

# Golfdom

04.21



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“I was so grateful for the first vaccination. I’m not smart enough to know entirely what that first shot meant, but it felt like a step in returning to normal.”

**SETH JONES**, *Editor-in-Chief & Associate Publisher*

## A shot in the arm

**T**he big news in the Jones family came in mid-March when my wife and I received our second COVID-19 vaccines. I’m in my mid-40s (don’t laugh), and my wife is younger than me. We didn’t expect to have our vaccines so quickly, but like the saying goes, it’s all about who ya know.

In this case, I know Adrienne’s grandma Virginia, who celebrates her 95th birthday next month. I’ve known Virginia for a long time, maybe 17 years now, but to Virginia, that 17 years is a blip on the screen. I wasn’t a major player in her life until recently when her balance became less trustworthy. We’re practically neighbors as far as living in the country goes, so I’m the one who gets a phone call when she’s slipped and needs to be helped up off the floor. And, of course, I’m happy to do it.

Based on that new need, my stock has risen with Virginia. I even got a “there’s my hero!” from her when I arrived a few minutes after my mother-in-law’s call the other day. Anyone who can live 90-plus years in the difficult conditions she’s seen, that’s my hero.

I’ve been extra cautious with the pandemic based on my relationship with



The Jones-Romero family smiles after getting 94-year-old Virginia (center) her vaccine.

Virginia. It was a relief when we learned she could qualify family who were her regular caregivers for the vaccine. Our small group arrived at the vaccination clinic together. As we left, I asked these three beautiful ladies to smile for a photo, in celebration of a long, unusual experience that was now making a change of course.

I recall that for the first vaccination, I was prepared

to be turned away at the door. There would be some snafu, some misunderstanding, that would prevent me from getting it. I didn’t want to get my hopes up and then not get it and be disappointed. It wouldn’t be until the shot was in my arm, I told myself, that I should believe it.

I was so grateful for the first vaccination. I’m not smart enough to know entirely what that first shot

meant, but it felt like a step in returning to normal. Something I’m very eager for.

The second shot was different. I felt a tinge of guilt. I wondered which of my family and friends needed the shot more than me and when they might get it.

As I gradually told people of my second vaccination, everyone was supportive and happy. It meant maybe we could see each other soon. Maybe we can travel together or go catch a Royals game or see a concert. I’m in Cleveland as I write this, and Editor Christina Herrick informed me that Market Garden Brewery is so excited about the vaccination rollout that it’s offering a 10-cent beer to anyone who presents their vaccination card to the bartender. A 10-cent vaccination beer sounds delicious to me. Cheers!

I was invited to speak at the joint chapter meeting of the Southern Illinois GCSA and the Mississippi Valley Superintendents Association. It takes place June 21 at St. Clair CC in Belleville, Ill. I was thrilled to get the invite and quickly accepted. The speaking part isn’t what excites me. What excites me is that they invited me to come out and meet a bunch of people I don’t already know. This time last year, that was strictly verboten.

After a long shutdown of travel, meetings and shaking hands, I’m excited to get back out and meet some more people. Because like the saying goes, it’s all about who ya know. 🍷

Email Jones at: [sjones@northcoastmedia.net](mailto:sjones@northcoastmedia.net).





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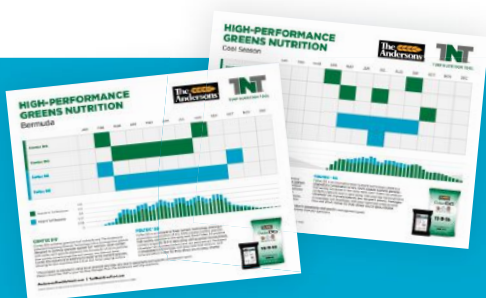
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# Starter

NEWS, NOTES AND QUOTES



## // INDUSTRY UPDATE

### WHAT TO EXPECT FROM BAYER'S DIVESTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

BY SARAH WEBB // *Managing Editor*

➔ Amid Bayer's planned divestment of its Environmental Science Professional business, *Golfdom* spoke with Gilles Galliou, who will lead the divestment effort, about what this will mean for the golf industry.

Bayer's Environmental Science Professional business includes vector control, professional pest management, industrial vegetation management, forestry and turf and ornamentals solutions. In a previous statement, the company said this move is designed to "focus on the core agricultural business in its Crop Science division."

The company named Galliou to lead the Environmental Science Professional business, as well as the divestment efforts, effective March 1. The business will be headquartered in Cary, N.C., effective June 1. Galliou currently serves as head of commercial operations for Bayer Vegetable Seeds Americas. He also is chairman of the governing board for Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment.

Galliou said golf customers can expect continued service from Bayer, and

Bayer's Gilles Galliou will lead Bayer's divestment of its environmental science division.



any outward change likely will not take place for another 12 to 18 months.

"We're at the beginning of a process of divestment, so it's going to take some time," Galliou said. "Internally, we'll do a lot to work with our team, and externally, we will guarantee that everything goes well with our customers. So, there will be no disruption in term of services, products, solutions, access to markets, any of that."

Galliou said that long term, Bayer's ambition is to be a leader in the industry.

"What we're really aiming at is to create an environment where our customers will see additional investment, a speed to embrace innovation and engage with our customers faster and

*Continued on page 10*

## // GRANTS GALORE

### USGA DISTRIBUTES \$1.8M IN SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH GRANTS

The United States Golf Association (USGA) will invest \$1.8 million into more than 70 separate research grants in 2021 through the Green Section's Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program.

The annual investment in the program is part of the USGA's continuous efforts to use science and innovation to support the long-term health and sustainability of golf and saves the industry an estimated \$1.8 billion in operating costs annually.

During the Green Section's 100-year history, the USGA has invested more than \$46 million in critical research aimed at improving the golfer experience while reducing the consumption of critical resources. The program, which serves thousands of golf courses and millions of golfers each year, represents the largest private turfgrass and environmental research effort in the game's history. The 2021 grant recipients, including 16 new projects, will receive an average of \$25,000 in funding this year.

## // FUNDING FROM FAIRWAYS

### FAIRWAYS FOUNDATION ACCEPTING GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Fairways Foundation is now accepting applications for grants. The submission window will remain open until April 30, and final grant recipients will be notified in October 2021.

Last year, The Fairways Foundation awarded more than \$106,000 worth of funds to a varied cross-section of environmental projects in both the U.S. and Europe. Successful grant projects included stream and grassland restorations, environmental conservation education for children and more.

The conservation-focused nonprofit encourages all businesses or individuals to apply who are looking for funding assistance for projects pertaining to environment and natural resources. To learn more visit [TheFairwaysFoundation.com](https://www.TheFairwaysFoundation.com).



// **MAKING UP FOR LAST YEAR**

## Prep for the 2021 Players Championship

BY SARAH WEBB // *Managing Editor*

➔ When the 2020 Players Championship at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., got canceled midtournament last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, it left a bad taste in the mouths of the crew members at the course, according to Jeff Plotts, director of agronomy.

“We didn’t get to finish the project,” Plotts said. “So, we had a rally cry that we actually had three extra days to prepare for the ’21 event, and we wanted it to be the absolute best event that it could be with those three extra days.”

He adds that the team’s focus for the past calendar year went into performing cultural practices on the course, aligning volunteer teams and communicating with the PGA Tour on requirements for the event. To help with those cultural practices and “dress the course up” for the upcoming tournament, Lucas Andrews, assistant director of golf course maintenance, said the team relied heavily on John Deere equipment.

That equipment included tractor units to help with topdressing and 12 new John Deere 2700 triplex units to keep the fairways in shape. The team also added a few John Deere 2500 units into its fleet.

The 2021 Players Championship concluded safely and on schedule. Justin Thomas walked away the winner, as did Plotts, Andrews and the entire crew at TPC Sawgrass in completing a tournament that was interrupted a year earlier.

“Our expectations didn’t waver because of COVID; we just had to adapt to the world of COVID,” Andrews said. “We always try to have a really good time and experience for our volunteers, for our team. We just have to figure out a way to do that and be practical in the world of COVID and still produce the same great expectations. We’re not going to back down or use COVID as an excuse not to have the highest expectations for our team and what we do here.”

// **CONGRATS, CAMERON!**

### STEPHENS RECEIVES 2021 MUSSER AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The Musser International Turfgrass Foundation has selected Cameron M. Stephens as the 2021 Award of Excellence recipient.

The award is given to outstanding Ph.D. candidates who, in the final phase of their graduate studies, demonstrated overall excellence throughout their doctoral program in turfgrass research.

Stephens received his B.S. in agriculture with a focus on turfgrass science from The Ohio State University; his M.S. in agronomy from Pennsylvania State University, where he focused on turfgrass pathology and fungicide resistance; and his Ph.D. in plant pathology at North Carolina State University where he pursued a dissertation entitled, “Etiology, Epidemiology and Management of Take-all Root Rot on Golf Course Putting Greens.” The research completed throughout his academic tenure aims to improve the understanding of detrimental turfgrass pathogens and optimize disease management solutions.

// **A NEW WAY TO MANAGE**

### USGA GREEN SECTION LAUNCHES MANAGEMENT TOOL

The United States Golf Association (USGA) unveiled Deacon, an innovative golf course management tool created to help operators improve the golfer experience by delivering better playing conditions while optimizing and prioritizing critical resource consumption.

Developed by the USGA’s Green Section and backed by its 100 years of hands-on industry experience, Deacon was designed to address two problems: a gradual decline in participation due to a lack of satisfaction and rising maintenance costs. The digital tool is accessible online and available in both iOS and Android app stores.

The name is a tribute to Deacon Palmer, whose 50-year stewardship of Latrobe (Pa.) Country Club starting in 1926, as superintendent and later golf professional, shaped a course that generations of golfers have enjoyed to this day. Latrobe is where Deacon taught his son Arnold to play the game on his way to becoming one of the most beloved figures in sports history, inspiring millions with his passion, character and values.

After a canceled tournament due to COVID-19, the crew at TPC Sawgrass was ready for another attempt at hosting the event. (Photo taken at 2018 event.)



PHOTO BY: GOLFDOM STAFF



## // A NEW HIRE

### TYLER ENTERPRISES HIRES SPIER

Tyler Enterprises, the turf products division of Masterblend International, has added Scot Spier, CGCS, to its turf products sales team. He will be responsible for business development and sales of both nutritional and plant protectant products for the golf, lawn care and sports turf markets in the northern and western suburbs of Chicago.

Spier's career spans 20 years in turfgrass nutrition and ornamental supply sales and consulting and more than eight years as a superintendent. Tyler Enterprises says this experience gives Spier a unique, firsthand knowledge of turfgrass maintenance and business management challenges. The company said his experience also will help superintendents and grounds managers accurately diagnose problems and develop comprehensive solutions that promote healthy turf while respecting and maximizing ROI.

He earned a B.S. in ornamental horticulture from the University of Illinois and is a certified golf course superintendent (CGCS). He is an active member in several golf course superintendent organizations including the GCSAA, Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents and North West Illinois Golf Course Superintendents Association.

## // IN MEMORIAM

### PENN STATE'S DICK FOX DIES

Former Penn State University soil fertility researcher Richard "Dick" Fox died March 1, in Prescott, Ariz., from heart failure.

He attended Carleton College in Northfield, Minn., on a Union Carbide scholarship, and received a B.A. in chemistry. Dick married fellow Carleton graduate Sarah C. Hardin in 1961. She died in 1993. After obtaining his M.S. and Ph.D. in agricultural chemistry and soils from the University of Arizona, he lived and worked in Peru and Puerto Rico on USAID tropical soils research projects.

Fox joined the Penn State University's agronomy department in 1975. His soil fertility research was partially responsible for a 20 percent reduction in nitrogen fertilizer use in Pennsylvania, which both increased the profitability for farmers and reduced water pollution. Dick received numerous professional honors and research awards over the course of his career. He retired at the end of 2001 as Professor Emeritus and moved to Prescott, Ariz., in 2003, with Robin Giles Kendall, his partner since 1997.

## // REST EASY, DAVE

### IN MEMORIAM: DAVID W. FEARIS

 Dave Fearis, CGCS-Ret., passed away last month.

Fearis, a 53-year GCSAA member, served as association president in 1999 and was the director of membership for GCSAA from 2005 to 2010. From 1985 to 2000, Fearis oversaw Blue Hills CC in Kansas City, Mo. He served on the boards of the Heart of America GCSA and the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation, and he was president of The First Tee of Greater Kansas City in 2006-07.

A graduate of Purdue University, Fearis' first superintendent job was at the Country Club of Peoria (Ill.). Later on, at Blue Hills CC, he hosted numerous Children's Mercy Classics, the annual charity event of Major champion Tom Watson.

In a 2013 article, he advised our readers on the importance of communication. He said his success was not because he was the most talented superintendent, but because he was a good communicator with golfers. "On weekends I'd do setup, then I'd come back to the pro shop — the assistant pro



was inevitably late — so I'd go in and make a pot of coffee and greet the early golfers. It's the little things, but it's on that line of communication."

*Continued from page 8*

in a wider scope," he said. "That being said, yesterday or today, we are really part of Bayer. Obviously, it gives us a very strong portfolio of innovation, but also limitations. Tomorrow, we are open to new partnerships and new ways of accessing an increase in speed in innovation."

Galliou noted that Bayer's portfolio and the people taking care of its customers won't change.

"We are building on who we are today, in terms of people, portfolio, regulatory support, products and solutions," he said. "In the future, they might see us investing in additional innovation, wanting to capture additional partnerships and bring new solutions to the market. We will continue to be the partner for Bayer Innovation

in the future."

He added that Bayer will continue its support of events such as Women in Golf.

"I was the head of the Bayer Environmental Science Americas when Women in Golf was created, so I'm very proud of that one in particular," he said. "We will continue 100 percent of our engagements with the community, with the industry and everything that we're doing as a member of this industry."

At this time, Galliou said it is too early to discuss a potential buyer.

Bayer has also named Jacqueline M. Applegate, Ph.D., to lead Crop Science North America, effective March 1. She currently heads the division's Environmental Science and Vegetable Seeds businesses.



## EMAILS @ TEXTS # TWEETS

Seth,

I saw the job description that requested greens stimping 11 at 2 p.m., and I understand their viewpoint, considering where it was located, short golf season and clientele.

I don't think many superintendents enjoy being told what to do, but it is just another challenge for the superintendent, both from a communication issue and a main-

tenance standard. There are many questions for that standard for stimping 11 at 2 p.m., such as where to stimp, what green(s) and location on the green, (level surfaces?).

Obviously, at any golf course, communication and educating members is very important.

Sincerely,

**Tim Scott**  
CGCS, Stoney Creek GC  
Oak Lawn, Ill.

## Ask Thad

BY THAD THOMPSON

Superintendent  
Terry Hills GC, Batavia, N.Y.



### What is your take on the 2 p.m. Stimp check?

— Sam, Kansas City, Mo.

Greens rolling at 11 feet at 2 p.m. every day, 1.9 percent organic matter, constant color, 100 percent turf coverage, free of all standing water and saturated areas, superintendent responsible for any misapplication resulting in turf loss ... Apart from the first two ridiculous points in a JOB DESCRIPTION, isn't this what we try to hold ourselves too anyway? I know my daily expectations and goals fall right in these parameters, and the last thing I need is a GM looking over my shoulder. To the general managers, owners, boards of directors and greens committees looking for quality applicants, we are turfgrass professionals that hold ourselves to a higher standard than any job description.

### Metal before, during or after fertilization?

— Darwin, Parry Sound, Ont., Canada

All of the above! I've been into heavy metal music since I was in high school and as a semi-grownup. It's always been on around the house and in the background. My two boys are in their 20s and are huge metalheads from rocking out since they were babies. Pots and pans as drums, brooms as air guitars and Guitar Hero as a teaching tool. They are now living libraries of heavy metal, and their knowledge puts me to shame. My son Dylan is the drummer in the metal band Invicta and my son Daley is an awesome guitarist who sits in with his brother on different projects. Ahh, family bonding.



Got a question for Thad? Tweet to @TerryHillsMaint and @Golfdom or email Thad at [thadthompson@terryhills.com](mailto:thadthompson@terryhills.com)



## #TurfTweetoftheMonth

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**Greg Niendorf**

@gregniendorf

Superintendent, Shadow Creek GC,  
Las Vegas

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# Go the Distance with Rayora™

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to Dollar Spot

Rayora is redefining what it means to be strong with proven turf safety. With confirmed 21-day Dollar Spot control - rain or shine - in spring, summer or fall, Rayora goes the distance.

For more information, visit [rayorafungicide.com](http://rayorafungicide.com)



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# Rayora™ Fungicide with Flutriafol Provides 21-day Control on Dollar Spot



When FMC Professional Solutions first introduced Rayora™ Fungicide early last year as a next generation DMI fungicide designed to control Dollar Spot while providing a layer of added protection from brown patch, the expected Dollar Spot efficacy was known to be at a 14-day interval.

One year later – already well-known by golf course superintendents, operators and managers for excellent control of Dollar Spot – the efficacy of Rayora Fungicide with the breakthrough active ingredient flutriafol is **now confirmed at a 21-day interval**, according to location trials recently conducted on fairways at both Ohio and Michigan State Universities.

“This new data, recently demonstrated in two new and distinct trials, expands the value-added elements of Rayora and Dollar Spot control for superintendents,” said Evan Parenti, golf and lawn care market manager for FMC. “Rayora continues to show excellent control of Dollar Spot with a wider application interval and an ability to perform in the face of challenges like pop-up showers.”

The latest data shows that flexibility in application interval demonstrated Dollar Spot control on creeping bentgrass fairways at the 1.4 fl. oz./1000 ft<sup>2</sup> rate of Rayora Fungicide, regardless of irrigation. This is due to flutriafol’s uniquely fast uptake into the plant’s roots and shoots. As Rayora Fungicide is formulated as a suspension concentrate, it can still be easily tank mixed with other fungicides, insecticides, herbicides and plant growth regulators.

In both trials, Rayora Fungicide clearly demonstrated unparalleled root uptake and foliar activity for 21 days. Superintendents can be confident that the inside-out protection and curative activity Rayora Fungicide offers will lessen the impact of Dollar Spot. With rapid absorption via roots and translocation through the xylem, protection from foliar disease is provided to mature and newly developed leaf material.

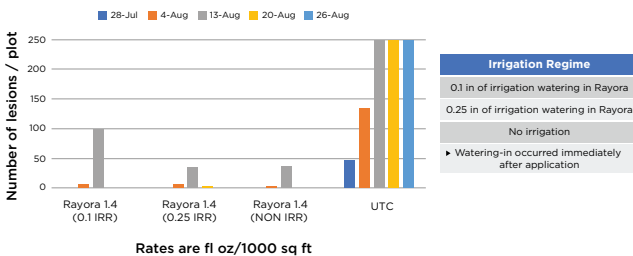
Rayora Fungicide also maintained excellent turf quality throughout trial applications. With this proven turf safety, Rayora Fungicide is redefining what it means to be strong, yet safe on turf...and now, for longer.

“Rayora gave excellent control of Dollar Spot on a 21-day interval while demonstrating excellent movement from the roots to the foliage.”

J.M. Vargas Jr., Ph.D.  
Michigan State University

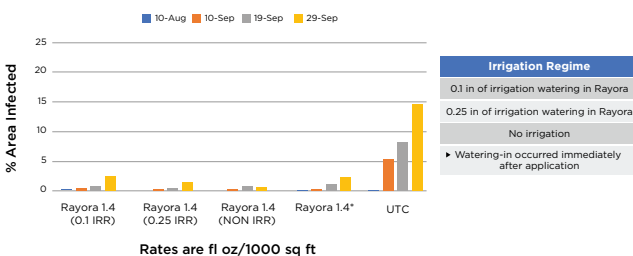


**Preventative Dollar Spot Control: 21-Day Application Interval (High Rate)**



Mr. Todd Hicks, The Ohio State University  
Initial Application June 8, 2020  
Creeping Bentgrass: ‘Penncross’  
Treatments applied on 21-day intervals

**Preventative Dollar Spot Control: 21-Day Application Interval (High Rate)**



Ms. Nancy Dykema, Michigan State University  
Initial Application June 4, 2020  
Creeping Bentgrass  
Treatments applied on 21-day intervals; 6 applications  
\*Applied at 96 GPA

## FMC True Champions – GCSAA Give Back Program

In addition to supporting the industry with effective, long-lasting products such as Rayora Fungicide, FMC provides added support to the industry through the FMC Give Back program, an initiative driven by the FMC True Champions program. The FMC True Champions program is a source for golf course superintendents and managers to access valuable Product Rewards, Product Assurances and Business Building Solutions to help them manage their course.

The program supports industry initiatives and associations like the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). In an effort to support local GCSAA chapters, annual contributions are set aside based on annual purchases. With new data to support a 21-day interval for Rayora Fungicide and the recent launch of Kalida™ Fungicide, the 2021 GCSAA Give Back Program is in full swing. To enroll, visit [FMCTrueChampions.com](http://FMCTrueChampions.com).







“How can we expect ourselves or others to be successful if we don’t set goals or deadlines? If you have nothing to aim for, you’ll never attempt to reach it.”

**ALAN FITZGERALD**, *superintendent,*  
*LedgeRock GC, Mohnton, Pa.*

## The art of procrastination

**W**inter is the time of the year where I burn through my unused vacation time, and due to COVID and doing practically nothing in 2020, I had a lot to take this winter. Between the usual winter stuff of the holidays, working on the house and, this year, nursing a shoulder injury — in the extra time that I had, I found myself wandering down more and more Facebook and YouTube rabbit holes.

It’s so easy to be reading a magazine on the iPad, see a reference that I am not 100 percent sure of and end up an hour later having learned some completely unrelated random information. Heaven forbid I click on a Facebook video, as minutes later I am watching ships crash (strangely calming watching something so big and slow hit something) or crazy Russian drivers doing their thing or some random standup comedian, all of which I suddenly cannot get enough of.

And then, thanks to the tech overlords’ algorithms, they will throw in something new like a TED Talk to keep me sucked in. One of these really struck a chord with me,

largely because I instantly related to it: “Inside the Mind of a Master Procrastinator” by Tim Urban. You’re welcome for the rabbit hole I have just sent you down.

That title was enough to draw me in, but I quickly realized he was actually talking *about* me, not *to* me (and, let’s face it: It proves that Facebook knows more about me than I do). Except for writing these columns, I have never missed a deadline. Saying that, I have always found that no matter how much preparation I have put in, I am still cramming at the 11th hour. Take, for example, the 9-hole golf course we had to “irrigate” for my irrigation class at Penn State. The Saturday

night before it was due, I am standing in the lobby of the dorm with multiple sets of drawings taped to the glass lobby door (the only spot big enough to display the sheets) with a bright light behind it so that I could easily trace my hard points to each layer. As 2:30 a.m. rolled around, and the revelers returned home, it created a lot of “that’s a cool major” coupled with an incoherent conversation.

Thankfully, due to that bit of resourcefulness saving a lot of time, the only consolation of missing my Saturday night was that I rested easy on Sunday and aced the class on Monday. In reflection, I am still impressed at those moments of ingenious clarity

when I was younger, even if they were caused by panic.

This is what I related to in the TED Talk — a sudden realization that we need panic stations to kick in to get a project done. The instant gratification monkey that sucks me down the interweb wormholes (which, ironically, is how I found the video ...) might be in control more than I expected. Then, the panic monster steps in, and all is saved (these characters will make a lot more sense if you watch the video). When Seth asked me to write for *Golfdom*, we discussed my ideas for the column, and I felt that I had no problem in getting several written within a year — but we both made the mistake of not setting a monthly deadline. And, hence, my procrastination and failure to get them out in a timely manner.

It turns out we are all procrastinators to some extent; we enjoy living life and trying not to worry about things until we must. These things don’t have to be a *Golfdom* column or an irrigation project due on Monday, but this simple concept can make you a better person and manager — how can we expect ourselves or others to be successful if we don’t set goals or deadlines? If you have nothing to aim for, you’ll never attempt to reach it.

Now, all I have to do is make sure my columns are in by the print deadline ... let’s see how well I do next month! **G**

Alan FitzGerald ([alan@ledgerockgolf.com](mailto:alan@ledgerockgolf.com)) is superintendent at LedgeRock GC in Mohnton, Pa.



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What does it take to host two Majors at the same course, with 12 years of separation between them?  
Work like a boss.

# Like a Stone

BY SETH JONES



Jeff Stone, superintendent, and Robert Polk, assistant superintendent, at the Ocean Course last month.



# Life moves a little slower in Charleston, S.C. It's the old South. Southern Hospitality. Porch swings and sweet tea.

Life moves a little faster at the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island Resort. North/south winds, big gusts. It ages daily, but not like a normal golf course. They say this course ages in dog years.

"Pete (Dye) hit the nail on the head when he said this course is always moving," says Jeff Stone, longtime superintendent of the course. "Like today, we went and added some sand to some waste areas,

but the wind is blowing, and the sand will blow across turf areas. The golf course is always changing. It's constantly evolving. This golf course evolves faster than 90 percent of the other golf courses out there. At some courses, once every five years, you redo a bunker lip because the sand has been hit out of it after so long. Here, that can happen in a matter of 18 months."

If this is a course that ages in dog years,

then Stone has seen this course age more than 100 years.

The 2021 PGA Championship embarks on the course next month. It will be Stone's second PGA Championship at the course. This dog still hunts.

## A history course

Built by Pete and Alice Dye in 1991, the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island Resort has made a rich history for itself in a short time (see sidebar, p. 35). 1991's "War at the Shore" is one of the more famous Ryder Cup matches, and a curly-haired Rory McIlroy's

*Continued on page 18*





*Continued from page 17*

eight-stroke margin of victory in the 2012 PGA Championship came at a time when the Irishman looked like Tiger Woods 2.0.

Now, the 2021 PGA Championship arrives May 20-23, and the course and the crew are ready to add to that history.

“It’s your life’s work to show it off,” says assistant superintendent Robert Polk, a former intern at the course. The proud Clemson grad grew up in the area. “What better way to (show it off) than on national television? Everybody’s ready.”

Another former intern of Kiawah Island Resort is Stone, who interned there in 1989. A native of New Smyrna Beach, Fla., Stone got into the business because working golf maintenance was his best way to hustle free golf.

“The decisions you make between the ages of 20 and 24 usually last you for the next 30 years,” Stone says. “So, I started



Rory McIlroy after an eight-stroke victory at the Ocean Course in 2012.

working on a golf course probably two years after graduating high school. I really enjoyed what I was doing and was looking for a career to get into.”

Stone was accepted into Lake City Community College (now Florida Gateway College) in 1987, interned in the Kiawah fam-

ily in 1989 and graduated in 1990. Upon graduation, Stone says he was fortunate and hired back on as an assistant by then-director of golf George Frye at Kiawah’s Marsh Point.

“I’m very blessed to have been able to spend pretty much my entire turf career here on Kiawah,” Stone says. “Being able to get up and see the sun rise over the Atlantic Ocean and then set in the evening, what’s not to like about it? I’ve been very fortunate to be able to be in a location and work for the resort that I do work for.”

### Remembering Pete Dye

Stone’s career choice allowed him to meet some of his childhood heroes. But he calls his relationship with Ocean Course architect Pete Dye the highlight of his career. He remembers seeing Dye when he was building the course back in 1989 and 1990.

*Continued on page 35*

PHOTO PREVIOUS PAGE BY STACY HOWELL. PHOTO OF RORY MCILROY: PGA OF AMERICA

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A SUPPLEMENT TO

# Golfdom

## *Focus on* **FAIRWAYS**

### ***INSIDE***

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**Maximizing spray programs... *FS4***

**A survey of the 2020 season... *FS10***

**A look at two new fungicides... *FS12***

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**COURSEPOWER**



# Focus on FAIRWAYS



**BY BRIAN THOMPSON**  
Turf Marketing Manager  
BASF

**G**reetings from the BASF Turf team! As the spring season approaches and the temperatures gradually rise, we know you, our customers, will be busier than ever getting your courses prepped for eager golfers ready to enjoy the game. In the wake of a very challenging 2020, one unanimous silver lining was the renewed interest and popularity in golf as a safe outlet from the trials and tribulations of COVID-19. While we would all agree that this lift is a great benefit to our industry, it doesn't come without its inherent set of challenges to superintendents around the country. It's our mission at BASF to remain connected to our customer community and help bring innovative solutions to meet your needs.

In this series titled "Focus on Fairways," we will highlight how the increased play volume has made managing quality turf on the largest parcel of your properties difficult and how BASF can help rally to support you and address these concerns. Full tee sheets, early start times and ever-present labor issues make executing normal maintenance practices more difficult than ever. You have communicated to us the importance of having products that not only are highly effective, but that also offer great longevity at a fair price. Whether minimizing or stretching applications, dealing with Mother Nature's curveballs or simply not having the labor to make a timely spray, BASF offers class-leading chemistries to give you the best chance of success.

When we look at the dominant pathogen on fairway turf, dollar spot clearly becomes public enemy No. 1. With the increased amount of play golf courses are receiving, opportunities to accomplish the most basic maintenance practices over 25-plus acres of manicured turf are becoming fewer and farther between. Regular mowing (dew removal), frequent fertilization (lean turf stands) and increased traffic are all contributing factors that increase dollar spot pressure. Enter our trifecta offering of dollar spot fungicides that give you the best foundation for controlling this persistent disease throughout the season:

**Emerald® Fungicide** — Emerald fungicide sets the stage for a successful dollar spot program. Programs that begin and end the season with Emerald fungicide have historically shown to not only reduce disease symptoms, but also help the superintendent stay ahead of the curve when fighting dollar spot. Emerald fungicide standardized the early/last bookend approach to a successful rotation.

**Maxtima® Fungicide** — Maxtima fungicide is the newest addition to the BASF stable of fairway fungicides. This cutting-edge DMI can safely and affordably be sprayed at any temperature and on any turf. Additionally, Maxtima fungicide has shown great control of many dollar spot strains that have historically been deemed as resistant to older DMI chemistry. This is a true innovation that brings an important class of chemistry back into the hands of superintendents as a viable tool in the rotation.

**Xzemplar® Fungicide** — Xzemplar fungicide provides the great benefits of fast-acting, curative control with class-leading longevity as a broad-spectrum fungicide. This workhorse SDHI chemistry has years of university-driven data to show that Xzemplar fungicide is at the top of the list in dollar spot treatments.

Recently, at Virtual GIS, BASF unveiled the CoursePower Diagnostic — a new tool that allows you to input key metrics unique to your geography and turf type to determine a customized program to help you manage your diseases and optimize plant health. Be sure to check out the CoursePower Diagnostic and see how having BASF in your corner can help you streamline your approach to disease management. Also, new coming later this year, we will be introducing Encartis™ fungicide to the fairway value offering. Encartis fungicide will continue BASF's commitment to delivering highly effective products with value to the superintendent at the forefront. We hope BASF can help you easily and effectively add "Focus on your Fairways" and achieve success in 2021!

Sincerely,

Brian Thompson

**BASF**  
We create chemistry

# More play, less spray

*When the pandemic caused rounds played numbers to skyrocket, superintendents maximized their programs*

BY SETH JONES

**T**he 2020 golf season will be forever remembered by anyone working in the industry. Early on, there was some doubt if COVID-19 would be anything more than a news story. Then, it became a serious story for the industry, shutting down golf courses coast to coast. And then, the next twist, golf's record-setting rounds played numbers based on the game being a safe, socially distant sport.

With so much tumult — and traffic — in one season, superintendents were put to the test. These four superintendents rose to the occasion and provided fabulous fairways for a golfing public hungry for a safe break from the “new normal.”

## **A PERFECT FIT**

Former farm kid turned superintendent Craig Kight has the desire to grow things in his blood. With some schooling and his big brother working as a superintendent in central Missouri, it was almost inevitable he'd become an assistant superintendent in the St. Louis area, latching on at Forest Park Golf Course, part of what was then called the American Golf Corp.

That move set off a 20-plus year career moving all over the country seeing all types of turfgrasses and golf clubs with stints in St. Louis, Chicago and Long Island, working for American Golf Corp., ClubCorp and now Arcis Golf.

“It's been a great journey in life and in the turf industry,” Kight says. “It's something I'm proud of, that I still communicate with a lot of friends from all over the United States that I've had the privilege of meeting.”

***Kight's ventings and aerifications are up, but his sprays are down, to the tune of 50 percent.***

---

Today, Kight is the superintendent of Eagle Brook Country Club in Geneva, IL, as well as the area's regional superintendent for Arcis Golf. Eagle Brook was built in 1992, and Kight is only the second superintendent of the property, replacing his friend and mentor Greg Johnson in 2015. For Arcis Golf, he

serves as a consultant for four other Chicagoland golf courses.

“I've always taken pride in teaching and helping others to be successful,” Kight says of his regional superintendent duties. “I'm more of a sounding block. We have four other superintendents who are successful in their own careers, at their own facilities. On the management side of turf, it is something that intrigues me, to get to help other people.”

Eagle Brook resides in a neighborhood community and has a 94-acre wetland in the middle of the property. Kight calls it a “fun atmosphere” club with an active membership and a growing junior program of 130 golfers. Every summer, Kight spends a few days with the junior golfers teaching them the etiquette of the game.

When thinking back to the 2020 golf season, Kight calls it, “Busy, maybe even too busy.”

In Kight's first year, the course saw 12,000 rounds of golf. In 2020, the course accommodated 23,000 rounds from just June 1 to December 1. Between 230 and 260 rounds on weekend days were common. Thankfully, golfers seem to be accommodating when it comes to the crew's cultural practices on fairways.

“Our fairways are wide; our height of cut is .400, and that's consistent from April 1 to our last mow, usually in November,” Kight says. “We're getting out





Eagle Brook Golf Club in Geneva, IL, has only had two superintendents since it opened in 1992: Greg Johnson and Craig Kight.

there more with aerifiers. Creating more air channels with the native clay soils of Illinois seems to make them better.”

Kight’s ventings and aerifications are up, but his sprays are down, to the tune of 50 percent.

“I was a generic applicator due to the size of the acres we have, and we had to watch our dollars in terms of fuel, labor and product applied,” Kight says. “With the new chemistries we’re seeing, in my opinion, there’s no reason to go with generics. In 2015, we completed eight applications on our fairways. Fiscal year 2020, we’re down to four. That speaks volumes to the chemistry that we have seen.”

At Eagle Brook, as well as at Kight’s regional courses, they rely on Maxtima® fungicide and Xzemplar® fun-

gicide from BASF. Kights says he saw 21 days of control when he was using generics, and now he sees 30 to 34 days of control, depending on weather, with these BASF products. He is down to one spray a month, which is easier to complete in the rare in-between play time they get with increased golfer traffic.

“It’s just a savior overall, throughout the entire operation of our department,” Kight says.

Kight remembers he first heard about the success of Maxtima fungicide from his brother, and then it was Andy Morris, former superintendent at Country Club of Peoria (IL), now sales representative for BASF, who came to visit him and explain how the product could improve conditions at Eagle Brook.

“The diseases that we see — anthracnose, summer patch, dollar spot — I remember talking to Andy about it before we even tried it,” Kight says. “This is curative and preventive on the label — it’s a perfect fit. It’s neat to see these companies; they’re looking out for the best for the course, the best of the environment and what is the best cost. I truly think the days of breaking the bank are over.”

### **RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME**

A native of New Zealand, former boat skipper Jeff Kerr got his start in the industry working on cricket fields, with a goal of someday making the switch to golf. When he and his wife moved to the states, they moved near her home

*Continued on page FWS6*

PHOTO BY: CRAIG KIGHT



Sunset Valley Golf Course  
in Pompton Plains, NJ.



Continued from page FWS5

of Lincoln, IL. Kerr got a job working at Country Club of Peoria about 40 minutes away.

Kerr calls it a case of the right place at the right time. He had spent six years as the assistant superintendent under Andy Morris when Morris took a job as a regional sales representative with BASF. The Country Club of Peoria gave Kerr a yearlong tryout, and he passed the test. Now, he's the superintendent at a private club with 400 members that will celebrate its 125th anniversary next year.

"Most of central Illinois is what I call 'Nebraska flat,' but we're on a bluff of the Illinois river," Kerr says of the course. "A lot of the undulations are nat-

ural, and it's a tight course ... less than 100 acres for the whole property. I do rely on wetting agents to keep moisture even through the profile. Sometimes, I wish we had a flat course, but this one is much more interesting."

Kerr was excited to see the course get an increase in play in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic canceling so many other activities.

"A whole lot more kids got to play golf because their other sports were canceled," Kerr says. "There was much more interest in golf for families, and having those people out here makes my job more pleasurable. The membership really supported the club, so it was a big win for us."

Kerr admits there were big boots to fill when Morris left the course after 16 years of serving as the superintendent, but working alongside Morris also gave Kerr the confidence, he says, because he got to learn from a true professional. Many of Morris' practices, including the daily task list and the spray program, remain intact.

But, there was one product that wasn't available to Morris when he was maintaining Country Club of Peoria — Maxtima fungicide.

"When Andy was asked to work for BASF, he said to me, 'There's a big product coming out, and they've been pretty keen to have me work for them,'" Kerr recalls. "Andy is very clued up with his chemicals and chemistry. He said to me, 'It's a bit of a game-changer.'"

Kerr agrees with that game-changer comment Morris gave him a few seasons ago. Kerr says the length of control Maxtima fungicide gives him is what really impresses.



Jeff Kerr

"It's a DMI, but it's a different kind of DMI. The caliber is a different kind. One pass around all fairways, and I'd get 30 days (of control)," Kerr says. "Sometimes, it was 45 days, and I'd just watch for something to pop up. I got 30 to 45 days of protection out of Maxtima (fungicide) seamlessly."

A gearhead who owns a bright red '68 Buick Riviera, Kerr calls Maxtima fungicide "a Cadillac spray" with an aggressive price point.

"It's a different type of chemistry in the shed, something the guys are looking for to keep the grass on its toes," Kerr says. "Being a new product on the market for 2020, it's a fantastic option for any time of the year. The fact that it's a unique, nonphytotoxic DMI type of chemistry that I can spray in whatever conditions are prevailing is a huge weight off my shoulders. In 2020, I left the fairways alone for 21 days in June until I saw *Pythium* conditions around the corner, and I followed up with Insignia® (SC Intrinsic brand fungicide)."

## SUNSET & BERKSHIRE VALLEY

Dan Clark and Craig Kraft work in the same county and see many of the same challenges at their respec-



Dan Clark

tive courses. The main challenge is the amount of golf they see each season.

Last year, Sunset Valley Golf Course, Pompton Plains, N.J., hosted 45,000 rounds, despite COVID-19 restrictions closing the course for six weeks.

"Sunset Valley is fast-paced, it never stops, it never rests," says Clark.

"We're busy — of course, not as busy as Dan," says Kraft, superintendent at

Continued on page FWS8



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# Focus on FAIRWAYS



Berkshire Valley GC is carved into a mountainside and has breathtaking views on its first five holes.



Kraft uses a 1,600-gallon mix tank from SynaTek, saving two hours of spray time.

*Continued from page FWS6*

Berkshire Valley GC, Oak Ridge, N.J. “We average around 37,000 rounds a year in a nine-month season. Play begins at sunrise daily.”

With the packed tee sheet and a challenging layout of the course at Berkshire Valley, getting in enough time to spray fairways can be difficult. It’s possible for the sprayer to be more than a mile from the shop when it runs out. Thankfully, the combination of a switch in products and a new mix tank has eased this burden.

“Up until three years ago, I exclusively used generic products for my fairway program on a two-week interval,” Kraft says. “When the pressure was high, I would struggle to get two weeks out of some of those applications and I’d see breakthrough at ten days.”

Kraft switched to a BASF fairway program and says all his bases are covered, even in middle and late July when



**Craig Kraft**

disease pressure is at its worst. Dollar spot, brown patch, leaf spot, fairy ring, anthracnose and summer patch are all held at bay.

Kraft also added a 1,600-gallon mix tank from SynaTek to accommodate his 30 acres of fairways. With the large capacity tank, he only has to mix once to fill a 300-gallon sprayer five times, he can knock out all fairway applications in a four-hour window, from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m., and stay ahead of golfers.

“The lower use rates of the newer BASF products and the three-week intervals mean I’m mixing quicker and I’m making less applications throughout the season, both of which are critical in my situation,” he says. “Yet, the control of these products on a three-week interval is what’s most impressive. That and the service from Paul Ramina, BASF and Mike Handley, Grass Roots Turf Products, is second to none. These guys go out of their way to accommodate me.”

Clark echoes those comments. He says in the 2020 season he didn’t see “a fleck” of disease and credits his spray program.

“Last year was my second season of using Maxtima (fungicide) on fairways, but I’ve been using Lexicon® (Intrinsic brand fungicide) and Drive® (XLR8 herbicide) and Insignia (SC Intrinsic brand fungicide) for years,” he says. “Lexicon is my Fourth of July spray every year, no matter what. I know it’s not going to let me down.”

Kraft says that after doing the math and accounting for the longevity of the products, he realized the BASF portfolio of products is affordable.

“Dan and I have smaller crews, so we’re the ones doing the applications,” Kraft says. “We have other things to do throughout the day too. Any time we can reduce time on the sprayers, it’s a big help.”



# Navicon<sup>®</sup>

## Intrinsic<sup>®</sup> Brand Fungicide

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Navicon<sup>®</sup> Intrinsic<sup>®</sup> brand fungicide. This highly advanced new fungicide combines the plant health benefits of Intrinsic brand fungicides with a first-of-its-kind DMI chemistry to deliver broad-spectrum disease control unmatched by its competitors.

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# Stay in control

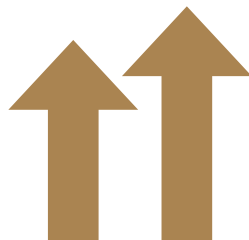
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**93%**

of superintendents reported positive results



**95%**

of superintendents would recommend to a colleague

Source: BASF survey of 183 product users, July 2020

*"There are rave reviews from those managing bermudagrass ... it's really strong on take-all root rot; it's performed very well for fairy ring. And, almost everybody I've talked to has said that their disease management has improved by incorporating this into their program."*

**JIM KERNS, PH.D.**

Associate Professor, Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, North Carolina State University

*On a scale of 1 to 5 stars, how would you rate the value of these two products?*

**39%** ★★★★★

**38%** ★★★★★

**16%** ★★★

*"When applied preventively, we've seen Maxtima and Navicon give 21 to 28 days of control. And, with intervals like that, you're going to be saving time and resources and also getting excellent performance."*

**CAMERON STEPHENS, PH.D.**

Technical Market Manager, BASF





We create chemistry

*"With a generic, people might get 21 days (control), but let's be honest, there's active fungi in the plant. What we have seen with Maxtima is a good 30- to 34-day rotation, depending on weather ... but that's been our average now. We're going down to one spray a month."*

**CRAIG KIGHT**

Superintendent, Eagle Brook Country Club & Regional Superintendent, Arcis Golf, Geneva, IL

6% ★★

2% ★

Source: BASF survey of 183 product users, July 2020  
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*"I'm on a three-week interval now, and I couldn't be happier with the results. With these new products, a three-week interval means I'm mixing quicker and making less applications throughout the course of the season. Both are critical in being able to stay ahead."*

**CRAIG KRAFT**

Superintendent, Berkshire Valley GC, Oak Ridge, NJ

To learn more about what these superintendents and researchers are seeing, talk to your BASF sales rep about Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide today.



// **SAFE, SOUND AND SOLVING PROBLEMS**

# In with the new

*Two experts discuss the safety, disease control and time and labor savings of Maxtima® fungicide and Navicon® Intrinsic® brand fungicide*

**BY ABBY HART**

It's not every day that a new fungicide arrives on the scene and causes a stir — but Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide made waves when Jim Kerns, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at North Carolina State University, first encountered it.

"It's a very exciting material dating back, gosh, five years ago was the first time I looked at it," Kerns says. "A number of us in the turf pathology group were texting one another, 'What is this material? What is this material?'"

Maxtima fungicide is a demethylase inhibitor (DMI) fungicide, but Kerns likes to say "it's in a new wave of DMI fungicides that doesn't have the growth regulation or phytotoxicity associated with it, as previous DMIs have had." He says it has shown faster and better control of multiple diseases compared to other DMI fungicides. Navicon Intrinsic

brand fungicide includes the DMI mefentrifluconazole, mixed with pyraclostrobin, which is a very strong quinone outside inhibitor (QoI) fungicide.

Both fungicides use the active ingredient mefentrifluconazole, an isopropanol-azole. The new chemistry can be applied at a range of temperatures with very good turfgrass safety — which caught the eyes of researchers as the products were in trials at N.C. State.



**Jim Kerns**

"What was memorable about the Maxtima (fungicide) and Navicon (Intrinsic brand fungicide) was the disease control shown in our research plots," Kerns says. "You could see these plots, I mean, literally (as you're) pulling up to them. You could always pick them out because of the amount of disease con-

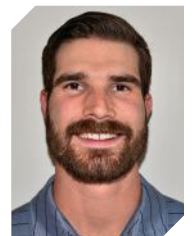


Maxtima and Navicon Intrinsic fungicides can be applied to a variety of turfgrasses.

trol these materials provided."

"I think two of the trials that stand out to me was when we first started working with Maxtima (fungicide) and Navicon (Intrinsic brand fungicide) for spring dead spot and take-all root rot management," Kerns says. "We all noticed how well the products were performing on various diseases."

Cameron Stephens, Ph.D., Technical Market Manager for turf and ornamentals for BASF, studied the products as a graduate research assistant at N.C. State. He joined BASF in early 2021.



**Cameron Stephens**

Stephens says that the products showed excellent turfgrass safety which is unusual for DMIs — especially when applied at high temperatures. "One (trial) that stood out to me was we were applying





four times the label rate of this new DMI on a cool-season putting green in North Carolina in the middle of the summer. And, we saw no (phytotoxicity) or turfgrass injury,” he says.

### **A DYNAMIC DISEASE-FIGHTER**

When N.C. State researchers tested these new chemistries, they began with common turfgrass diseases like dollar spot and brown patch. Kerns also stated they provide excellent control of summer patch, anthracnose, fairy ring and take-all root rot on bermudagrass as well.

Kerns says that the release of Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide expands BASF’s portfolio of solutions for turfgrass disease management. “With the amount of stress that we are dealing with on warm- and cool-season turfgrass, it provides a lot of peace of mind through the season to be able to start with something like a Navicon (Intrinsic brand fungicide),

(then) 28, or 21 days later, come in with a Lexicon® (Intrinsic brand fungicide) application,” he says.

### **A NEW ROTATION PARTNER**

The new DMI chemistry helps combat the issue of fungicide resistance because it offers a new, safe option in the DMI class of chemistry. This helps with the overreliance on succinate dehydrogenase inhibitor (SDHI) fungicides, which have become more popular in the industry over the last few years.

Kerns says the arrival of Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide fit very well into the rotation to break up back-to-back or repeated applications of an SDHI while providing excellent disease control.

“We pride ourselves on the amount of disease pressure that we get here in Raleigh, and we have very few products that last 21 days for dollar spot. That’s where I think Maxtima (fungicide) is a

standout for me,” Kerns says. “We’ve tested it in the mountains of North Carolina, which is a very hard environment for longevity because they get 60 to 70 inches of rainfall — and we were getting 21 days of control.”

Kerns says that resistance is less of a concern with these new fungicides. “I think having a good new DMI that (superintendents) can apply at any time of the year without risk to turf safety helps with that overreliance on the SDHI.”

“Just having the options to rotate with a really efficacious DMI or DMI+QoI combination at all times of the year, including the middle of the summer, is really important for resistance management,” Stephens adds.

### **A FAIRWAY FUNGICIDE**

How can these two products help superintendents maintain top conditions

*Continued on page FWS14*

PHOTO BY: JIM KERNS





Maxtima and Navicon Intrinsic fungicides allow superintendents to stretch application windows, increasing efficiency.

*Continued from page FWS13*

on fairways? Stephens says that both Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide and Maxtima fungicide can play a major role in fairway programs because of the longevity of the product. He says when applied preventively, both have shown up to 21 to 28 days of disease control. “With intervals like that, you’re going to be saving time and resources while getting excellent performance.”

Both Kerns and Stephens agree that Maxtima fungicide provides a cost-effective option for superintendents controlling many different diseases on warm- and cool-season fairways.

Kerns recommends the following rotation for fairways: “You could start the season with a Maxtima (fungicide) application, rotate to Xzemplar® fungicide, then go to a contact fungicide, then back to another Maxtima (fungicide) application in July ... that would be an outstanding fairway approach, and you’d have great rotation of the actives,” Kerns says.

Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide is a more premium brand fungicide that combines the active ingredient in Max-

tima fungicide with the plant health benefits of the Insignia Intrinsic brand (pyraclostrobin) fungicide product. Combining mefentrifluconazole with pyraclostrobin not only expands the number of diseases this product can control, but it also provides an increase in plant growth efficiency and improved stress tolerance.

### **A TOP PERFORMER**

Kerns believes using Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide gives superintendents flexibility because it will allow them to stretch application intervals if they choose, which could save a lot of time, money and labor — especially with the ongoing pandemic.

But, he says, performance is more of a concern than even labor and time. “That’s more important to a golf course superintendent, in my experience ... they want to know, ‘I’ve spent the money on this, is it going to perform?’” he says. “I think every person that’s worked with it has seen them perform well. The growers have come to me and said how well these materials have performed.”

Kerns adds that superintendents managing both cool-season and warm-season grasses are seeing great results.

“Some of our superintendents that were managing bentgrass in our area sprayed Lexicon (Intrinsic brand fungicide) pretty religiously throughout the summer. This gives them an added benefit of having Navicon (Intrinsic brand fungicide) in July, August — and everybody I’ve talked to has really enjoyed the results they’ve seen,” he explains. “More importantly, there are rave reviews from those managing bermudagrass ... this material is really strong on take-all root rot, and it’s performed very well on fairy ring. Almost everybody I’ve talked to has said that their disease management has improved by incorporating this into their program.”

Stephens adds that use rates have been an ongoing concern for superintendents as well and that the Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide labels provide low-use rates. “When you’re combining low-use rates with excellent longevity of disease control, you’re definitely going out with the sprayer less, and that’s going to save time and labor.”

Stephens says that he’s received positive feedback from superintendents who are excited about the versatility of these new products. “You hear a lot from the superintendents about the safety of these new products, which has been excellent,” he says. “Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide efficacy is another huge point, and it is exciting how many diseases these products can control. Maxtima fungicide and Navicon Intrinsic brand fungicide offer great versatility as they can be used to control many different turfgrass diseases on tees, fairways and greens with exceptional turfgrass safety.” **G**

PHOTO BY: JIM KERNS

# EOP saves the day

The BASF Early Order Program helps The Architects Club in Phillipsburg, NJ manage costs and disease effectively

For Dan Livingston, superintendent of The Architects Golf Club in Phillipsburg, NJ, 2020 was a busy year for the Troon Golf-managed course. Livingston said the premise of The Architects Golf Club's layout — which pays homage to the styles of famous golf course architects like Old Tom Morris, Donald Ross and Alister Mackenzie — garners a lot of interest. As the course reopened last year, the course went to single-cart drivers and daily rounds jumped to more than 200 rounds a day.

The increase in rounds and COVID-19 restrictions also complicated pre-emergent and fertilizer applications on the 18-hole course. Because of this, Livingston said the course had issues with dollar spot. Livingston said Xzemplar® fungicide from BASF — with its low-rate applications and longer residual — helped get dollar spot under control on his greens.

“Thank God for Xzemplar,” he said. “It really helped me last year. I sprayed at 11.4 ounces per acre, and

I've had tremendous results with it. It knocks everything out quickly. You're getting 21 to 28 days out of it.”

Livingston also likes the affordable low-rate dollar spot control Maxtima® fungicide provides on his fairways. “I use it at 17.5 ounces per acre,” he said. “It gives me 21 to 28 days of coverage so that we weren't getting any dollar spot.”

He said he's been using Emerald® fungicide by BASF for 15 years and it's his go-to in the beginning and end of the growing season. He calls Emerald fungicide bookends to spray for his greens, tees and fairways.

“It's my first spray of the year on my greens, tees and fairways, and it's my last spray of the year,” he said. “It does a great job at the end of the year, knocking any disease that's left, that's going to survive through the winter. Then when we're coming in the spring and the temperatures rose, to get them to where we need them to be, that's always my first spray to knock out anything that did survive.”

Livingston said participating in the BASF Early Order Program has also helped save his course extra money as he uses Xzemplar fungicide, Emerald fungicide and Lexicon® Intrinsic® brand fungicide on his greens. Pylex® herbicide for control of goosegrass and bermudagrass helps him manage



Dan Livingston (right), Larry Turco (left), Lawrence Turco (center)

his 40 acres of fescues, too. With the BASF Early Order Program, superintendents earn rebates, ranging from 8 percent to 24 percent, based on spending. Superintendents qualify for the rebates by purchasing three fungicide brands and ordering at least \$5,000 in fungicide products.

“BASF has just taken it to the next level with their Early Order Program,” he said. “Because I have 4 acres of greens, 4 acres of tees and almost 40 acres of fairways that are all bentgrass, my costs are up a little bit, because of the design of our facility. But, with their early order program, it's a real big help to me.”

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Continued from page 18

“He would show up here at the golf resort, and we would go and look at things, and come lunchtime, we’d have lunch. And then, he would just go for a walk around the golf course,” Stone says, a common recollection of the architect. “He would go out and talk to the golfers, and he was just one of the guys. That’s what was always so neat about Pete. He was never bigger than the moment. He was always one of those guys and really enjoyed giving back to golf. He was very unique, and he’s going to be missed.”

Stone remembers a photo, currently misplaced, of Dye after he built a sand wall at the course that was ... extreme.

“It was ludicrous, this wall of sand that he had built — and we put some grass on top of it!” Stone says. “He was standing in front of this wall of sand with his back to us, and he had his hands outstretched

kind of like the statue that overlooks Rio de Janeiro (“Christ the Redeemer”). And I was like, there he is, he’s blessing the work. He was a trip. He had so many stories of the things he had done in life, and he’d just sit there and tell you about them. He was fun.”

Stone says he’s taken by how many ad-

vancements have been made in the business. By now, the thing that impresses him the most is how he’s been able to see this game evolve over his years at the Ocean Course.

“The development of technology and equipment and what we’re doing with

Continued on page 36

## THE OCEAN COURSE’S WINDY TIMELINE

1991 — Ryder Cup, “The War by the Shore,” won by America

1996 — Shell’s Wonderful World of Golf, pitting Annika Sorenstam against Dottie Pepper (Pepper won)

1997 — World Cup of Golf

2001 — Inaugural UBS Warburg Cup, a Ryder Cup format of professionals age 40-plus, captained by Arnold Palmer, won by the U.S.

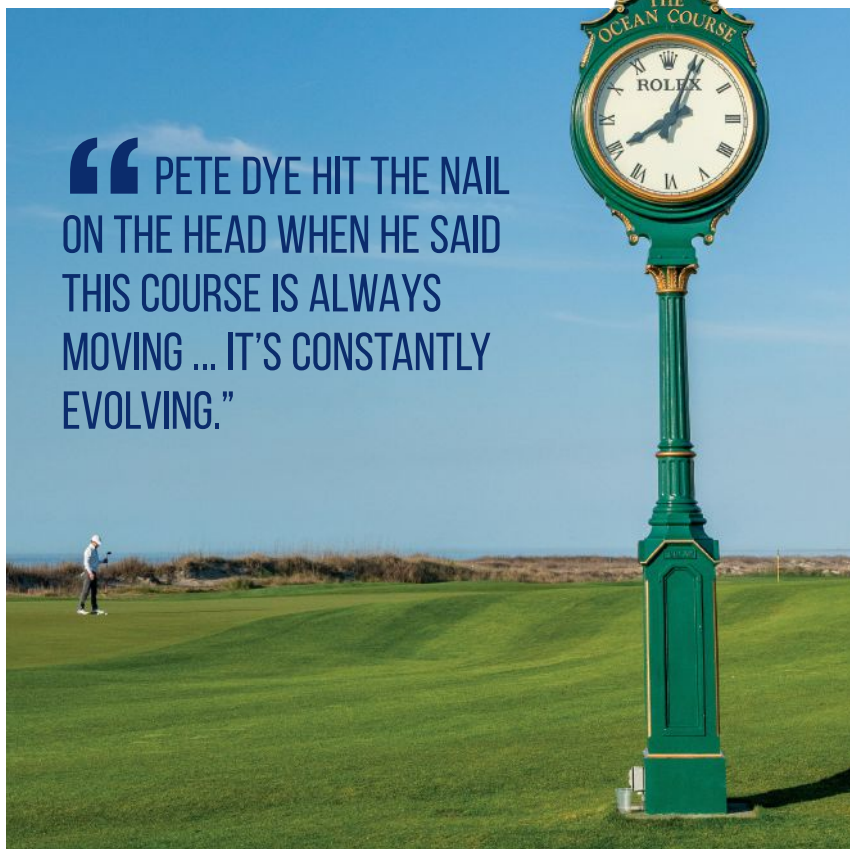
**2003 — World Cup, won by South Africans Rory Sabbatini and Trevor Immelman**

**2005 — PGA Professional Championship**

**2007 — 68th Senior PGA Championship, won by Denis Watson**

**2012 — PGA Championship, won by Rory McIlroy with a record eight-stroke margin**

\***Boldface** denotes tournaments overseen by Stone



“PETE DYE HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD WHEN HE SAID THIS COURSE IS ALWAYS MOVING ... IT’S CONSTANTLY EVOLVING.”

Polk says the crew is counting down the minutes to the start of the 2021 PGA Championship, which starts play May 20.

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Continued from page 35

grasses now? We're literally — we would be flooded with seawater in the past with bermudagrass, but now we have paspalum that tolerates it," Stone says. "It's been a joy to watch technology grow and watching these professional golfers force change in golf course architecture."

### Band of brothers

In the weeks leading up to the 2021 PGA Championship, not much has distracted the team from their goals. Heck, the wind is so strong at the Ocean Course that the virus would probably be in the next county before it could infect someone.

The crew is a little smaller than usual as a result of COVID-19, but not much else has changed. The fairway lines have gotten a little tighter, and the rough has been let loose. "We could definitely manage a park," laughs Stone. "We were essential person-



nel, so we worked through the pandemic."

Polk has been following Stone's lead. The two have similar starts to their careers, and Polk would love to emulate

Stone's career. He says it's his dream to be a good head superintendent.

"I've been learning from the best. I have the education, and I have the boss that can



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"Turf is not near the maintenance as the waste areas are," Stone says of the biggest challenge of the course. "We can get off the turf areas pretty quickly and then move on to the waste areas."

PHOTO BY: PGA OF AMERICA/GARY KELLNER

"I've been here for 30 years. We've got five superintendents. Steve Miller, he's been here for 35 years. Brad French, he's been here for 20-plus years. The other two guys have been here for at least 10 years," Stone says. "The superintendent that we have here, we are like brothers. We fight like brothers, and we'll defend each other like brothers. And, Kiawah Golf Resort, it's top-notch. Roger Warren, the president of the resort, he really goes to bat for the golf courses."

At this point, the island and the course have become a way of life for Stone.

"When I first moved to Charleston, coming from New Smyrna (Beach) and growing up there and Daytona Beach ... moving to Charleston 30 years ago, it was a little bit slower pace. It was really enjoyable. And, being right on the beach, I've always lived on the ocean," Stone says. "It's a different mindset." 

teach me. It's been awesome. Jeff is always cool, calm and collected," Polk says. "He's been doing it for a while, over 30 years. He's very patient and very smart. I couldn't

ask for a better boss."

Stone counts himself lucky to be in the Kiawah Resort family, about to host his second PGA Championship.



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*Tim Glorioso, CGCS | Director of Golf Course Operations  
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Left to right: PJ Salter, CGCS, director of agronomy, Drew Nottenkamper, golf course superintendent (pictured with Drew's dog and resident fowl control Jett, a border collie from Fly Away Geese), Mike Heinz, second assistant superintendent, and Mike Smith, first assistant superintendent.



# Growing more than the grass

There are a million things on the minds of superintendents to keep the playing conditions of their courses at the top level — and many of these leaders are trying to grow people alongside the grass.

PJ Salter, CGCS and director of agronomy at Riviera CC in Coral Gables, Fla., says that developing and mentoring young superintendents is part of what keeps him going.

“I feel like a big part of the success I’ve had in my career and a big part of why I am where I’m at is because I had mentors take the time to show me the ropes,” Salter says.

## The science and the business

Salter is from the metro Detroit area and grew up working on golf courses there, but after getting his degree in crop and soil sciences at Michigan State, his job search took him to the Sunshine State. He ac-

BY ABBY HART

cepted a job as second assistant at the GC of the Everglades in Naples, Fla., and after that, took a job at Riviera CC as first assistant. There, Salter met his first mentor in golf course maintenance, Eric von Hofen, who was then the director of agronomy and clubhouse operations.

He says von Hofen was very open about the business side of being a superintendent.



PJ Salter

— all to explain there’s more to the business than just having green grass, and

there’s so much more when you’re the one in charge and managing money.

After his stint at Riviera, Salter took a role at Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo, Fla., to work as a superintendent for Juan Gutierrez, who would become his second mentor and who von Hofen happened to mentor at Doral Golf Resort years earlier.

Gutierrez gave Salter a new perspective on being a superintendent. “Juan was the most detail-oriented person I’d ever worked for,” Salter says. “He was so good about actually managing the agronomy part of it and being proactive, looking for solutions and imparting that to his assistants.”

## Growing your mentees

Salter’s mentor Gutierrez is now a colleague at the director of agronomy level. “I’ve been fortunate enough to see my professionals be on their own and run-

*Continued on page 40*



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While growing grass is important, PJ Salter says it's not the only thing aspiring superintendents need to know.

*Continued from page 38*

ning their own operations,” says Juan Gutierrez, now director of agronomy at Grey Oaks Club in Naples. “But, one of the highlights of my professional career has been to see (PJ) grow. He’s tremendous. He’s just a great pro, a great human being.”

He says a number of different factors combined to make his relationship with Salter a successful one and one that continues to this day. “It was agronomy, how to branch out and be not just a superintendent of one golf course, but also rallying within your profession in order to be more successful. That’s how he and I really helped each other,” he says.

When it comes to learning the business of golf course maintenance, Gutierrez says that schools aren’t preparing students to deal with much other than the agronomy.

“I report to people who own jets and

who are former or current CEOs of multibillion-dollar companies, and I have to ask them for money for projects and raises. There’s not (an agronomy) school that prepares you for this,” he says.

He says that mentors help superintendents fill in those gaps in knowledge, and he credits his own success to people he’s had the opportunity to watch in his career, including Ken Mangum at Atlanta Athletic Club. “How he spoke to members, how he had achieved great professional success and helped other people grow — I know it was very important for me after witnessing that and how I should conduct myself in life and in my career,” he explains.

### Branching out

Salter returned to Riviera in 2016 after von Hofen retired from the maintenance business. He’s working to make sure his staff is

learning everything they need to know to move on and manage their own operation one day.

“When I worked for Eric, he brought us to every green committee meeting. He let us see the good, the bad and the ugly,” he says. “Every month when the financials came in, he pulled them out and went through them with us. A lot of us as assistants don’t really get exposed to that.”

Now, Salter brings his team to green committee meetings every month and gives them part of the presentation to run through. One talks about the weather and how that’s affecting the golf course and maintenance practices, another discusses how crew members are being stewards of the environment and offering environmental outreach and, finally, another presents the course’s green speeds and how the team is maintaining turf health and playability.

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“(It’s) giving them that opportunity to get over being the deer in headlights so that when they get that interview, they’ve been there, done that,” he says.

### Mentoring in the new age

Salter had a new opportunity to mentor with the 2020 Green Start Academy sponsored by Bayer and John Deere. Salter was one of five mentors who were assigned a group of assistants to coach during the four-week session.

Green Start attendee Mike Lopez, assistant superintendent at Baywood Greens in Long Neck, Del., started out working as a line cook at Baywood Greens. He began his career in turf when he thought it might be interesting to take a job on the grounds crew at Baywood. He’s now been in turf maintenance for eight years.



Mike Lopez

Lopez was a part of Salter’s mentor group and found the lessons he learned at Green Start and from Salter to be helpful. “I can’t say enough about all the sessions and PJ — his sessions were on point. He had a great email each week, called ‘Saturday Morning Cup of Coffee,’ where he would review the speaker and the topic for the week and let us know what he had planned,” he says.

Salter also led weekly Zoom calls with his own mentors, including von Hofen, and golf maintenance experts including Florida GCSAA representative Ralph Dain, USGA Green Section Southeast Regional Director Steve Kammerer, Ph.D., and résumé reviews with professional development coach Erin Wolfram.

Months after the November Green Start event, Salter’s mentor group is still going strong, and he’s added a monthly “Budget Beatdown” email where the assistant superintendents get a breakdown of budget fundamentals and share what projects are happening at their courses.

Now, Salter has come full circle, since he’s celebrating five years as the director of

agronomy at Riviera, the role his first mentor von Hofen held. He says in his early days in the industry, he was naïve about everything interns and assistants have to do aside from mowing and hand watering.

“There’s a whole other learning side to it. Yes, you can have them do all that grunt work, but you also owe it to them to take

time and show them the other side of the business,” he says. “I was fortunate to work for guys with the mindset of we want you to come and work hard for us, but we don’t want you to work for us forever. We want to promote you into your own position to better your own personal life.”

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# Super Science

## // POA PROBLEMS

### A PROLIFIC SEED PRODUCER ANYWHERE

By Elliot Dowling

**P***oa annua* is a prolific seed producer at any height of cut. The ability to seed contributes to spread, and the seedheads can affect putting green smoothness in the spring. *Poa* plants are also noticeable on bermudagrass fairways that are starting to green up.

Managing seedheads is necessary in many cases, especially on putting greens. Suppression of seedheads is possible with properly timed growth regulator applications. However, once seedheads emerge, suppression is no longer possible.

You can remove seedheads mechanically with brushing, verticutting or grooming. However, it is essential to be careful with aggressively brushing or grooming grass that is not actively growing. If performed too often or too aggressively, mechanical methods can hurt the desired grass and slow spring development. Continue to mechanically remove seedheads this spring and plan for preventive programs this fall and winter.

Several herbicides are available for selective control of *Poa annua* and broadleaf weeds in bermudagrass tees and fairways. It is important to control the plants with postemergence herbicides so that seeds do not spread with mowing and increase the population, making control more difficult next year.

If you are not on a preventive program for *Poa* seedhead control, perhaps it is time to consider one. For putting greens, ongoing research suggests that preloading *Poa* with a late fall application of the growth regulator Proxy can help suppress seedheads. Timing varies, but the most recent research shows promising results with the following program:

- One application after the last mowing in the fall;
- An initial spring application between 200 and 500 growing degree days with a base of 32 degrees Fahrenheit; and
- A final application three to four weeks after the initial spring application.

On bermudagrass, applying a preemergence herbicide in late summer to early fall will control the emergence of *Poa* plants from seed in the soil. The turfgrass researchers at the University of Tennessee examined several products for preemergence control of *Poa*. If plants still germinate, waiting until the bermudagrass is dormant and applying a nonselective herbicide will clean the rest of the plants up. ☺

For two excellent webinars on *Poa annua*, visit the links below:

2019 *Poa* Day, University of Tennessee, <https://vimeo.com/332017868>

2020 Resist *Poa*, USDA-ARA Annual Bluegrass Collective, <http://resistpoa.org/webinars/>

Elliot Dowling is an agronomist in the USGA Green Section's Northeast Region and can be contacted at [edowling@usga.org](mailto:edowling@usga.org).



*Poa annua* seedheads on putting greens can affect surface smoothness and ball roll. Controlling them before they emerge reduces playability issues and helps the turf conserve energy.

## NEWS UPDATES

### EWING ADDS PAT GROSS

Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply recently expanded its golf team, adding Pat Gross, formerly of the United States Golf Association (USGA), in the newly developed role of Ewing Golf Inside Sales.

"The Ewing Golf Team is thrilled to have the tenured Pat Gross on our team," said Steve Sakurai, Ewing Golf Segment manager. "His in-depth knowledge and experience in the golf industry will be a tremendous benefit for our golf course customers, as he will be reaching out to provide support to Ewing customers nationwide."



Pat Gross

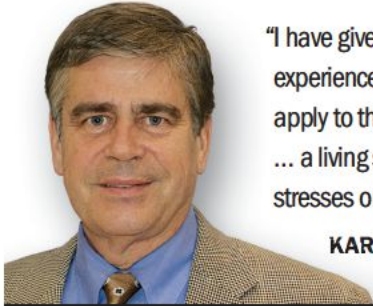
Gross recently retired from the USGA after a 28-year career with the organization as agronomist and director of the Western Region of the Green Section. During his tenure with the USGA, he completed more than 2,000 on-site consulting visits to courses throughout the Southwest United States and Mexico, with a focus on providing practical information to help golf courses conserve water and improve course conditions.

“IF YOU OVERFERTILIZE AND PRODUCE MORE OF (AN ORGANIC) LAYER, THAT WILL MAKE NECROTIC RING SPOT MORE SEVERE.”

Jim Kerns, Ph.D.

(see story on page 44)





"I have given some thought this past year to what I have experienced with the coronavirus and how it might apply to the management and agronomics of turfgrass ... a living system (whether a person or turf) encounters stresses or diseases that can result in death."

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

## A new perspective

**W**ith the appearance of this column, it has been close to one year since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and myself being stricken with the disease. Needless to say, a lot has happened in a year and continues to happen. Most of it is pretty emotional for those who have encountered the coronavirus.

I have given some thought this past year to what I have experienced with the coronavirus and how it might apply to the management and agronomics of turfgrass. Not in any way to correlate hundreds of thousands of deaths with managing turf, but, at some basic level, a living system (whether a person or turf) encounters stresses or diseases that can result in death.

Below are a few moments that I recall that, at the time, I thought were applicable to COVID survival but could be applied to turf. Each moment is briefly summarized and described as the "story," which is followed by what it meant to me: the "takeaway."

**Story:** The day after I came off the ventilator, the intensive care unit nurse asked, "Do you remember anything from the past three weeks?" "No," I responded. She replied, "Well, maybe that is good given what you went through ... and, by the way, you didn't miss out on anything."

**Takeaway:** Initially, I thought

she was talking about world events; however, it did not take long to realize that we were not going to dwell on the past but focus on the future and the challenges to be faced. As summer stress periods approach, your focus should be on strategies to manage the challenges.

**Story:** My wife told me that while I was on the ventilator, the doctors would call multiple times a day to give her updates. Almost all the news was not positive. Once she asked, "Can you tell me something positive?" The doctor's reply was, "We are learning something new about the virus every day."

**Takeaway:** That probably was not the response my wife was expecting, but it does speak to the idea of continual learning even during the most difficult times. Continuing to gain knowledge helps plan or modify a strategy during the most difficult times. During the summer when difficult issues arise, continue to learn and study the problem. If you give up, you may not

gain a perspective that comes from continual investigation. Continuing investigation or just plain curiosity can provide a positive reinforcement mechanism that helps provide a sense that you are making progress.

**Story:** When the nurse came to remove the ventilator from my room, the intensive care unit doctor who was present said, "I think your wife knows more about how a ventilator works than me."

**Takeaway:** Do your homework. The doctors who spoke with me mentioned how impressed they were with the questions and knowledge my wife had about my treatments. When explaining an agronomic situation or presenting a budget to your board, golf course owner or crew, a thorough and thoughtful explanation projects a self-confident and knowledgeable individual.

**Story:** My brother who worked in the medical field in California at the time of my hospitalization asked a few of his colleagues what they thought my chances were. The doctors asked if I smoked, drank frequently and if I was obese. My brother responded "no" to their questions. The doctors said I had a shot.

**Takeaway:** One's overall health plays an important role in the severity of COVID-19. On average, 2.6 preconditions like diabetes, influenza, heart disease, respiratory failure, etc., are cited as contributing to the severity of COVID-19.

As we approach the summer stress period, the health of the turfgrass plant is critical to reduce or minimize the severity of the stress, whether it's environmental or biological. In addition, preconditioning or protecting the turf prior to the stress may not eliminate injury but can reduce the severity. 📍

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





**Necrotic ring spot** often appears in Kentucky bluegrass where the organic layer under the soil has built up.

## Knowing necrotic ring spot

The opportunistic pathogen of necrotic ring spot looks for Kentucky bluegrass turf with a thick, lush organic layer to thrive. Follow these tips to keep the pathogen at bay.

The frog-eye appearance observed in Kentucky bluegrass is a trademark of necrotic ring spot. While this pathogen is different than summer patch, Jim Kerns, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at North Carolina State University, says that since the organisms of the two diseases are similar, they are often lumped in together.

When Kerns was studying at the University of Wisconsin, he says necrotic ring spot and summer patch were almost indistinguishable. Necrotic ring spot, though, tends to only plague Kentucky bluegrass. However, he did notice some differences in the development of the pathogens as spring turned to summer.

“With the necrotic ring spot, it starts to develop when soil temperatures get around 60 to 65 degrees, and it doesn’t continually develop all summer long like summer patch would,” he says. “It will stop when it gets really hot.”

Necrotic ring spot often shows up on bluegrass where the organic layer beneath the soil has built up due to a reduction in aeration.

“That may be especially true for areas of the country that reduced maintenance because of the pandemic,” he says. “Not aerifying fairways and cutting back fertility on fairways and roughs could cause necrotic ring spot or summer patch to creep back in if it wasn’t a problem in the past.”

Kerns says the same fungicides that tackle summer patch will also control necrotic ring spot, but management strategies should also include proper fertility and aeration to reduce the symptoms of necrotic ring spot.

“It’s making sure they’re following fertility recommendations for Kentucky bluegrass in their region,” Kerns says. “If you overfertilize and produce more of (an organic) layer, that will make necrotic ring spot more severe.” ©

PHOTO BY: PAUL KOCH, PH. D.



## Greene County Fertilizer Co.

### JOSH WEAVER, PH.D.

Director of research and horticulture



The necrotic ring spot pathogen is a soil-borne fungus, *Ophiosphaerella korrae*. Root infections are favored by unseasonably cool, wet weather in late April and May. The disease is often more severe in areas where the soil dries out more quickly, such as on knolls or slopes. One factor favoring disease development is heavy nitrogen application during spring or summer. Spring and summer fertilizer applications, especially fast-release formulations such as urea, stimulate rapid turfgrass growth and favor necrotic ring spot. Consider the use of low input, slow- or controlled-release nitrogen for spring applications to maintain turfgrass color. Cool-season grasses should receive heavier applications of slow-release forms of nitrogen fertilizer in the fall. This best management practice has been shown to reduce disease severity in sites with serious necrotic ring spot problems during autumn and early winter.

## LebanonTurf

### CHRISTOPHER GRAY

Golf market manager



Since NRS is a disease caused by soil-borne fungi, the pathogens stay in the soil for long periods, making this common disease a constant threat to the turf. Effective cultural practices are the most effective long-term solution to managing it. Start by improving the health of your soil, which is most easily achieved with multiple applications of humates (granular humic acid). In terms of fertilizer, it's imperative to maintain adequate levels of potassium and phosphorus, as well as optimal nitrogen levels. However, avoid applying excessive amounts of nitrogen, especially during the spring and summer; applications of more than 1 pound will enhance NRS severity. Slow-release (methylene urea) and organic forms of nitrogen are recommended.

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### GREG TURNER

Global sales director



Necrotic ring spot (NRS) is a difficult disease to manage because of its perennial nature. At the time of the year (July to September) when NRS is thriving, most aeration practices cannot be used. Yet, compaction and lack of porosity increase as does NRS. Air2G2 uses 12-inch probes to penetrate the turf's surface. The first injection of air occurs between 5 to 7 inches and the second between 10 to 12 inches. Used frequently, Air2G2 will decrease compaction and increase porosity, air supply to the roots, fertilization and fungicide effectiveness and gas exchange at the most critical times when NRS is thriving. Remember, NRS is a fungus, and its spores can be transferred via foot traffic and machinery that comes in contact with NRS. To help prevent the spread, clean equipment with a combination of rubbing alcohol and water to sterilize before next use.

## Mountain View Seeds

### GREGG MUNSHAW, PH.D.

Director of agronomy



The fungus that causes necrotic ring spot (*Ophiosphaerella korrae*) is active in the soil and infects roots, rhizomes and crowns. While there are several chemical control options, management practices that can promote healthy roots may help with controlling this disease. Practices such as a higher height of cut, watering deeply and infrequently, maintaining balanced fertility and using slow-release sources, aerifying to reduce compaction and managing thatch can all help to reduce the severity of this disease. One of the easiest (and cheapest) things we can do to combat diseases, however, is to plant improved varieties. Even if you can't completely renovate your turf, interseeding in new genetics can help reduce disease pressure. Cultivars such as Hampton and Blue Note have shown high degrees of necrotic ring spot resistance in NTEP testing.



# Grubs be gone

By Sarah Webb

**D**akota Dunes CC in Dakota Dunes, S.D., has always struggled with a white grub problem, in part, due to its location between the Missouri River and the Sioux River, according to Doug Hausman, superintendent.

“We’ve always had issues with white grubs,” he says. “It wasn’t so much the grubs as the wildlife, such as skunks and raccoons, pursuing them in a moonlit buffet, tearing it up. Wherever we didn’t treat, we were getting torn up.”

Dakota Dunes features bentgrass tees, greens and fairways, all of which have been impacted by grub damage at some point over the years.

To identify which type of grub is afflicting the turf, Hausman suggests looking at the backside of the grub and counting the raster pattern.

He adds that to the eye, areas inflicted with grub damage look like wilt.

“You’ll see areas that you don’t think you can get enough water on it, and you’ll peel it back, and you’ll just see the grubs,” he says.



For years, white grubs afflicted the turf at Dakota Dunes CC.



Wildlife, such as skunks and raccoons, often pursue white grubs at nighttime, causing damage to the turf.

About three years ago, Dakota Dunes started using Acelepryn for grub control, putting it down once in the springtime at a rate of about 7.8 ounces per acre.

“Acelepryn has been bulletproof, assuming we get it on early enough,” Hausman says. “The longer it’s on, the better.”

While Hausman says the ideal time to make an application is in early to mid-April, often, Dakota Dunes puts down an application later to combine it with other products

“We’re pushing the envelope as far as timing, and we go later so that we can accomplish two or three things at once,” he says. “If you have limited resources, it makes sense to make one pass over the acreage versus three. We usually also put down a preemergent or a fungicide treatment for dollar spot.”

In addition to using Acelepryn on tees, fairways and greens, Dakota

Dunes uses Merit or a generic product on 12 acres of rough.

“Last year, early season was as good as we’ve seen. We saw very little damage,” Hausman says. “The critters had been looking for grubs but couldn’t get through — the turf was dense, and they couldn’t find anything.”

For fellow superintendents who have encountered problems with the pest, Hausman recommends watching out for thatch and keep up with sound cultural practices as needed.

“That helps tremendously so that you can have as healthy a stand as possible to help stand up to whatever you may face,” he says. ©

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“Charles V. Piper and Russell A. Oakley were instrumental in the early days of the Green Section.”

MIKE KENNA, PH.D., *Research Editor*

## New bentgrasses to celebrate USGA Green Section 100th Anniversary

**R**utgers University and the USGA are working together to release two new creeping bentgrasses. Piper and Oakley bentgrass will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Green Section. Charles V. Piper and Russell A. Oakley were instrumental in the early days of the Green Section. Mountain View Seed will produce, market and distribute the new varieties.

Piper and Oakley were well-known U.S. Department of Agriculture experts on grasses. In 1906, a golfer named Dr. W.S. Harban went to Piper and Oakley for help with turfgrass problems at his course. Later, golf course architect C.B. MacDonald asked Piper and Oakley for help growing grass at the National Golf Links of America. Hugh Wilson also sought their assistance while establishing Merion Golf and Cricket Club. This need for information led to the 1917 publication of *Turf for Golf Courses* by Piper and Oakley.

In 1920, E.J. Marshall of the Inverness Club in Toledo, Ohio, saw a need for help solving turf problems on golf courses. Along with Hugh Wilson and other golf enthusiasts, Marshall's passion convinced the USGA Executive Committee to establish the Green Section on Nov. 20, 1920. On Feb. 10, 1921, Piper and Oakley published the first issue of *The Bulletin of the Green Section*.

From the beginning, Piper and Oakley worked with bentgrass. They established the Arlington Turf Garden at the

USDA's Arlington Experiment Farm. This early research location is where the Pentagon is today. The USGA contributed a large part of the funds for its pioneering turf research. By the 1930s, 30,000 square feet were at putting green height. Early work was on stolon plantings of creeping, velvet and colonial bentgrass strains. There also were plots of various grasses obtained from different bentgrass seed sources.

The Green Section recommended bentgrasses and fine fescues for greens on northern courses. Seeded types included South German, Rhode Island and colonial bentgrass. Greenkeepers sent promising bentgrass strains to Piper and Oakley from several early golf course greens established by seed.

By the 1930s, John Monteith Jr., Ph.D., and Fred V. Grau conducted the “pie green” experiments across the country. These experimental greens had 12 or more wedge-shaped sections. Each section had a different strain of the C series of creeping bentgrass. Co-hansey, Congressional and Toronto are three creeping bentgrasses that arose from this national test.

Professor H.B. “Burt” Musser, Pennsylvania State University, became interested in the grasses available for golf courses. Seaside, Astoria, Highland or colonial were the seeded bents of the 1930s and 1940s. He wrote that they all contained many individual types, some of which were good and some poor. There was no effort made to breed out the weak plants. So, the turf produced by these was a composite and represented the average for the species.

In 1937, Musser began research on bentgrass leading to the 1954 release of Penncross. He attempted to concentrate on desirable qualities and reduce weaknesses by controlled breeding. Penncross received favorable performance reports over an extensive range of conditions. The variety also outperformed the other seeded bentgrasses, and it had a more comprehensive range of adaptability than individual vegetative strains. These traits made Penncross the most popular putting green variety for 30 years.

In 1959, Musser retired, and his graduate student, Joseph Duich, Ph.D., continued breeding bentgrasses. He released Penneagle in the 1970s and Pennlinks in the 1980s.

The USGA Green Section increased its support of turfgrass research in 1983. Interest in improved bentgrasses for putting greens and fairways led to a rapid increase in new varieties. Dick Skogley, Ph.D., the University of Rhode Island, released Providence for northern climates. Dr. Robert Kneebone licensed his heat-tolerant bentgrasses for SR1020. Milt Engelke, Ph.D., Texas A&M University, released Crenshaw and Cato. Unfortunately, many of the Texas A&M grasses were very susceptible to dollar spot.

I will continue this look back at turfgrass research in the May issue of *Golfdom*. 📍

Mike Kenna, Ph.D., is the retired director of research, USGA Green Section. Contact him at [mpkenna@gmail.com](mailto:mpkenna@gmail.com).





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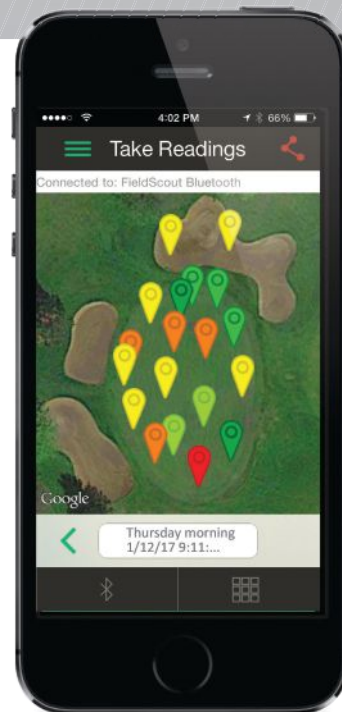
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# The 19<sup>th</sup> Hole



## Jeff Smelser

CGCS // Galveston (Texas) CC



**Jeff, drinks are on me, what do you want?** A Budweiser, or eight. One always leads to multiple.

**Tell me about your family.** Kellie and I have been married 30 years. We're both from central Illinois, and we moved to Texas in 1989. We have one daughter, Karlie. She just graduated from Stephen F. Austin. She's a registered nurse at Dallas Children's Hospital, and she's a member of the Texas National Guard.

**Tell me about Galveston CC.** It's the first private club in Texas, established in 1898. It's been at its current location since 1940. It's 18 holes of paspalum greens, tees and fairways. It's all at sea level. Every time we get a 1-inch rain or a high tide, the course floods. There's not a lot of damage — a lot of debris, a lot of cleanup — but not damage because the water just rises and then goes down.

**What teams do you root for?** The Cubs and anybody playing the Cardinals, but I love all sports. I am a diehard Cubs fan. I try to go to a game every year.

**What's your favorite tool?** Right now, it's a little homemade sprayer on the back of my golf cart with three nozzles that I just drive around with and spot spray dollar weed and whatever needs sprayed.

**When I'm in Galveston, where do I have to go to eat?** Primos. It's a little hole-in-the-wall Mexican restaurant. Best breakfast in the world and the hottest, spiciest sauce. You just want more and more. It's fabulous.

**What's the strangest thing you've seen on a golf course?** When I was an assistant back in 1990 at North Shore CC, Portland, Texas ... our old irrigation system had a clock on the wall where you set little pins. I went to the maintenance barn on a Sunday afternoon to set up the irrigation. I walk in, and there's a guy doing jumping jacks! I went back to the mechanic's bay and grabbed a crowbar and called 911. I kicked the door open and yelled at him. He left and went down in this ditch ... I'm just watching him to see where he went, and then two cops draw their guns on me and yell, 'Get on the ground!' I told them, 'He went right there!' They put me in the police car to identify him. As I'm driving up in the backseat, I'm looking out, and my general manager looks at me with the most dumbfounded look. Turns out it was an escaped person from the mental hospital. They think he had been living up in the attic of the maintenance building for two or three days. When we would close, he'd be in the shop all night.

**That's crazy! I'm glad I asked.** To add a moral to the story, now I never go to my maintenance barn without my handgun.

As interviewed by Seth Jones, March 16, 2021.

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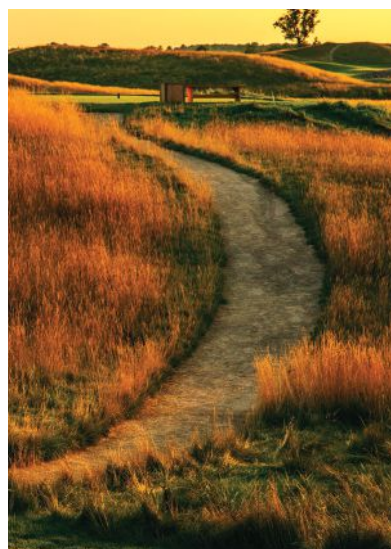
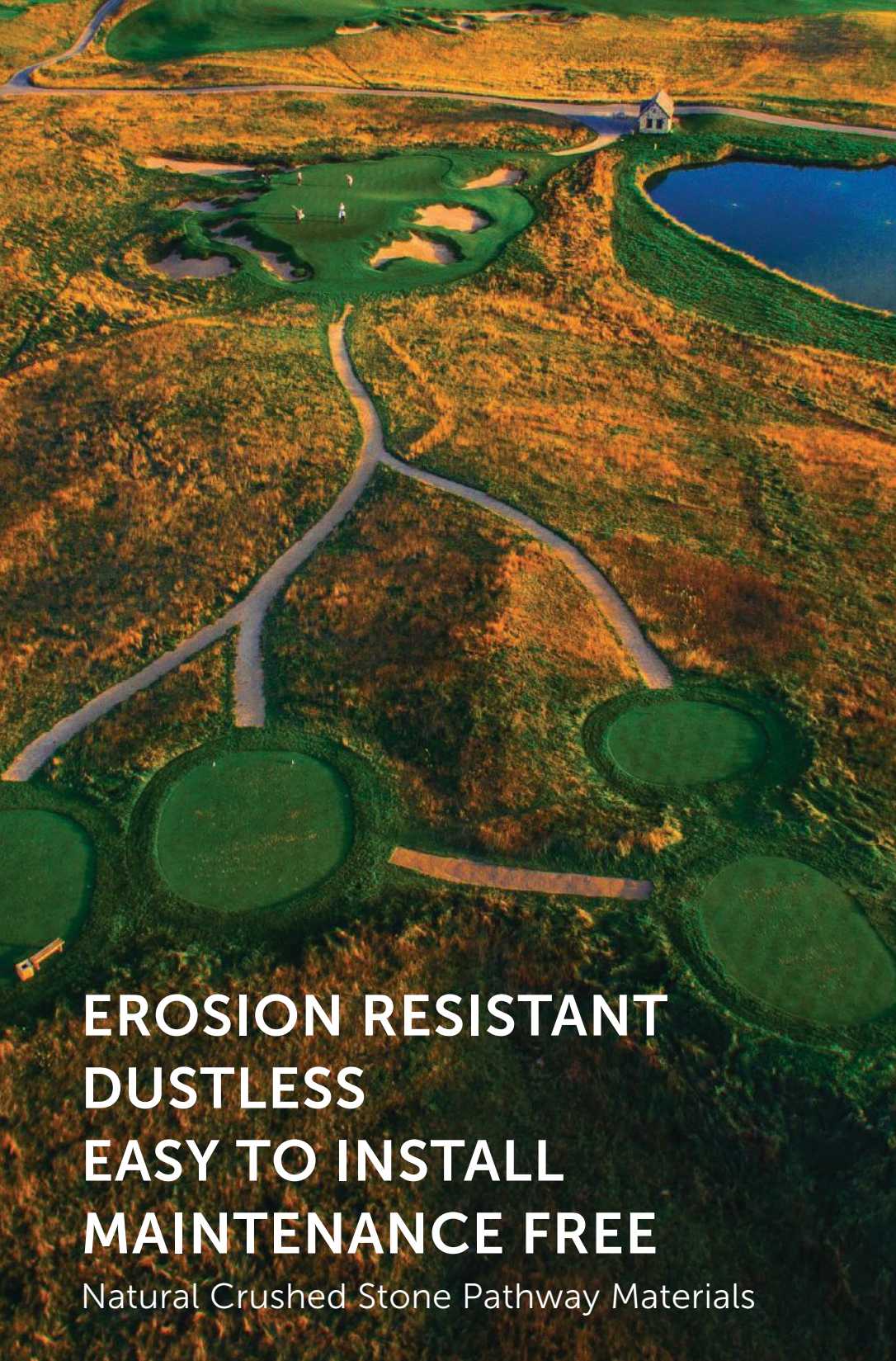


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