

EDITOR'S CORNER

By Tom Johnson
New Richmond Golf Club



Stan Kincaid sent me an article out of FYI, a supplement to Forbes Magazine, entitled, 'Golf Inc.: The War For Golf's Soul.' It was written by James Y. Bartlett and it describes golf as a big business and how golf ownership companies can "maximize the assets" to turn a financially troubled course into a cash flow machine. This is no doubt true, but I feel uncomfortable when Wall Street lingo is used in describing the golf industry.

Things like economic downturns, corporatization of golf, golf courses as corporate entities and money-making assets. The author has some reservations about this scenario. He sees an upward creep of the green fee as more and more of "maximizing the assets" takes place. The article says perhaps the bean-counters in charge may drift towards standardization in the games, while sacrificing personality and character of golf courses. How about making all the bunkers uniform in size and shape so each can be raked in 48.7 seconds for efficiency? By increasing the diameter of the hole to six inches, approximately 42% more putts will be made, thereby shortening the time-per-round coefficient allowing an additional seven foursomes per day to tee off.

It all seems to take some of the fun out of the game. But why do I get the feeling that some of today's golfers mirror that philosophy?

There was a letter to the editor of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* recently in which the writer vented his displeasure on the cost of playing golf. He was looking for 40 acres to build a golf course where the working man could afford to play the game.

I hope the 'Mom and Pop' operations never franchise.

Why is it that some golfers throw cans under trees? They probably think it's not really littering, but at the same time it makes it more difficult to pick up. Do these same people do that sort of thing anywhere else?

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The golf course being built at the Snowcrest ski area is progressing very well. Kevin Clunis reports that construction is actually ahead of schedule. What side of the fence are you on Mr. President?

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Several courses had turf loss this past winter/spring and by this time have recovered by reseeding or letting the *Poa annua* do its thing. Greens covers may have contributed to the problem in some situations. Every so often we are reminded of what can happen to the *Poa annua* and rye when the going gets rough. Any superintendent who experienced turf loss and consequently did some renovation could share their experience by writing an article for 'Hole Notes.'

Serious accidents on the golf course are rare but the possibility of one occurring is always on the back of your mind. A few weeks ago (May 23), Wayne Willey, a long-time employee of the New Richmond Golf Course, was hit in the eye by a golf ball. A golfer heeled a shot on the tee and it hit him before he had a chance. Wayne has gone through two surgeries at the U of M to try and save some vision. Wayne is the mechanic, and those of you that have been without a mechanic for a period of time know how valuable they are. It was a tragic accident and I hope everything turns out okay for Wayne. We sure miss him!

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Thanks to Tom Johanns and his crew for hosting the June meeting. So far he's the winner in the beautiful weather department. We had to go to northern Minnesota to get away from the rain and snow, but what nice country and what a nice golf course! There were over 70 people signed up for the meeting. How could you go wrong with a sunny day and a beautiful golf course? **Bemidji Town and Country Club and Tom** deserve our thanks and appreciation for a wonderful time.

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There was some nice compliments from the LPGA on the condition of Edinburgh USA. It was great to see one of the players, Val Skinner, comment on how good a job the superintendent had done with the greens. *St. Paul Pioneer Press* sports writer Charlie Walters put **Tom Fischer's** name with her comments as being the superintendent. Congratulations to all those at Edinburgh.

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