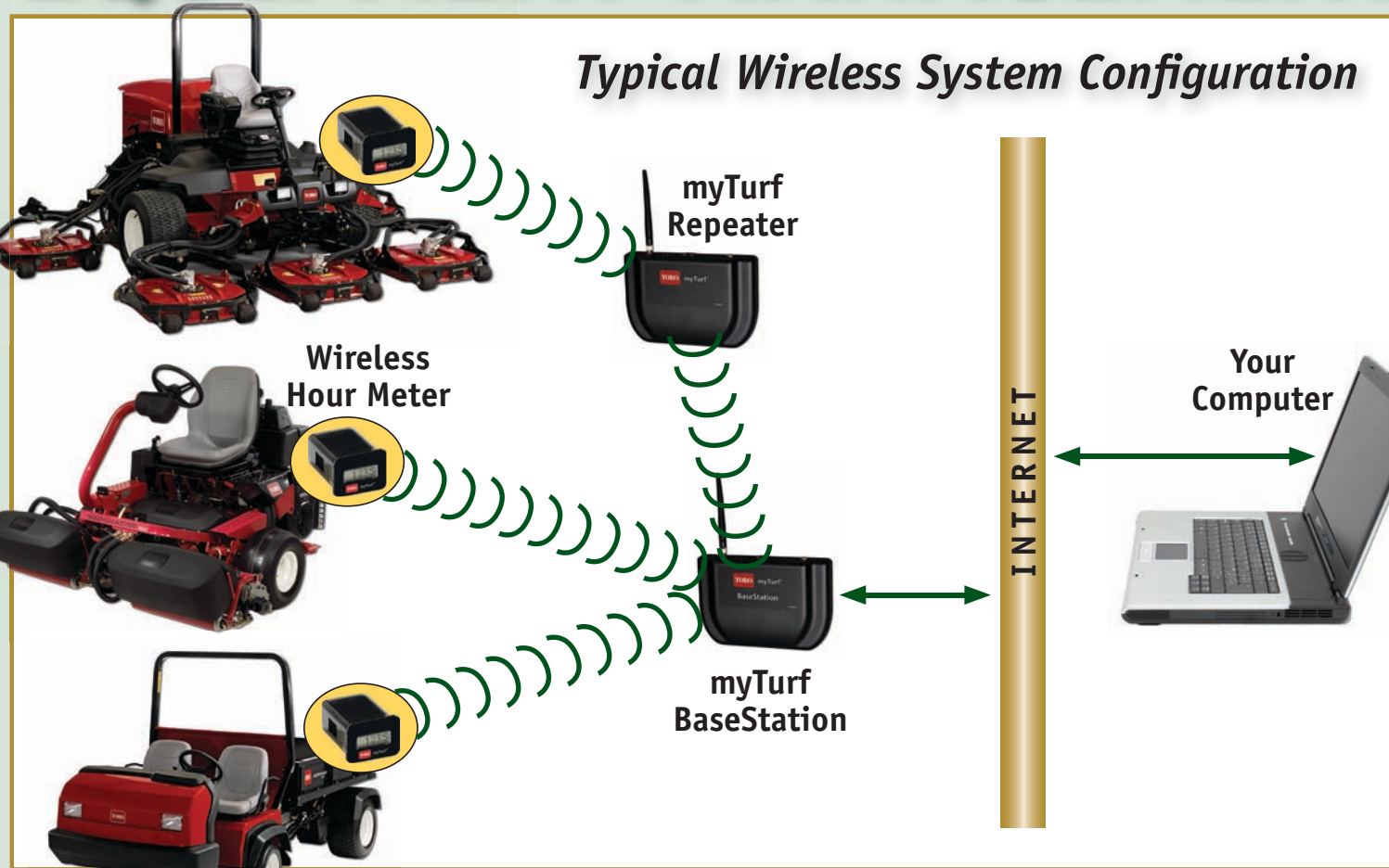


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ABOUT THE COVER

Cover Artist Julie Moyer highlights WGCSA President Jeff Millies.

"Golfers are not going to accept lower quality conditions..." "Our challenge then is to meet that demand, and if that demand is not changing your precision has to get better."

By Dr. Frank Rossi, Extension Turfgrass Specialist and Associate Professor of Turfgrass Science, Cornell University at the 2011 Golf Industry Show.

THE GRASS ROOTS

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Winter a Great Time for Education

By Jeff Millies, Certified Golf Course Superintendent, Edgewood Golf Course

By the time you are reading this the worst of the winter weather has passed and spring has begun. I don't know about the rest of you, but my winters seem to get busier and busier. Its hard finding the time to get all of those winter projects completed. Some might say I spend too much time planning for April Fools Day. It truly is one of my favorite holidays and I am thankful for all of the good nature gullible sales people I have in my area.

This winter we definitely have had some great education opportunities. Starting with the WTA, I would like to thank the committee for all their hard work and putting together a great line up of speakers. One thing you can seem to always count on is snow and the WTA Expo. At least this year's snow came the day before instead of during the event.

This year the Golf Industry Show was held in Orlando. Some how they managed to pick a week where the weather was great in Orlando with bitter cold temperatures here at home. They couldn't have planned that any better. GIS was definitely smaller this year, but it still is the largest educational conference in the golf industry. The educational seminars, panel discussions, forums, and networking opportunities were outstanding.

Speaking of networking, the Wisconsin Hospitality Room was held again at the Best of British Pub. It is always great to see everyone and the 2 hours never seems long enough. This year there were 227 people from Wisconsin who attended, making this event the largest of the year. I would like to thank all of our sponsors who helped contribute making this possible. Without them events like this would not be possible. Please remember to thank your sales rep and to support those sponsors.

The Spring Business and Educational Meeting took place in Fond du Lac with some timely topics. For those of you who attended I'm certain you came away with some valuable knowledge. Thru out the winter, several vendors' hosted events, along with all of the webcast and webinars that were offered online. There was certainly no shortage and I hope all of you had a chance to participate in some of those events, not only because of the education, but because of the camaraderie as well.

As you read this I hope the golfing season has begun and I hope everyone came thru the winter okay. I look forward to seeing many of you at our first golf event meeting of the year, April 18th at Geneva National located in Lake Geneva.

WGCSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is committed to serve each member by promoting the profession and enhancing the growth of the game of golf through education, communication and research.

WGCSA VISION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- Enhancing the professionalism of its members by strengthening our role as a leading golf organization in the state.
- Growing and recognizing the benefits of a diverse membership throughout Wisconsin.
- Educating and promoting our members as leaders in environmental stewardship.
- Offering affordable, high value educational programs at the forefront of technology and service.
- Being key to enjoyment and the economic success of the game of golf.

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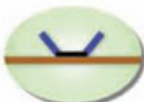
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Spring Rush!

By Brett Grams, WGCSA Chapter Manager

At the time of this writing the early March weather is certainly still winter like throughout the state. I am confident that spring is just around the corner but as I look out the window we still have a lot of snow to melt before all of our courses can green up. I wish all of you a successful end to the winter months and a pleasant spring with consistent weather to help your efforts on bringing your course out of it's winter dormancy.

I was happy to see many of you at the various winter functions. The new venue of the WTA Expo appears to have improved attendance. Likewise, the GIS in Orlando had steady attendance with WGCSA Members. Our WI Room was attended by 227 Wisconsinites or friends in tow. This was a recent record and great to be a part of.

In a conversation I had with a long time member he pointed out that my current duties are like a golf course superintendents duties in August. January thru Mid April is certainly my busy time! All of the administrative functions of our chapter happen at the start of the calendar year. Member renewals are being completed, the excellent support of our Affiliate Companies is being finalized, and our planning of our events and our most recent efforts to our PAR4 fundraiser are all in full swing. I am happy to report that efforts to date are on schedule or better than past years.

The Board of Directors and Committee Chairs have been very helpful in providing me with the leadership and goal setting that we need to continue to enhance member benefits and to promote our mission and vision statements in 2011. We again have a quality lineup of great meeting sites and we are finalizing the educational speakers to make for informative and enjoyable meetings for our members.

Our Vice President Chad Harrington and I have been selected to attend the GCSAA Chapter Leadership Training in Lawrence, KS on March 15th and 16th. This program is designed to enhance the communication between our chapter and headquarters and to make sure we able to utilize all of the services and functions that GCSAA offers. Our current President Jeff Millies and I were able to attend a similar event last year and found the program very valuable. The majority of the costs of this event are courtesy the GCSAA and the WGCSA is fortunate to be one of the 25 chapters selected again this year.

I hope that all of you that have the ability to donate rounds of golf to our PAR4 fundraiser have been able to do so. Our live online auction takes place April 1st-10th. Please share the www.PAR4Research.com website to all your members, golfers, and friends. The more bidding the more money raised for turf research at the UW.

Our first monthly meeting is being held April 18th at Geneva National. The online registration for the meeting will be active approximately 30 days prior to the event. Check the home page of our website for periodic updates and for details of pending meetings and events that our chapter offers.

Lastly, do you need my assistance with any chapter related services? Do you have access to our member's side of the site? Do you need help with posting a open position on your staff? I enjoy helping our hardworking members, companies, and facilities as I can.

Please have a GREAT SPRING!

Editors Note: You can reach Brett at the WGCSA Office at 920-643-4888, Email - bgrams@wgcsa.com,



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Winter Injury: The Road to Recovery

By Dr. John Stier, Department of Horticulture, University of Wisconsin Madison

Turf on putting greens often dies, sometimes for indiscernible reasons, during winter. Known causes include snow mold disease, low temperature kill, desiccation from wind, and lack of oxygen or the effect of noxious gases related to ice cover. Creeping bentgrass is usually much more resistant, but not immune, to winter injury than annual bluegrass (*Poa annua* L.). The end result are putting greens that may have sparse living turf, dead patches, or large areas of killed turf.

The big question coming out of winter is “What to do about getting the greens to a playable condition before the golfers arrive”? Putting up a “Closed for Renovation” sign generally isn’t an acceptable option! The answer depends on the extent of the damage and, to a lesser degree, the amount of time available to recover.

Thin turf may be able to recover on its own, particularly if it’s creeping bentgrass. As spring conditions develop, the warmer temperatures and rush of water into the turf plants will propel new tiller development and leaf expansion. Addition of a little water-soluble nitrogen fertilizer will help, typically 0.3 to 0.5 lb N/1000 ft². Granular N additions work just fine, though they should be watered in. Research at Michigan State University showed 0.3 lb N/1000 ft² applied as a granular treatment at 21 day intervals resulted in better turf cover than 0.1 lb N/1000 ft² applied at weekly intervals following spring seeding of creeping bentgrass into dead turf (Dr. Kevin Frank, personal communication, Feb. 2011). Mowing will generally help too; it will certainly help with spring greenup. Mowing helps by removing any dead leaf tips which increases the amount of sunlight available to penetrate the turf canopy and heat the soil. The higher soil temperatures will stimulate growth. Mowing also may encourage growth by stimulating the turfgrass plants’ production of hormones for more tiller production, cell division and enlargement. Irrigation will help grass grow, too, particularly on well-drained soils if rainfall is lacking. Light topdressings can also aid establishment.

Small dead patches may be dealt with in several ways. Plugging out dead turf and replacing with live turf from a nursery is time consuming and laborious but offers a virtually sure type of recovery. Verticutting may encourage stolon development of surrounding bentgrass plants into the dead patch, though stolons can also develop without verticutting. Unfortunately, stolon development will take several weeks and the patch will only slowly fill in as new plants develop from the stolons. Raking out some or all of

the dead turf and reseeding can more rapidly fill-in dead patches than waiting for stolon development.

Large areas of dead turf warrant a moment of truth. If the area habitually dies out, or clearly died out due to something like crown hydration caused by poor drainage, it may be worthwhile to take corrective actions such as reshaping the green or improving the drainage.

Regrassing large areas can be done several ways. I’ve seen some courses use multiple plugs, which can definitely help, but will require many weeks before the areas in between the plugs fill in. Any areas not quickly covered by bentgrass are likely to be populated by annual bluegrass as existing seed in the soil germinates. Consequently, sodding or seeding bentgrass are often better options.

Sodding offers a quick, almost sure success of getting complete bentgrass cover on the green. Using sod to fix large patches is a laborious and often costly process. The existing dead turf has to be removed, and the soil base brought to grade sufficiently so that the sod is level with the surrounding turf. Sod selection can be important to the success of the project. In most cases, sod grown on soil with a finer texture than the soil of the putting green will hold water at the surface, inhibiting rooting and predisposing the sodded area to future types of water-related stresses such as root rot diseases. One study clearly documented the reduced infiltration rate associated with sodding putting greens compared to seeding (Table 1). Other factors to consider are the difficulties in getting the color and density of the turf to match the rest of the turf on the green, especially as creeping bentgrass sod availability is quite limited. Finally, since bentgrass sod is typically maintained at 0.5 inch or greater height, it will take some effort and time to bring the height down to putting green conditions.

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GAZING IN THE GRASS

Seeding offers a broader selection of cultivars than one is likely to find with sod. Any seed used should of course be certified seed to protect against the introduction of unwanted species such as annual bluegrass and to ensure good seed germination. Cultivar information can be found at the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) website, www.ntep.org. The information provided will allow purchasers to select seed on the basis of color, spring greenup, and other characteristics including quality.

Creeping bentgrass can take 7-14 days to germinate depending on temperature. Establishment can be sped up by using pre-germinated seed. The process is relatively simple. Soak a water-permeable bag of seed in a large container of room temperature water. Occasionally stir the water during the day, or place an aquarium bubbler in the container. The stirring or bubbling is important to circulate oxygen dissolved in the water into the seed bag. The water should be replaced with new room temperature water at the end of the day to remove possible seed germination inhibitors flushed out by the soaking process. After two to three days, spread the seed on a paved or other flat surface, and keep warm (at

least room temperature). Keep the seed moist by occasionally misting it. I like spreading it on tar paper to help keep the seed from drying out too fast between mistings. Examine the seed at least twice daily for signs of germination. Within two to three days, seeds should begin to produce roots. As soon as the first root is seen, the seed is ready for planting. It can be mixed with sand or Milorganite®, then distributed using a drop or rotary spreader or a slit-seeder. It is important to plant the seed before too many seeds begin to germinate, as the seed will be unable to form a plant if the root gets broken off before planting.

If the seed is broadcast, be sure to prepare the site first to allow good seed to soil contact. This may mean raking off or even sod-cutting the dead turf from the area. Extensive core aeration, usually before seeding, can also be effective. Irrigate the site after seeding just as any seeding event.

Mowing and fertilizing can take place almost immediately after seeding. Keeping traffic off the green while its establishing may be the toughest part of all. Ideally, the greens will be allowed at least one month before play begins.

Table 1. Impact of sodding on infiltration rates of putting greens (adapted from Canaway, 1993).

<u>Method</u>	<u>Ball Roll (ft)</u>	<u>Infiltration Rate (in/hr)</u>
Seeded	5.64	7.0
Juvenile Sod	5.84	4.1
Sod, Sand-Based	5.18	1.1
Sod, Soil-Based	5.02	1.8
Sod Washed	5.25	2.8
LSD ₀₅	0.36	0.4

References Cited:

Canaway, P.M. 1993. Effects of using seed, sod and juvenile sod for the establishment of an all-sand golf green turf and on its initial performance under wear. In *Int. Turfgrass Res. Soc. J.*, R.N. Carrow, N.E. Christians, R.C. Shearman (eds.). pp. 469-475. Intertec Publishing Corp., Overland Park, KS.



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Career Assistance for Assistants

By Jake Schneider, Assistant Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club

A group of thirty assistants from around the state gathered at Whispering Springs Golf Club in Fond du Lac for the third annual WGCSA Assistant Superintendents' Seminar. The late-January meeting featured speakers from around the country who offered their insights on successful career development in an extremely competitive job market.

Greg Wojick, the founder and president of Connecticut-based Playbooks for Golf, started off the seminar by discussing industry and employment trends. With diverse agronomic and business experience that includes both course consultations and conducting searches for superintendents and assistant superintendents, Greg's unique perspective resonated strongly with the audience. One of his more interesting predictions was that assistants will be increasingly long-term employees with higher compensation packages.

One audience member who certainly didn't need any advice for a long, successful career was the second speaker, Jerry Kershasky. As many of you know, Jerry is the long-time superintendent at Westmoor Country Club. Much of Jerry's talk focused on developing networks with membership, co-workers, and other industry professionals. Besides outstanding agronomics, he credited the relationships within these networks for aiding his tenure at Westmoor. Jerry's assistant, Bryan Bergner, also shared his perspectives on developing positive work-related relationships and dis-

cussed some of the methods in which he was able to keep the membership informed during the recent renovation at Westmoor.

The final speaker, Steve Randall, GCSAA chapter liaison, spoke of the merits of achieving certification. Most in the audience expressed their desire to achieve CGCS certification, and Steve outlined ways to make this possible. Before becoming superintendents, assistants can begin building their certification portfolios by simply documenting relevant job tasks that they already perform.

Also during the meeting, the very first WGCSA Assistant Superintendent Committee was introduced, and this year's members include co-chairs Chad Harrington (WGCSA vice-president) and Kevin Knoblauch (Milwaukee CC assistant), Bryan Bergner (Westmoor CC assistant), Tim Schmidt (Butte des Morts CC assistant), Jake Schneider (Blackhawk CC assistant), and Joe Sell (Whistling Straits assistant). This committee was formally established at the Fall Business Meeting at the WGCSA Symposium, and the committee is already busy working on a summer educational event designed specifically for assistants.

Special thanks for a very worthwhile event go out to the organizing committee, the outstanding speakers, and the gracious host at Whispering Springs, Matt Schmitz.



WGCSA Assistant Superintendent Committee

Jake Schneider, Kevin Knoblauch, Chad Harrington, Tim Schmidt, Bryan Bergner.
(Joe Sell is not pictured)