbo setting, which produces a 132-mph blast of wind. Using a combination of the various settings, Pfeifer estimates the battery will last 30 minutes total. oregoncordless.com

2. Holganix

"I'm trying to get them to understand the relationship between soil fertility and biology, and how biology impacts soil fertility... we have a product that deals with it, but I'm trying to get them to understand how important

that balance is," says Dave Henriksen of **HOLGANIX**. "Soil biology really is the key to plant nutrition. Feeding plants directly is not the answer, it doesn't work — it's feeding plants through soil biology. The way you fertilize the soil is the way that you're going to feed the plant eventually, but you're going to run it through the biology... so you're actually doing things to support biology, to support the plant." Holganix had flash drives available for attendees that explained the parameters for using their products. holganix.com

3. BASF

"For the masses, Lexicon and Xemplar are two innovations, they're fresh on the marketplace, they've got a half a season underneath them to rave reviews," says Brian Thompson of BASF. "We've been aggressively launching the products and doing some sample programs. They're the products we're touting and we're getting great feedback." Derek Miller of BASF says he was pleasantly surprised to see that many of the superintendent attendees were already

MORE THAN 600 1-ON-1 MEETINGS took place at the 2014 *Golfdom* Summit. The meetings, held both indoors and on an outdoor demo area, featured one of the Summit sponsors and one superintendent, and lasted 15 minutes. ¶ We asked all the sponsors to give us a glimpse into what their meetings were like — what was the main product they talked about? Or was it a main message they were trying to convey? Their responses are below. ¶ This is a partial list of *Golfdom* Summit sponsors. We'll include comments from Jacobsen, Smithco, Healthy Grow and Cushman in our next issue.

familiar with both products. "When we mentioned Lexicon/Xemplar, probably 85, 90 percent of the room raised their hands, that they had either been exposed to it by using it, or had been trained on it already. For a product that just came out in May, to have that much product awareness already, is phenomenal for BASF." betterturf.basf.us

4. Quali-Pro

"Our key message that we've been reiterating all day is that we support the industry, the local chapters, the GCSAA... and that we back our products," says Jeremy Moore of **QUALI-PRO**. "We stand behind all of our products, and if they have a problem with anything, we're going to take care of it, we're not going to leave them hanging." Aside from that message, Quali-Pro was also presenting information on a few products for the company, namely their azoxystrobin, Strobe 50WG; Enclave fungicide and Negate herbicide. "We've had some really good meetings," says Nick Strain of Quali-Pro. "I don't think (some of the superin-

tendents) were aware of our commitment to standing behind our product."

quali-pro.com

5. Air-O-Lator

"We've been around since 1968, not only in the golf industry but in many industries, from fish farming to waste water applications, so we deal with water quality issues daily," says Roy Watkins, president of **AIR-O-LATOR**. "A lot of people don't like to think of their golf courses as waste lagoon, but it is, and the same treatment process occurs there as it does in a wastewater plant. Our background is a big benefit for us, because we've dealt with everything from small waste lagoons to million-gallon waste lagoons. We have solutions we've dealt with in the past that can be used on golf courses." Watkins was excited because he said only about 10 percent of the attendees were previously familiar with Air-O-Lator. "A lot of them have been on golf courses that previously had fountains or aerators, and they're old now, so they're looking to replace them."

airolator.com



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CONTINUED ONLINE

For more listings
of top products,
go to [golfdom.com/
category/
products](http://golfdom.com/category/products)



4



5



6



7



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6. Underhill International

"We are talking a lot about the Profile nozzles — people really understood the quality of the nozzles, the difference in what we can do for their turf," says Ed Underhill, president of **UNDERHILL INTERNATIONAL**. "Water savings is a huge issue these days. The Profile nozzles really help save water. Ideally you want to have an even amount of water throughout the whole profile of the turf. There's a lot of times where nozzles will have a donut, or brown spots, wet spots, dry spots..."

with our nozzles we increase that uniformity, so we have a lot less of those problem areas." Underhill says that superintendents are always looking for that new, unique product. "With our company, we focus on the niche problem areas that golf courses have and we're always going to help them with those issues." underhill.us

7. Soil Technologies Corp.

"Essentially we're starting with the idea that soil is a dynamical

system, and that we can change physical properties of soils to make inputs work better, cut costs and make turfgrass (a) more efficient system," says Steve Nichols of **SOIL TECHNOLOGIES CORP.**

"We can upgrade the putting systems on golf course greens, reduce input costs and help make golf courses green." Nichols reports that many of the attendees were initially intrigued by his products based on the boardroom presentation he made for the group. "They want to know how it applies to their situation," Nichols says. "It's an invaluable 15-minute meeting for me, a real game-changer."

soiltechcorp.com

8. FMC

"We're trying to help them fine-tune their spray program, give them some new options, save them some money, give them some

new ideas to try and also pick their brains on unmet needs they have," says Adam Manwarren of **FMC**. He also says that Tropical signal grass control was a popular topic. "We got to meet with a number of the Florida guys today. Tropical signal grass is a very hot topic here in southern Florida. There are not a lot of solutions. We think we have a great key product in Xonerate. It's really the cornerstone, you're still doing a tank mix with other products, but it's basically the linchpin product in that mix." fmc turfwire.com

CONTINUED ONLINE

For more listings of top products, go to golfdom.com/category/products



9. Turfco

Out on the driving range at Reunion Resort, Scott Kinkead of Turfco was busy talking to superintendents about efficiency. "We're focused on helping these guys accomplish the task while being more productive," Kinkead says. "Superintendents today are dealing with less staff, less time, smaller budgets... trying to make them more productive is critical." One of the products he brought to demonstrate was the **WIDESPIN 1550**. Benefits of the machine include being able to change to saved settings on the fly, without getting out of the seat. "This machine is fundamentally changing the way superintendents topdress," Kinkead says. "Getting a chance to demo it and show them the key points is a big value." Turfco also gave demos on the **TORRENT BLOWER**.

turfco.com



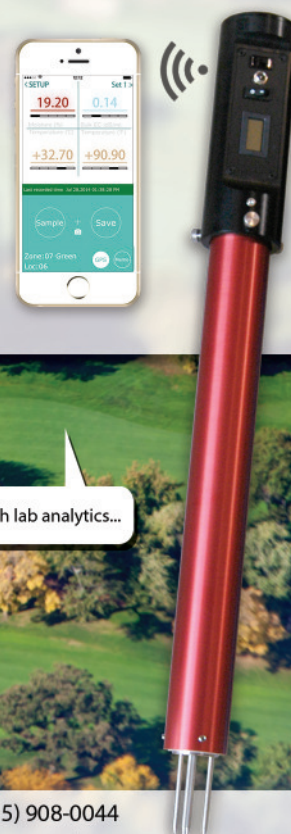
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The 19th Hole

Greg Burleson

CGCS // Augusta (Ga.) CC



What's your favorite drink after 18 holes of golf?

A Luzianne sweet tea.



Where are you from originally?

I'm from Gastonia, N.C. I went to school at UNC-Charlotte and got a business degree. I knew after three years that I didn't want to do that, I knew I wanted to be on a golf course. So I went to Catawba Valley Technical College in Hickory, N.C., and earned an associate's degree in turfgrass management.

Tell me about your family. My wife, Connie, and I will be celebrating our 30th anniversary in June. We have two girls,

Hannah (24) and Haley (22). Hannah is getting married this year, and Haley is graduating college, so 2015 is going to be a big year!

What's on the radio during your commute to work?

Going to work I listen to the local news and weather. On the way home I'll listen to country music — I like Kenny Chesney and also Zac Brown Band.

What is Masters week like for you and your team?

The week itself, if the weather cooperates, goes pretty smooth. The weeks leading up to that is when we see the Masters effect — we work hard to get the course dialed-in for that week. Aesthetics and playability are equally important that week... We're not trying

to create championship conditions because most of the play is new play, people who don't know the course. Monday is the slowest day, but Tuesday through Sunday? We're slam-packed, and that's a good thing.

PLANTS & SHRUBS

You're on Jeopardy!, and you've got a slim lead. What category do you hope pops up on the screen for Final Jeopardy? And if you say 'turf science,' I'm going to demand a second answer... OK, but I'll give you one really close to it: Plants and shrubs. I like plants and shrubs as much as I like turf.

What's your favorite vacation spot?

The mountains of North Carolina. It's a pretty area and a different pace of life. Very relaxing, and everyone is nice. I feel like I can go up there and get away from the hustle and bustle.

So where's the best place to go when you're there?

The top of Roan Mountain. It's right on the border of North Carolina and Tennessee, about 6,000-feet elevation. You have to check out that view, you can see forever in all directions. As interviewed by Seth Jones, Jan. 8th, 2015.

"I'VE HEARD A LOT OF GOOD ADVICE OVER THE YEARS, I WISH I COULD REMEMBER IT ALL. 'HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.' THAT'S A SIMPLE ONE, AND VERY IMPORTANT."



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