

Without Fairways Every Hole Would be a Par 3

BLACK													INITIALS												
BLUE													305	145	531	424	333	187	481	155	400	296			
WHITE													292	127	501	394	315	171	451	140	343	271			
													252	106	466	348	278	135	387	115	291	237			
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	TO				
RED	317	236	265	135	322	91	234	477	324	291	211	89	431	313	220	82	336	100	246	208	4419				
YELLOW	210	233	100	125	255	91	234	290	152	160	180	73	330	233	187	67	271	88	164	133	3288				
PAR	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	27	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	54				
HANDICAP	12	17	13	7	11	8	18	1	2	16	15	3	5	14	6	10	9	4							
DATE:											SCORER:														
													ATTEST:												

*Studies have shown that golf course superintendents rate fairways low on their priority list, but without fairways, you'd only have a par-3 course.

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Golfdom

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The Go

6A

The Bucket Is Half Full

Insiders are confident about the industry's economic state.

By Larry Aylward

15A

Image Is Everything

As one superintendent found out, keeping a low profile can banish you to utter obscurity.

By Ron Furlong

19A

Separate and Unequal

Superintendents at private clubs are three times more likely to be satisfied with salaries than those at public courses.

By David Frabotta

28



golf industry show
Preview

'Is This Show Still For Me?'

■ Golf course maintenance exhibitors battle the GIS dilution effect.

By David Frabotta

42

Mona's Memoir

■ Outgoing GCSAA CEO takes a candid look back at his 14-year career.

By Larry Aylward

48

Show Case

■ From new products to giveaways, here are some of the things companies will do and display at the big show.

Compiled by Larry Aylward

Ifdom Report

cover story

BY LARRY AYLWARD,
DAVID FRABOTTA
AND RON FURLONG

Check out our seventh-annual analysis of the state of the profession, featuring results of our extensive survey of superintendents.

5A

About the cover

Art Director Kristen Morabito, with the help of an image from iStock International, designed our cover to give a crystal (golf) ball look into the state of the profession.

88 Extreme Makeover

The practice range at Traverse City Golf & Country Club was made near perfect thanks to an extensive renovation.

By Raymond Hearn and Steven J. Hammon

92 Quality (of Cut) Control

Manufacturers know just what superintendents want in a greens mower.

By Larry Aylward



96 Behind the Scenes

Administrative assistants help superintendents stay the course.

By Roger Kamholz

columns

8 **Pin High**
Just One Man's
Opinions for 2008

22 **Shades of Green**
Dare to Dream
and Execute, Too

24 **Designs On Golf**
Happy New Year,
And Good Luck

26 **Turf M.D.**
Making the Case
for Turf Shows

104 **Out of Bounds**
Dips

departments

10 **Big Picture**

12 **Off the Fringe**

16 **Hole of the Month**

101 **Classifieds**

Turfgrass Trends

This month, *Goldom's* practical research digest for turf managers discusses nitrogen partitioning and metabolism for optimum root growth, as well as other topics. See pages 75-86.

Online Exclusive



Hear these podcast
interviews only at
www.golfdom.com/podcasts:

- Gregg Breningmeyer, director of sales and marketing for John Deere Golf & Turf One Source, talks about golf's growing markets in Asia, where he spends an ample amount of time.
- Kyle Miller, the senior technical specialist for BASF, sheds light on how to diagnose and combat turf disease outbreaks.

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McKinley. His owner is Kyle Evans, the former superintendent (now managing partner) at the Belgrade Lakes Golf Club in Belgrade Lakes, Maine. (Photo by: Kyle Evans)



Improving the Way Professionals Care for Turf

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As a typical “he-has-an-opinion-for-everything” American, I’d like to share some thoughts with you about what I see happening in the golf world this year. Here goes:

I’m going to go out on a limb and say that water will be the biggest issue of 2008 in the golf course maintenance industry. (I know — I’m not straying too far from the tree trunk.)

Water is getting to be everybody’s favorite topic. Once the mainstream media latches on to the topic and squeezes every drop out of it, everybody will be talking about it, a la global warming, over Sunday night’s pot roast and potatoes.

It doesn’t take an irrigation consultant to conclude that golf courses all over the country will continue to be faced with an array of irrigation challenges, from cutting back on water use for environmental and economic reasons to sparring with the public over the industry’s alleged wasting of this precious commodity.

But the bet here is these continued challenges will become even more intense because of the mainstream media’s scrutiny.

Filling Mona’s shoes

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America will hire a very capable replacement for Steve Mona, who’s leaving his CEO post next month after 14 years. Whoever it is better have a thick skin because that person will be compared to Mona in many phases.

According to a recent *Golfdom* poll of about 600 superintendents, 65 percent of them said Mona “did a great job and elevated the profession.” Thirty-two percent of respondents say “he did a decent job.” That’s an astounding 97 percent approval rate, folks. Members and the GCSAA staff will miss Mona. Altogether now: “When Steve was here, he did it this way.”

McCain will gain

Early last year, *Golfdom* conducted an informal presidential poll listing candidates Hillary Clinton, John McCain, Barack Obama and Rudy Giuliani. Not surprisingly, Giuliani won our poll with 35 percent of the vote. McCain was second with 29 percent.

Just One Man’s Opinions for 2008

BY LARRY AYLWARD



EVERYBODY IN THE
INDUSTRY KEEPS
TALKING ABOUT HOW
IMPORTANT IT IS TO
HAVE FASTER PLAY.
BUT ARE WE KIDDING
OURSELVES HERE?

We didn’t list preacher-politician Mike Huckabee in the poll because we knew little about him. But Huckabee, a Baptist minister, has come out of nowhere as a GOP presidential contender.

We plan to conduct another poll soon, and Huckabee will surely be listed as one of the candidates. I have a feeling that some in our industry will latch onto the former Arkansas governor. But Huckabee, who has been labeled as a closet liberal and has a few skeletons rattling in his closet, will fade and will not win over the golf course industry crowd.

Speaking of skeletons, they will do in Giuliani, and McCain will become the industry’s favorite and the GOP’s presidential nominee.

Fast times?

I — and a lot of people just like me (who have a spouse and two young children) — will play about four rounds of golf this year. What I’d give to be an avid golfer, but I just don’t have the time to play that much. If I spend six hours every Sunday at the course (including time spent for an after-round beverage), I wouldn’t be a very popular person in my household.

Everybody in the golf industry keeps talking about how important it is to have faster play. But are we kidding ourselves here?

It doesn’t take an Einstein to conclude that if golf courses are getting longer, they’re going to take longer to play. And in this day of flat rounds and needed revenue, you can’t expect owners to turn away paying customers on a beautiful Sunday — even if it means golfers having to wait for each other on each tee.

See that guy hopping around on one foot and yelling “ouch!”? That’s Mr. Golf Industry.

Aylward, editor in chief of Golfdom, can be reached at l aylward@questex.com.

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TIDBIT OF THE MONTH

Projects on the Move in 'Mount Rushmore' State

Although South Dakota isn't known for its wealth of golf courses, one layout in the state is getting upgrades while work has begun on an all-new facility.

Memorial Golf Course in Huron, a city-owned nine-hole facility, will get \$250,000 worth of drainage improvements. In Spearfish, the developer of a neighboring housing and commercial project donated property to the city for a nine-hole track. Site prep is now under way on Elkhorn Ridge Golf Course, a Pat Wyss design. For details on these and other golf projects around the United States, visit www.golfconstructionnews.com.

COURTESY OF:



Gas Prices Up — So Are Superintendents' Concerns

What a difference a year makes when it comes to golf course superintendents' concerns about gas prices and how they might affect the industry's economic viability.

Last year, we asked 621 superintendents and other industry professionals if they were worried that high fuel prices would lead to a decrease in golf course rounds and revenue in 2007. At the time, gas was around \$2.10 a gallon.

Here's how they responded:

Yes, people just won't have the money to play: **7%**

No, golfers will always find the money to play: **36%**

Somewhat, gas prices will have a slight impact on play: **57%**

We asked the same question to 640 superintendents a few months ago. But this time gas prices were more than \$3 a gallon — about \$1 more than last year. Take a look at the difference in the responses:

Yes, people just won't have the money to play: **20%**

No, golfers will always find the money to play: **36%**

Somewhat, gas prices will have a slight impact on play: **44%**

Golf Rounds Played

The percentages below represent the change in the number of rounds played in October 2007 compared to the number of rounds played in October 2006.

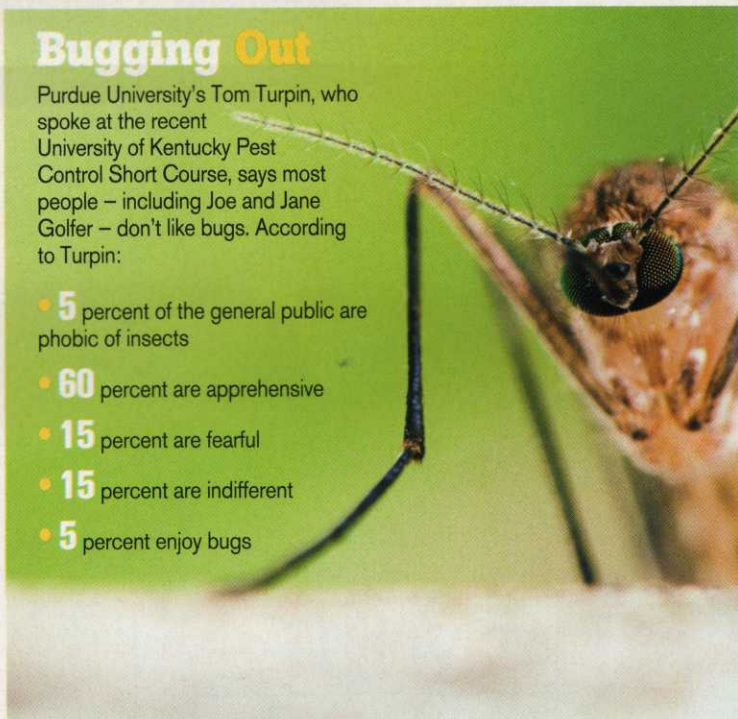
REGION	OCTOBER	Y.T.D.
New England ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, CT	9.1%	5.9%
Middle Atlantic NY, PA, NJ	18.7%	3.6%
East North Central MI, OH, IN, IL, WI	29.8%	3.1%
West North Central ND, MN, SD, NE, KS, IA, MO	11.1%	-0.7%
South Atlantic WV, DE, MD, VA, NC, SC, GA	-2.3%	0.0%
Florida	-10.4%	-1.2%
South Central KY, TN, AL, MS, OK, AR, LA	6.3%	-4.5%
Texas	4.0%	-8.6%
Mountain MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM	0.3%	0.5%
Pacific WA, OR, AK, HI	-8.3%	1.1%
California	-4.7%	2.6%
TOTAL UNITED STATES	6.9%	0.7%

GOLF DATATECH

Bugging Out

Purdue University's Tom Turpin, who spoke at the recent University of Kentucky Pest Control Short Course, says most people — including Joe and Jane Golfer — don't like bugs. According to Turpin:

- **5** percent of the general public are phobic of insects
- **60** percent are apprehensive
- **15** percent are fearful
- **15** percent are indifferent
- **5** percent enjoy bugs



PHOTOS BY: INDEF INTERNATIONAL INC.