

HOLE NOTES

Official Publication
of the
Minnesota Golf Course
Superintendents' Association

2001 MGCSA
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From Your President's Desk



E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS

From Board Room to Water Cooler Everyone's Talking About Weather

What a great day for golf. Mike Nelson had the golf course in terrific condition and the weather, for once, cooperated. Thanks Mike to you and your staff for providing a great venue for the Scholarship Scramble. While many of you were at Dakota Dunes, others were at the Pines in Nisswa for the E-Z-Go appreciation event. Another fine golf course and more good weather, how did that happen?

From the board room to the water cooler, just about all anyone is talking about is the weather and for good reason, the season has been terrible. Enough said. Wait a minute, there may be another reason to talk about the weather. With all of the lost rounds everyone is feeling the financial crunch. A KARE 11 report had Braemar losing as much as \$18,000 per day. And the public courses are not the only ones feeling the pain. Private clubs, even though they have already received their dues, are feeling the pinch in the clubhouse. Without golf there is lower food and beverage revenue as well as fewer guest fees. Where does all of this lead? If history is doomed to repeat itself then it leads straight to the Golf Course Superintendent (GCS). Boards and owners are sure to come calling on the GCS to start cutting costs. Eliminate fertilizer applications, cut the labor budget, cut the improvements. These are the cries we are all soon to hear.

This may be the best opportunity we have had in many years to promote ourselves. We must point out to all those who scream that the grounds department must cut costs that the grass doesn't really care if it is raining or not. That all the rain really does is increase our cost, more labor to put bunkers back in place after a downpour, more fertilizer to replace that which has leached out of the system, more pesticides to combat disease. However, it is also a chance to show how well we are spending the money of others. We can show them how we can or have cut the labor needs by fixing bunker faces to eliminate erosion, how we are spoon feeding the turf so as not to lose a months worth of fertilizer the minute it rains. These are but a few of the examples we must point out to the decision makers at your club or course. Show that not only are you trying to control cost but are doing it in a way as to provide a better facility when the rains do come to an end and we finally see that big orange orb in the sky.

If you are looking for some timely weather information we have added some links to some good sites on the mgcsa.org web site. The wunderground site offers some realtime data for all major cities in the state including radar information. This may save many of you from the high cost of weather information services. That is if you don't have a problem hitting the refresh button once in a while.

Take the time to promote yourself and show with facts how you truly are the most valuable member of the staff. Keep smiling for the sun is sure to shine one of these days.

Respectfully,
Paul Eckholm, CGCS
President

HOLE NOTES (ISSN 108-27994) is published monthly except bi-monthly December/January, February/March for \$2 an issue or \$20 per year by the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association, 240 Minnetonka Avenue South, Wayzata, MN 55391-1617. Scott Turtinen, publisher. Periodicals postage paid at Wayzata, MN. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HOLE NOTES, 240 Minnetonka Avenue South, Wayzata, MN 55391-1617.