



ON BOARD

Musing the Monthly Minutes

*By Jack MacKenzie, CGCS
North Oaks Golf Club*

No doubt everyone's season is well under way and we are all enjoying the challenges our jobs offer. For these reasons the Board of Directors did not meet in the month of June. However, several important and news worthy events did transpire over the last few weeks.

Of primary interest to me, the Scholarship Chairman, was the Scholarship Scramble. This year, Dan Hanson at the St. Cloud Country Club hosted the event. Kudos to Dan and the whole club staff from Lori Larson in catering to Art Martinez in the kitchen.

Congratulations are in order for all of the winners that day, but the true champions will be chosen later this year when the scholarships are awarded. I personally commend all who donated additional monies to the Scholarship fund through the purchase of Mulligans. And I would like to say A BIG THANK YOU to the hole sponsors and those who contributed to defer the cost of dinner.

Stepping up to the contribution plate twice were Hydrologic and Simplot Turf Partners. Also adding to the donations were Plaisted Companies and Brackets Crossing. Thank you all for your participation.

Another big contributor to the Scholarship Fund, in the form of the on-going Legacy Scholarship Program, is Steve Garske president of ParAide. Muchas Gracias!

Recently I played in the Research Fund Raiser. This year MTI Distributing invited me to play one of the finest-maintained tracts in the Twin Cities, my course, North Oaks Golf Club (maybe I'm a bit biased!). Besides strengthening friendships, MTI Distributing contributed \$1,140 to research. Thank you.

While both of these events were fun, the greatest gain for me was in the form of a thank you note from James Gardner CGCS, Superintendent of The Wilds Golf Club. James had played my course during the Research Event and took his professionalism over the top by sending my staff and me a letter of thanks. Even though everyday I try to motivate my staff by positive promotion, nothing beats a "congratulations on a job well done" note from another professional in the industry.

How many of you have sent a Thank You note recently? Two years ago my club hosted the Minnesota PGA Championship. I received and posted in my shop cards of gratitude from over twenty-five percent of the playing field. Talk about a professional group of guys! As superintendents let us take this lesson of diplomacy to the next level and send thank you notes for all of the functions we attend. And please do not forget the associate members who also donate of themselves so generously.

Hey Dan and staff, your course was awesome. My thank you note is in the mail!

— Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

USGA Questions—

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caveats, a very general estimation of the cost of new greens is that they will range from \$4 to \$7 dollars per square foot. In most cases, new greens will range from 6000 to 7000 square feet apiece.

How Long Will the New Greens Last?

This is much like trying to answer the question, "How long will your house last?" The answer to both questions depends on numerous factors. What kind of construction technique was used? How good were the construction materials? How high are the demands of the owners? Is the design still appropriate for those using the structure?

From an agronomic point of view, greens built according to the USGA Green Section's guidelines should last indefinitely if they are cared for properly. There are greens across the country built in accordance with these guidelines that are more than 40 years of age. In contrast, poorly built greens are likely to fail within a few short years, usually due to inadequate root-zone drainage.

Even greens that drain well are occasionally targeted for reconstruction. Many courses are much more heavily played now than when they were originally designed. Often, the greens are simply too small to withstand the increased traffic load and must be completely rebuilt to accommodate the new design.

The bottom line is that there is no fixed number of years of a green's life. There are golf courses in the country with greens that are over 100 years old and there are courses that rebuild the greens every 10 to 15 years in order to remain competitive with other facilities in the area. As a very general rule of thumb, it is reasonable to expect well-built greens to provide satisfactory service (both architecturally and agronomically) for at least 20 to 25 years.

How Long Will We Have to Wait to Play Golf Again?

There are two aspects of the project that must be considered. The first is the actual construction process. The second is the grow-in of the new greens following construction.

The complete reconstruction of 19 greens normally takes from 6 to 12 weeks depending largely on the resources of the construction company and weather conditions. Once construction is finished and the greens are planted, the grow-in process begins. Bentgrass greens normally take 14 to 16 weeks of good growing weather to get ready for play, while bermudagrass greens are a little faster, typically needing 12 to 14 weeks.

The key phrase that must not be overlooked is good growing weather. Ideally, bentgrass greens should be planted in the fall and bermudagrass greens in early summer. Although it is certainly possible (and often unavoidable) to plant at less ideal times, it will take longer for the greens to mature enough to withstand traffic.

Obviously, there is much more to building and growing-in greens than can be covered in this short response. A great deal of information can be obtained by calling any of the Green Section's offices or by visiting the Green Section's Construction Education Program Web site at www.usga.org/green/coned.