

HOLENOTES

The Official Publication of the MGCSA
V. 58, #1 February 2023



2022 DSA Recipient:
Mike Brower

The MGCSA
Needs You

How Much Does
Research Cost?

On the Cover:

2022 DSA Recipient: Mike Brower

On this page:

Minnesota Valley Country Club



Board Members

President

Matt Cavanaugh

Vice President

Mark Michalski

Secretary/Treasurer

Nikk Dickerson

Ex-Officio

Mike Sonnek

Director

John Cameron

Director

Jacob Dixon

Director

JT Hauser

Director

Sally Jones

Director

Geoff Jordan

Executive Director

Chris Aumock

HOLENOTES

Hole Notes (ISSN 108-27994) is digitally published bi-monthly, 6 issues per year, by the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association, PO Box 2028, Maple Grove, MN 55311. Chris Aumock Publisher. Please send any address changes, articles for submission, advertising and concerns to chris@mgcsa.org.

Editor

Matt Cavanaugh

mattc@umn.edu



Minnesota Chapter

GCSAA

February 2023

Featured Articles

2022 Distinguished Service Award: Mike Brower

By: James Westendorf, Indian Hills Golf Club

Page 10-17

MGCSA Needs You!

By: Joe Berggren, The Wilds

Page 21-25

Here's What You Can Do

By: Mike Sonnek, Royal Golf Club

Page 26-27

Roll it Forward

By: Tom Meier, Le Sueur Country Club

Page 32-37

Get to Know 'Em

By: Jared Kalina, White Bear Yacht Club

Page 38-41

How Much Does Research Cost?

By: Eric Watkins, UMN

Page 44-47

Monthly Columns

Presidential Perspective P. 2-3

By: Matt Cavanaugh

From the High Grass P. 50-53

By: Chris Aumock

Upcoming Events

Assistants Pro Forum 2/28

Spring Carnival 5/8

Little Crow Exposure Golf 6/1

Eau Claire Exposure Golf 6/5

Giants Ridge Exposure Golf 6/20

Presidential Perspective

By: Matt Cavanaugh
Rush Creek Golf Club



I'm currently looking at the February family calendar that is posted in our kitchen. There are very few dates that do not have something on them. Baseball practice, swimming, conferences, middle school orientation, band concert, birthday party, my wife's work travel, my travel for a few speaking events, and even a little family get-a-way to Breezy Point. Most of the calendar stuff does not include the day to day of two working parents which can wear all of us out by itself never mind the extra stuff displayed on the calendar. I actually consider my family to be one of the less busy families I know of, but life still has a way of filling up.

Huh...I just noticed there is a heart on one of the days, but I can't seem to figure out why... Hopefully it comes to me.

Over the past few weeks I have done lots of thinking about my own calendar and about what the calendars of my peers looks like. I had the assistant superintendent calendar. I had the sales role calendar. I had the university researcher calendar. I briefly had the head of grounds at Stillwater School District calendar too, but that barely filled from Labor Day to Christmas in 2011. Those were dark times. I now have the superintendent calendar. Thinking about all of this and,

through a few conversations I had at the Northern Green, a simple phrase popped into my head. "The MGCSA should not feel like a chore." I think it can certainly feel that way at times and it shouldn't.

I'm truly excited for the new ideas that are coming with Chris now fully immersed in his role as Executive Director. The first year was a year to get a lay of the land. Understand where the fairways are and where the bunkers are. The member needs survey provided some great insight and will not be ignored by the new board of directors which include a very diverse group from throughout the state of Minnesota. These individuals are Mark Michalski (Chisago Lake Golf Course), Nikk Dickerson (Owatonna, MN), John Cameron (North Oaks Golf Club), Sally Jones (Benson Golf Club), JT Hauser (Rochester Golf and CC), Mike Sonnek (The Royal Club), Geoff Jordan (EcoWorks), Jacob Dixon (Par Aide) and Matt Cavanaugh (Rush Creek Golf Club). This is a great mix of metro and out state individuals that understand what

your calendar is all about too.

The MGCSA calendar is just as full and will hopefully provide opportunities that do not feel like a chore. The three outreach events in Fargo, Eau Claire, and Owatonna seemed to fit perfectly with many calendars. The shop tours were absolutely amazing with 110 plus people enjoying an incredible finish at Interlachen CC. Continue to monitor the MGCSA calendar and see what may fit into your packed calendar. Also take notice that the fees on many of these offerings are much different than past years and this starts with the MGCSA National Night in Orlando which is free. The term "gratis" has been part of many conversations over the past year. The May event at TPC Twin Cities...free. If you enter the Don White Match Play this year your team is entered into a new MGCSA Championship format and that portion is...free. I look forward to interacting with many of you this year and hoping to keep the chores at home with the kids, but that will likely cost you a few bucks. Dang it, I just remember what the heart is for.

2023 Platinum Sponsor



2023 Gold Sponsors



Bayer Environmental Science

2023 Silver Sponsors



CLESENS

Reinders



2023 Silver Sponsors



Thank you to our 2023
annual affiliate
partners, for your
continued support of
the MGCSA!

Minnesota Chapter



2023 Northern Green Beer & Pretzel



2023 Annual Meeting

Below: Your 2023 MGCSA Board of Directors, L to R: Nikk Dickerson, Geoff Jordan, Jacob Dixon, Mike Sonnek, Matt Cavanaugh, Mark Michalski, JT Hauser, John Cameron, and Sally Jones.



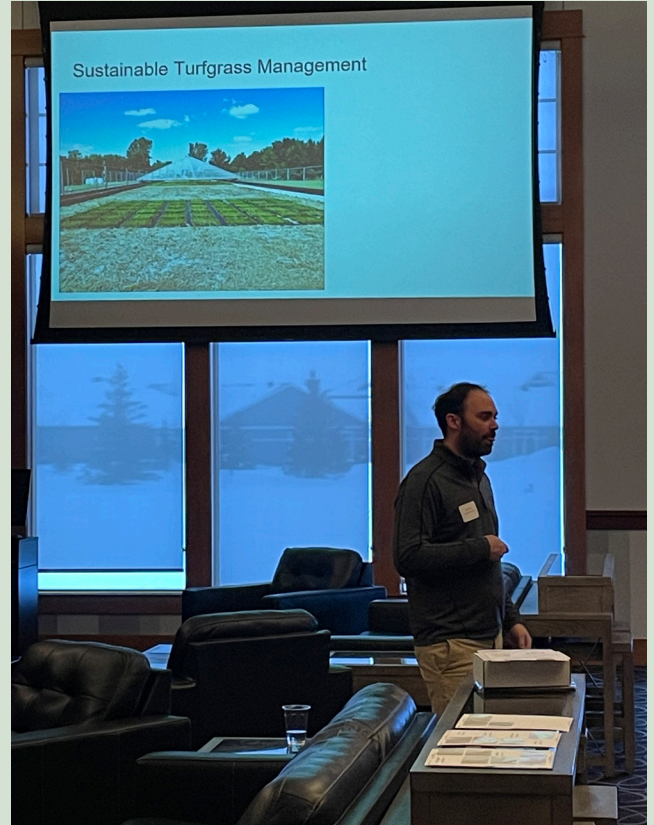
Thank you Past President, Mike Sonnek, for your years of service!





Oxbow Outreach Event

Thank you host David Wood & Oxbow CC for a fun and educational day!





Making the cut was never so easy.

See our ever-growing line of tools and accessories to enhance your course including Accuform™, HiO®, FusionCast® and Miltona.



ParAide.com

DSA
DSA
DSA
DSA
DSA
DSA
DSA

2022 MGCSA Distinguished
Service Award Recipient

Michael Brower
Minnesota Valley Country Club

By: James Westendorf



The MGCSA's Distinguished Service Award (DSA) is an award presented to an individual who has made an outstanding or significant contribution to the advancement of the golf course superintendent's profession. This contribution is the result of exemplary behaviors over a significant period of time, and takes a true dedication to our industry, its initiatives, and its vitality. Perhaps no one exemplifies these attributes, or the meaning of service to one's industry better than the

2022 recipient of the DSA award, Mike Brower, Minnesota Valley Country Club.

Mike has spent the better part of five decades dedicated to the game of golf and the Turf profession. He is currently the Golf Course Superintendent at Minnesota Valley Country Club and has spent the last 22 years in that position. Before leading Minnesota Valley, he was Golf Course Superintendent at Hillcrest Country Club, Assistant at the Minikahda Club, and a



Mike and his partner of 43 years, Shelby Wintz

member of the grounds staff at Worthington Country Club, La Crosse Country Club, and Maple Grove Country Club. He is a proud graduate of both the University of Minnesota (Environmental Science) and Pennsylvania State University (Turfgrass Management). Mike has been a member of the MGCSA since 1987 and held board positions twice within the organization. He was an early crusader for the Audubon Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses beginning in 1991, promoting their programs and encouraging courses to provide

habitat for bluebirds, monarchs, waterfowl, and songbirds. Over the decades his work and involvement with Audubon International placed him in a position to become a state steward for their organization.

Mike was an integral part of partnering the MGCSA with other allied associations to form the present day MTGF in order to provide a larger opportunity for all members of the turf community. Mike served two terms with the MTGF board during this merger. Mike has been published several



times in industry magazines, including Hole Notes and GCM also receiving the Watson Award in 1999. In 2008 Mike was awarded the MGCSA Environmental Award for his efforts in sustainability. The same year he and Minnesota Valley were honored by GCSAA with a national merit Environmental Leader Award. Mike's largest contribution to the golf industry and the superintendent's profession is mentorship. He is a leader on and off the property.

Mike has worked with many

interns and twenty-five Assistant Superintendents in his career, many becoming Golf Course Superintendents. Superintendents that have worked under Mike's leadership include: Tom Schmidt – Mendakota Country Club, Kurt Knox- Island View Golf Club, Tim Rasmussen - formerly Lafayette Country Club, Jason Dorn – Portland Golf Club, Brady Klein – Sacconnesset Golf Club, Christian Dunn – Golf Club Gut Grambe e.V. Germany, Josh Lemons – City of Orono, Brady Scott – Minnewaska Golf Club, Kyle Stirn – Baker National Golf





Club, Jason Sharfencamp, Pebble Creek Golf Club, Mike Mohn – Medina Golf Club, Dan Kampa – Stoneridge Golf Club, and James Westendorf – Indian Hills Golf Club. While Mike has extremely enjoyed working with interns and Assistants, he is also very grateful for the mentorship he received while working under four Superintendents in his career, Otto Pongratz, Luke Strojny, Dan Hanson, and Doug Mahal. -JW



Dan Kampa StoneRidge Golf Club

The Distinguished Service Award recipients are an elite club. Not only have they shown longevity in the profession,

but they have had a profound impact on everyone around them. As someone who worked for Mike Brower for three-and-a-half years, I can think of no better addition to the list of DSA recipients.

Mike is a true lead-by-example Superintendent. He brings an impeccable work ethic, day in and day out, that is infectious to every staff member. His positive attitude, supreme attention to detail and wonderful relationship with his membership are just a few examples of what he taught me that I use every single day. Congrats, Mike.



Kyle Stirn
Baker National Golf Course

Mike also known as the Bow-wow is a wealth of information when it comes to being a superintendent and I learned a TON of real-world turf skills from him. I was an assistant for Mike at Minnesota Valley 13 years ago and consider him a mentor. His energy and enthusiasm always impressed, even when we got into the “dog days of summer”. Mike is always thinking about how he can make the playing surfaces better at Minnesota Valley and anyone who steps foot on the property knows the membership and Mike take great pride in the course. Mike has made an impact in my career, and I am certain that he has helped many others as well! Congrats Mike on a much deserved Distinguished Service Award!

Mike Mohn
Medina Golf & Country Club

I had the pleasure of working with Mike Brower for two seasons, I was newer to the industry and began as an intern at Minnesota Valley Country Club, this role evolved into an assistant position. Mike’s passion for golf course management and Minnesota Valley in conjunction with his impressive work ethic has a great influence on the entire maintenance staff. These traits make Mike a great superintendent and someone who truly wants to share his passion with the people that he works with. Congratulations Mike!



Eau Claire Outreach Event

Thank you host Nick Peinovich & Eau Claire CC for another successful outreach educational event!





CUSTOM OVERSEEDING

by



**PROFESSIONAL
TURF & RENOVATION** Inc.

- **JOIN THE BENTGRASS REVOLUTION EFFICIENTLY AND ACCURATELY!**
- **MULTIPLE REDEXIM 3D 1575 OVERSEEDERS REDUCE COURSE DOWN TIME**
- **IDEAL FOR REGRASSING, REPAIRING WINTER KILL OR DROUGHT DAMAGE**

**CONTACT ANDY HOPKO
763-370-5186 • PROTURFMN.COM**

PTR'S PRESIDENT IS A PENN STATE TURF ALUM, FORMER MN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT AND HAS BEEN ESTABLISHING TURF FOR 40+ YEARS.



Toro ProCore[®] 648s



The New Gold Standard of Greens Aeration.

The ProCore 648s builds on the tremendous legacy of the 648 by incorporating proven technology & even more innovative features while preserving the time tested design elements that changed the way you aerate.

MTI Distributing is the Upper Midwest's leading supplier of products and services to the green industries. Since 1948 we have been committed to providing durable and reliable products and exceptional services to our customers. Call us to learn more about the Toro ProCore[®] 648s - 888-537-2484



SALES 888-537-2484
PARTS 888-537-2485
SERVICE 888-537-2486



SALES@MTIDISTRIBUTING.COM
PARTS@MTIDISTRIBUTING.COM
SERVICE@MTIDISTRIBUTING.COM
PREOWNED@MTIDISTRIBUTING.COM



WWW.MTIDISTRIBUTING.COM



BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA
BERKELEY, MISSOURI
GRIMES, IOWA

MGCSA Needs You!!

By: Joe Berggren, The Wilds

The weather outside is frightful, -10 currently (12/22/2022) and I have a chance to reflect on my 2 years volunteering my time as communications director for the MGCSA.

I was on the board during some interesting times. I was part of the covid era. We survived through zoom calls, through outdoor meetings, and social distancing. I was also lucky to be part of an important part of our association. The transition to our new executive director, Chris Aumock. I have come to realize that the only way for the MGCSA to continue to evolve and progress is by input from you, the member.

Two years ago, I talked with Jack Mackenzie about serving on the board of directors for the MGCSA. I wanted to get involved. I wanted to help. I had no idea what I was getting in to. I showed up for my first board meeting very excited, ready to jump in and get my hands dirty. But I was also a bit intimidated, as I have never truly known many of the guys on the board. My intimidation was quickly snuffed out as I came to realize that everyone in that room spoke the same language. They were fluent in golf course superintendent. The realization came that this was no “good ole boys club,” we are all doing the same job, just at different facilities and with different challenges. I may have challenges getting updated equipment, the guy next to me is dealing with a difficult board of directors, and the third guy may be dealing with a dilapidated, ancient irrigation system. But we spoke the same language, we all agreed that we hate it when the pro shop shoves a two-some out at daybreak and is pushing us! I had a million questions in those first couple of MGCSA meetings. Why this event? Why that seminar? Why no participation? I was

humbled immediately by a group of guys who all have the same questions and work very hard to come up with answers to share with our members. It is a true team environment where there are no wrong answers, we have had really good discussions on many topics, and this is all done for you, the member. Anyone that has served on the Board of Directors in past years knows this to be true.

There have been some changes on the board during my time, but I do believe that the board members need to be applauded for their work on the MGCSA board of directors.

- Scott Thayer served as President for 2 terms during the tumultuous covid years. He along with Jack Mackenzie worked hard to provide our membership with all the covid information we needed to navigate that memorable season.
- Mike Sonnek has served as President this season and navigated the retirement of Jack Mackenzie and the introduction of Chris Aumock.
- Nikk Dickerson has done great work providing quality education to the Northern Green Expo. It is a situation that is impossible to please everyone in our association.
- Eric Counselman and I spearheaded the “Member needs Survey.” It was created for you, the member, to voice your needs and wants from your membership. The results have been tallied and there is a lot of good information that will be available for you.
- Geoff Jordan has done a fantastic job representing the affiliate members of our association.
- 2022 introduced Chris Aumock as our Executive Director and he has done an exceptional job.
- 2022 also welcomed Matt Cavanaugh back to the board and introduced Mark Michalski, both of whom have made significant contributions.
- 2022 also introduced Ryan VerNess to the board, who is very comfortable sharing his opinion in a positive and constructive way.

The 2022 board has already delivered on some of our discussed adjustments. This year's board, along with Chris, has made changes to some offerings working to improve member value. Including:

- Suspending planned dues increases for 2023.
- Adopting a Reserve Fund Policy to manage the use of our investment funds, working to put those dollars back into the association and improving member value.
- No cost registration to the National Night event in Orlando. We can do so because of the generosity of our supporting affiliates.
- Increased turf education funding for interested and engaged staff members.
- Reduced cost for specific events such as the MEGA and The Championship.
- One of our most popular events, Shop Tours, is getting increased value by offering host venue provided lunch and additional educational content.



6500A

PrecisionCut™ Fairway Mower

KEY FEATURES:

- 24.7 hp FT4 compliant liquid-cooled diesel engine
- 22" QA5 cutting units for a 100" total width of cut
- 3-wheel, smooth tire configuration with standard grip all-wheel drive
- Passcode-protected TechControl display

For more information visit mmcjd.com to find a dealer near you.



While I give kudos to the Board of Directors, let's not forget the title of this article is "The MGCSA needs you!" Many of you took the time to respond to the "Member needs Survey." This survey serves as a tool for you to direct the board of directors which way you want your association to go. Many of the responses are fantastic. With the good always comes the bad. I believe that the not-so-positive results should be addressed also.

- Some comments refer to "the good old boys club of the board of directors." I would encourage whoever wrote that to attend a board meeting, call a board member, get involved and realize that this is nowhere near the truth.
- Another comment regards, "getting an assistant on the board of directors." We are all for that. We encourage assistants to get involved. The unfortunate reality is that generally, assistants are on the career path to becoming a superintendent. They may start on the board as an assistant, but quickly they will become superintendents. At that point, the board is then looking for another assistant. It can be an endless cycle.
- "I do feel the Board of Directors is out of touch because they all look forward to going to the National Show." I am happy to respond to this one. I have never gone to the National Show. Period. Feel free to call me to discuss. This year only 3 of 9 are attending.
- "The MGCSA concentrates on the twin cities only." The unfortunate reality is that many of the golf courses are concentrated around the metro area. Chris has reinitiated more outreach events in other regions, but it is up to YOU, the member, to attend. MGCSA is one of larger geographic GCSAA chapters, and most do not make the outstate efforts we do. There is room for improvement, but we are working to better support our outstate membership.
- "I don't have time to attend events." There is nothing the board can do about that. Until the person who wrote that comes to the realization that we are all replaceable and you need to make time, they will never make it to an event.

As I finish my tenure on the Board of Directors, I have come to the realization that we need to reinvent and reenergize the camaraderie and communication back into our profession. Pick up the phone or shoot a text to your neighboring golf course superintendent. Put yourself out there, ask dumb questions. If you don't want to ask a dumb question, call me. I have a million of them! Get involved, attend events, volunteer to help. We have a very specialized occupation, and we are a special group of individuals. The MGCSA needs you.



What if a Pythium Product Did More?

Union® Fungicide SC:

Dual mode-of-action control of all Pythium diseases and 17 other diseases in a single product.

Union® Eliminates:

- All Pythium Diseases
- Summer Patch
- Brown Patch
- 15 More Turf Diseases

► For more information contact Jeff Schmidt at jschmidt@pbigordon.com.

PBIGordonTurf.com/Union



Always read and follow label directions. Union® is a registered trademark of PBI-Gordon Corp. 2/22 06242

Here's What You Can Do?

Mike Sonnek
Royal Golf Club



A few years back I wrote an article titled, "What Can I Do?" In the article I shared some volunteer opportunities that I participate in and encouraged others to participate in volunteering as well. I would like this article to turn into, "Here's What You Can Do."

I know many of you give back and participate in volunteer events that have significant meaning to you. We would like you to share these opportunities with your fellow MGCSA members. Our hope is that by sharing your causes, your fellow association members may want to join you. I am going to start by sharing two events that I'll be participating in this spring.

I made my first blood donation with Memorial Blood Centers in 1996. I didn't become a regular donor until later on when my wife was no longer able to donate. I am now closing in on 4 gallons of blood donations. I have arranged for an MGCSA donation week, March 27-31. You can schedule a donation appointment at any of the six Memorial Blood Center Donation Centers. Donating blood is always a need and a simple way to help save lives.

Each of the donor center locations have different schedules, so donors from our group can go wherever is convenient for them. Our contact, Jessica Wheeler, is

available to schedule anyone for our group who would like assistance. They can email her at Jessica.Wheeler@innovativeblood.org or call at 651-508-3715. If they would like to schedule online, they can do so at www.mbcherohub.club. Please enter the code "MGCSA" in the appointment notes section.

On Sunday April 2nd I will be participating in I believe my 6th Goldy's Run. The beneficiary from the run is M Health Fairview Masonic Children's Hospital to support pediatric patients with heart disease. I was

supposed to do this run with my best friend in 2016 but we lost him to a heart condition before we got the chance. If you'd like to join me for the 5k you can register under team MGCSA at goldysrun.com. If you are unable to make it or choose not to run, you can still support the cause by following the link and making a donation to team MGCSA.

We hope that many of you can join us and I know many of you have causes that we would like you to share with us. With your help, let the MGCSA membership join you in support of your cause.





**Plaisted
Companies**
INCORPORATED

Elk River, MN • 763.441.1100
www.plaistedcompanies.com



GOLF

Topdressing Sands & Mixes

Our Sands meet USGA guidelines and are available with green pigment. Custom mixes can be blended for your individual needs using our 4-bin computerized Accublender.



Bunker Sands

Our bunker sands are always washed and screened. Choose from:

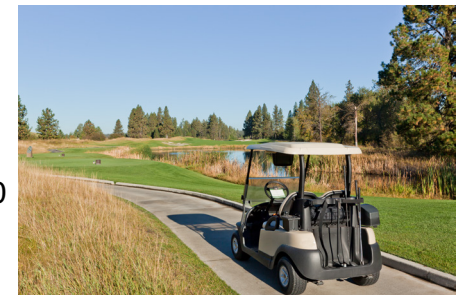
- Plaisted Bunker Sand Natural Tan
- Plaisted Pro Bunker Sand Blend Natural Tan
- 700 Best Signature 100% Crushed Off White
- 900 Best Signature 100% Crushed White



Golf Construction Sand Mixes

Our mixes all use USGA sand and a combination of fine grade peat and screened black dirt. Chose one of our popular mixes or we can custom blend one.

- USGA Coarse Gravel - A great bridging rock used as a drainage layer.
- Construction Sand & Peat Mixes - 50/50, 60/40, 70/30, 80/20, 85/15, 90/10
- Construction Sand & Black Dirt Mixes - 50/50, 70/30, 80/20
- Construction Sand/Peat/Black Dirt Mixes - 1-1-1, 60/20/20, 70/20/10, 80/10/10



Cart Path & Road Base

- 3/8" with fines river rock
- Class II buff limestone or red rock
- Class II, III, IV crushed granite
- Class 5 gravel
- Recycled concrete, crushed asphalt, conbit

Bagged Products

- Dry topdressing sand
- Dry tournament topdressing sand
- Dry green topdressing sand
- Dry early-green black topdressing sand
- Dry 70/30 green divot mix

GOLF COURSE MUSINGS

Share your strange, funny, and unique photos from your time on a golf course?
Send your images to chris@mgcsa.org.

Our golf industry representatives at Day on the Hill met with State Senator Judy Seeberger, District 41A, and discovered her stuffed squirrel playing golf!



2023 SHOP TOURS

Eagle Lake Golf Center
Edina Country Club
Interlachen Country Club



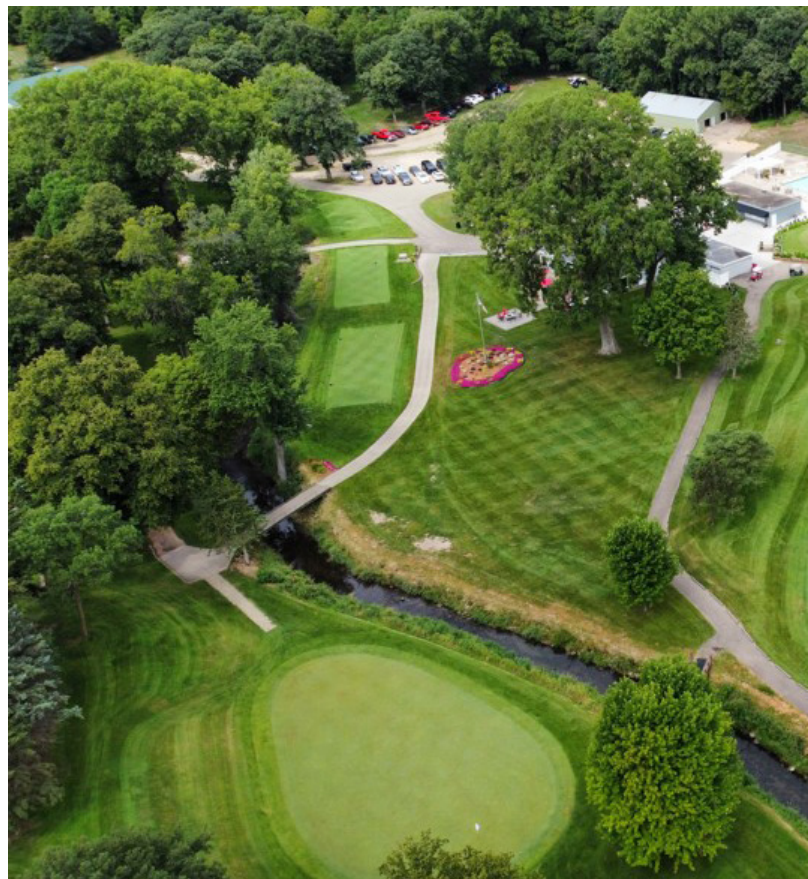
Thank you to all of our hosts for the largest shop tours event yet! 120 people joined us this year for tours of Eagle Lake, Edina CC, and Interlachen maintenance facilities.

An extra thank you to the Interlachen service team for providing us with a unique, and very different shop tour experience! Thank you to Jeff Drake and Josh Kravik from Toro, for providing educational content on shop electrification and autonomous mowing.



Roll It Forward

By: Tom Meier



As a young kid growing up in SW Minnesota, I was a baseball nut who woke up everyday and went looking for a game, either at the old Martin Oil lot or the local softball diamonds with the neighborhood kids. I guess I enjoyed being outside and hanging out with friends. (I'm sure Mike Brower and

Mark Koepsell remember those days as well).

It wasn't until about the 7th grade that I was introduced to golf. As I recall, Koepsell and I had gone to the Worthington Country Club, on a ladies day no less, to play my first round ever. I remember we were on the fourth



hole, and my ball was sitting in the fairway about 230 yds from the hole. A group of lady members were finishing up on that green. I looked at Koepsell, and he handed me a 3 iron and said, "Just hit it. You'll never make it there from here anyway." Well I hit it, and it felt like I had hit a feather ("pure," as I now know

it is called). We watched as it bounced about 10 yards from the green and rolled up and past one of the ladies just as she was putting. Needless to say, we kind of got chewed out by a couple of them, but that "pure'd 3 iron" hooked me on the game of golf.

Fast forward a few years, I had

the opportunity to work on the grounds staff at the Worthington Country Club, I couldn't turn it down because I had developed such a love for the game and the outdoors. I became the assistant superintendent there a few years later and moved into the superintendent job in 1989, the same year that I married the love of my life. It was there, under the guidance of then-superintendent R Drew Demorest, that I really developed a passion for providing the members and guests with an enjoyable, aesthetically pleasing, and challenging golf course. In 2002, after 24 years at WCC, a job at the Le Sueur Country Club opened

with the departure of Barry Provo to Deer Run. I applied, interviewed, and became their next golf course superintendent, where I remain today.

Over the past 40+ years in this industry, what I've enjoyed most is the people that I've met, whether it be my peers, the members, or the staff that I work side-by-side with every day. Sometimes I wish I had kept a log of all the great people that I have had the pleasure of being around, because there have been many. Many of them have become great, lifelong friends, and many more, some still with us and some not, I think about





often. As a wise Confucius once said, “Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life,”. I’m going with that!

As per instructions, I have to nominate the next person to “Roll it Forward”. I think back to all of the local “kids” that have gone into this industry such as Mark Koepsell, sales for Frost Industries, Freddy Ehlers, GC Superintendent at Brookview in Golden Valley, Josh Eykyn, Hartman Companies, Mike Brower, GC Superintendent at Minnesota Valley CC in Bloomington, to name a few.

I also think of all my industry friends that I have met over the years, Fred Taylor, GC Superintendent at the Mankato Golf Club, Tom Proshek, GC Superintendent at Bracketts Crossing CC, Mike Brual, GC Superintendent at Greenhaven GC, Jeff Schmidt, PBI Gordon, Scott Gilbertson, Reinders, John Spaulding, Syngenta, and so many more. With that being said, I’d have to nominate Fred Taylor, as he is the senior to all of the aforementioned. So, Mr. Taylor, consider yourself nominated, I’m looking “forward” to hearing your story!



Tom with a few familiar faces

Quality since 1971...

HARTMAN

Golf Course Construction
& Renovation

Specializing in...

Bunkers • Tees • Laser Leveling • Green Drainage • Irrigation • Design • Pump Station Upgrades

8099 Bavaria Rd.
Victoria, MN 55386
952.443.2990

info@hartmancompanies.com
www.hartmancompanies.com



Above: The crew at Le Sueur CC

Below: Tom and his Family



Landscape Materials

We offer 8 varieties of mulch and 11 varieties of landscape rock to add the pop and class your course deserves. We also carry quality hardscape brands and natural stone options that offer exceptional strength, durability and the kind of long lasting beauty that will make your clubhouse a coveted destination for golf and events.

- Mulch
- Decorative Rock
- Mason Sand
- Boulders
- Monument Stones
- Water Features
- Pavers
- Retaining Walls
- Fire Features



Delivery Options

We own our own fleet of 50 GPS tracked trucks making delivery dependable, efficient, and timely. We have a truck for any job.

- Tandems
- Tri-Axles
- End Dumps
- Dump Trucks
- Truck & Pup
- Clam Trucks

**From Order
To Production
To Delivery
One Call Does It All!**

Get to Know 'Em



Jared
Kalina

*White Bear
Yacht Club*

FACILITY INFO

Public or Private: Private

Number of Holes: 18

Fulltime employees: 4

Seasonal employees (not including full time): 17

Types of grass: Bent/Poa/Bluegrass

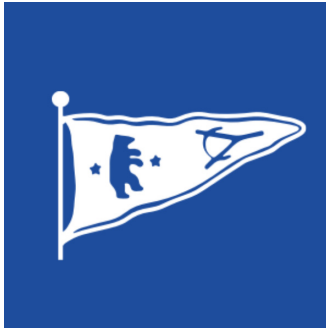
Total course acreage: 95

Greens acreage: 3

Tee acreage: 3

Fairway acreage: 40

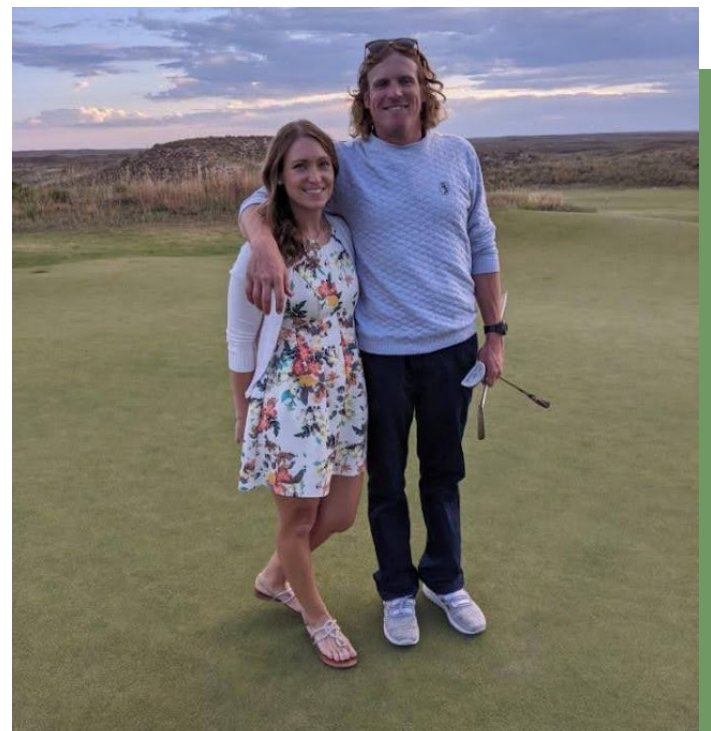
Rough acreage: 50



1959, and to put it nicely, has its limitations.

What concerns do you have the turf business and the future of golf? It's definitely water. Right or wrong, we are going to be easy targets when water becomes more and more scarce.

What is needed to bring more young professionals into the industry? We have to keep reaching out to the young people on our staffs and continue to lead by example. Golf course superintendent isn't exactly a conventional job a young person considers, but if we are having



PERSONAL TURF FACTS:

How many years have you been in your current position? Years? Let's count in weeks instead...so six?

How many years have you been in the turf industry? 15

Where else have you worked?
Wilmington CC, Wilmington, DE
Sand Hills Golf Club, Mullen, NE
Ballyneal Golf Club, Holyoke, CO

Turf School Attended (if any)?
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

INDUSTRY THOUGHTS:

What is one "master plan" thing you would like to change at your golf course?
WBYC is overdue for a new irrigation system. The current one was initially installed in



FUN FACTS

Have you ever met a celebrity?

Who? I've been lucky enough to work at some private resorts where famous people came through...lots of memorable interactions, some not fit to print. Peyton Manning was a very nice guy.

What is your favorite vacation spot? You can't have a bad time in Hawaii, not possible.

What is your favorite memory of starting your turf career?

No single moment or memory, really. I was lucky enough to have some good mentors that showed me you can have fun and do a great job, they are not mutually exclusive. Lots of jokes and laughs help break up the tough times.

What is your favorite job on the golf course? Golf course setup - cup cutting

What is your least favorite job on the golf course? Weed-whipping. I know it's important and a necessary evil but yuck!

fun and being good people I think we can "open some eyes" and bring talented, curious minds into our business.

What piece of equipment do you want? Not a need, a want.

Hard to say yet, but the mechanic says the rough mowers and rollers are about as old as me so we will start there with a new roller.

In terms of industry costs (equipment, pesticides, labor, etc.) are they too low, too high or just right? I mean, who's going to answer "just right"? Everything has seen a big jump since COVID and it seems like we aren't ever going back to the "before" times.

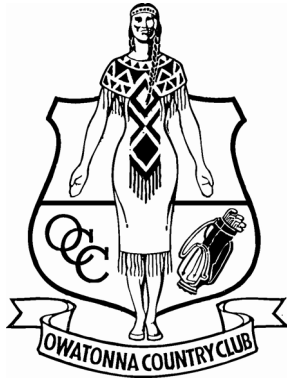
Have you played any famous golf courses? Which ones? I love golf and golf architecture and love to travel to play other places when I can. Seen some great courses all across America but the best time of my life was the 10 days in New Zealand and Australia seeing their best. Tara Iti, Barnbougles Dunes, Royal Melbourne, and St. Andrews Beach in a the same week is a pretty good week.

Who is your dream foursome?
my dad, brother, and the GOAT - Tiger Woods

The last few years have been unique, with Covid and drought. Would you like to comment on how it affected you, and how it has changed your management approach now? As superintendents, we have to be ready to adapt and

change at a moment's notice. It's usually weather-related, but I know I personally always have 'the plan' and the finished product usually diverges from 'the plan' quite a bit. Flexibility has always been important, but now it is beyond important, it is necessary. If you want to fill out a good crew behind you, you must be willing to give and take with some employees. Showing flexibility in scheduling and job responsibilities has become essential as more and more untrained laborers wake up and realize there's more jobs available than people to fill the jobs. If McDonald's has enough employees than we as golf course superintendents have no excuse because I've worked at McDonald's and let me tell you, it is way harder than what we do!

*If you would like to participate in a future
Get to Know 'Em, please reach out to
Chris at chris@mgcsa.org*



Owatonna Outreach Event

Thank you Owatonna CC for hosting our Winter Outreach Event and a Board of Directors meeting!



Advocacy Update

Currently Introduced Legislation Potentially Impacting MN Courses

[HF1130/SF608](#) **Golf Opposes**

Cities authorized to adopt pesticide control ordinances

- Legislation to give local authority to restrict pesticide use. Currently, 43 states have some form of state law that preempts local governments' ability to regulate the use of pesticides, ensuring regulation at the state level.

[HF1538](#) **Golf Supports**

Water appropriation allocation properties modified

- This bill works to allow responsible water users, such as golf, access to minimal water during times of drought. Our efforts over the last few years have gotten this bill introduced and now reintroduced. We are working on additional authors in the House and may also have earned Senate authorship during our recent Day on the Hill.

[HF1715](#) **Golf Opposes**

Sale of nonelectric powered lawn and garden equipment prohibited

- Just this week, HF1715 was introduced to prohibit new gas powered equipment below 25 hp. This bill follows efforts in other states to ban new sales of gas-powered power equipment in the coming years, in an effort to transition to all electric equipment. This would include almost all of your small power equipment, excluding snowblowers.



How Much Does Research Cost?

By: Dr. Eric Watkins,
Dept. of Horticultural Science
University of Minnesota

Editor's note: this article is an update from an article originally published in the March 2020 issue of Golf Course Management

The Environmental Institute for Golf, on its research web page, declares that “Without research, where would the game of golf be? Research adds to every aspect of the game, from enjoyment to efficiently managing the resources used.” In 2022, the EIFG supported research by awarding \$149,957, split among five research projects. The many state-level BMPs that have been written in recent years are built on a foundation of applied turfgrass research conducted at many locations, the primary being the public land-grant university. At one time, the costs of turfgrass research were primarily covered by University and related state

funds; however, paying for research has long since shifted away from the University to other sources, including federal granting agencies like the USDA, state agencies related to agricultural development or environmental protection, and grants and donations from professional groups like the GCSAA, its state chapters, and other turf foundations. Nationally, research funding is falling well short of what is required to take on the many challenges the turfgrass industry faces. At the University of Minnesota, we are blessed to have a longstanding partnership with the MGCSA and the Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation (MTGF); combined, these two organizations donate in the range of \$75,000-100,000 each year to our program. These funds are critical, providing

baseline funding that allows us to be successful in obtaining larger grants from other sources. I'm sure several readers might be wondering why \$100,000 might only be considered "baseline" or why we need to get multimillion dollar grants to do what we do.

Much like for golf course superintendents, the most expensive budget item for researchers is labor. A typical golf-related turfgrass research project might include personnel such as scientists, research associates, postdoctoral associates, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Most of the research that has impacted the golf course superintendents has probably been led by graduate students, whose total costs generally fall between about \$45,000 and \$50,000 per year. These funds are used to pay an assistantship (salary), health care, and tuition.

It would be a rare applied turfgrass research project that could be completed in under two years; in fact, most projects take 3 years--at least 3-6 months to get things going

(planning, seeding, etc.) followed by two full growing seasons of data collection (necessary to repeat the experiment), with an additional 6 months, and probably more, for data analysis and reporting (writing papers and theses, talks at field days, etc.). Let's assume a project takes 2.5 years: at \$46,000 each year, that puts us at \$115,000 in personnel costs for the primary researcher involved in the project. At this point, it might be useful to note that there is only one turfgrass-specific grant opportunity that funds projects at levels over \$115,000 for a single project (the USGA research grant program, where funded grants above this amount are allowed but rare).

Money for personnel is only the beginning, there remains: field equipment, fuel, labor to manage the research plots and equipment, storage, laboratory equipment to process or measure samples, undergraduate student labor to help process samples, a computer to enter data, software to analyze the data (sometimes this is free!), charges for greenhouse bench space, growth chamber rental fees, charges for

field plot space, publication costs of the journal article reporting the results (at least \$1000 if open access, which is ideal so that practitioners can access the full results for free), and travel to meetings (GIS or scientific conferences) to present results. Let's not forget the turf professor who supervises the student; fortunately, this is the only part of the research project that doesn't need to be covered.... unless your project requires field research in the summer, then the professor might need to be paid with grant funds during the summer months.

Taking all these costs into consideration, the real cost of a project of moderate scope is probably in the range of \$150,000-\$250,000. If the project is very focused on golf course management, it is going to be very difficult (impossible for some projects) to garner funding outside of a turf-specific grant program. Unfortunately,

there are no turf-specific grant programs that will fund projects at these levels. Instead, we work to pull together teams of researchers, both at UMN and beyond, to write grant proposals to federal funding agencies with the hopes that 10-20% of our submissions will be successful. We've been fortunate to lead several funded proposals, and this has allowed us to add several talented researchers to our team.

I hope this short description of the costs associated with research will come to mind as you visit our turfgrass research field days, read research articles in Hole Notes, and consider donating rounds for the 2023 Rounds for Research program. The cost of research only continues to increase, and the challenges of funding the next great bentgrass cultivar, or the next disease-suppressing cultural practice, or the next water-saving strategy will only increase along with it.

Follow the UMN Turf Blog
for project updates!

Thank you for supporting 2022 Rounds Fore Research!

Eric Watkins
University of Minnesota

The MGCSA has been a great partner with the UMN Turfgrass Science program. In 2022, with funds raised from Rounds Fore Research and the Research Scramble, MGCSA donated \$30,000 to our program. We are very grateful for this gift. Thank you to all who participated in these events. I want to specifically thank those superintendents who donated rounds for the Rounds Fore Research program.

<u>Course name</u>	<u>Superintendent</u>
Minnesota Valley Country Club	Michael Brower
Somerby Golf Club	Jacob Kocak
The Wilderness at Fortune Bay	Ryan Verness
Rochester Golf & Country Club	JT Hauser
Woodhill Country Club	Erik Tolzmann
Stoneridge Golf Club	Dan Kampa
Southview Country Club	Mike Paape
St Cloud Country Club	Troy Tschida
Windsong Farm Golf Club	Jon Daihling
Golden Valley Country Club	David Phillips
The Minikahda Club	Jeff Johnson
Dacotah Ridge Golf Club	Cody Wersal
Spring Hill Golf Club	Tim Johnson
Prestwick Golf Club	David Kazmierczak
The Jewel Golf Club	Lucas Grieves
Bearpath Golf and Country Club	Jim Snell
Mendakota Country Club	Tom Schmidt
The Legacy Courses at Craguns	Matt Mckinnon
Medina Golf and Country Club	Mike Mohn
Interlachen Country Club	Brian Boll
Northland Country Club	Jacob Ryan
Edina Country Club	Brandon Schindele
Indian Hills Golf Club	James Westendorf
Giants Ridge Golf Course	Jeff Simondet
White Bear Yacht Club	John Steiner
TPC - Twin Cities	Joe Rolstad
Legends Club	Scott Thayer
Rush Creek Golf Club	Matt Cavanaugh
Royal Golf Club	Mike Sonnek

GCSAA Conference and Show

National Hospitality Night



Mike Sonnek and Kevin Clunis dressed appropriately for the Florida sunshine.



MGCSA National Hospitality Night was sponsored by the following generous affiliate sponsors:

Diamond Sponsors



Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors





From Biffs to Bills

I never thought I would have to ask this for a Superintendent job, does the shop have a bathroom? Did you all know this was actually a perk of the job! One could assume that would be a necessity for employees, but not always the case, as I know I wasn't the only one with only a Biff. That outdoor toilet was a little chilly to use in the winter! It was

always an effort and discussion to get the bathroom rebuilt, but we had become discouraged at the lack of progress.

I am referring to Meadowbrook Golf Course, who only recently finished rebuilding a shop bathroom. A few years back, there was an old well that needed to be capped. The bathroom had to be removed to do so, upon completion of that project, the funds had all been used, and it was decided to just put the walls back up without the bathroom. That is when the Biff showed up and became the main toilet onsite. Side note, the clubhouse had been razed as well due to some previous issues, so there was a temporary facility in place for that as well. In my last season, they were planning, and ultimately built,



a new clubhouse facility. I insisted that a bathroom be included in that process for the shop building. A seemingly unnecessary request. After some initial threats and discussions, the plan was pursued and completed, albeit for an astronomical fee. At this point, the fight was won for our staff, and the future staffs basic needs, so the cost of the project was no longer my concern.

I was thinking about this story the other day at our Day on the Hill event. As we were leaving, we had the feeling that we didn't accomplish anything, yet we had. We had a positive day, making some new connections and we started some new relationships. It requires a step back to find the tangible value of the day, but over the years we are starting to see those steps, and the importance continues to be paramount. Just like the Meadowbrook bathroom, it was easy over the last few years to not see the progress, or the importance of stepping up and explaining our needs.

Our goal at the Capitol this year was to focus on building relationships with our legislators. This is the essential facet of our advocacy efforts. We simplified our approach, to make it easier for individuals to carry on a dialogue. For those who attended, thank you again for your time! For those who didn't, your voice was missed. This event allows us to get into more doors than we can individually, and that is the point, make as many connections as we can so when the time comes, we have the recognition we need.

Perhaps these efforts for water assurances, or pesticide preemptions laws, or other usual topics, aren't for you, then find whatever it is that would make you step up. Maybe you're interested in the tax on restaurant equipment for your clubhouse? Whatever your reason, find your perspective that allows you to engage. We need to build relationships, we can do that for golf, or you can do that personally. Either way, establish that communication that could pay off in the future.

What legislative action is impacting, or will impact you? Ask that question over the next year and I hope you consider joining us next time. Until then, reach out to your legislators, invite them to your golf courses or events, and begin to establish the framework for future golf industry dialogue.

We'll take all the friends we can get at the Capitol. So, this started at a biff, and got to a minimal, basic toilet. That progress was incremental and seemingly endless, but in the end we got the main mission accomplished. Was it up to the standards that we would have preferred, no, but

MGCSA NEW MEMBERS - *Jan./Feb. 2023*

Ben Wisniewski	Class C	Rush Creek Golf Club
Matt Hanson	Class C	The Loop at Chaska
Dylan Klein	Class C	Meadows at Mystic Lake
Dwight Vaughn	Class C	Highland National GC
Jordan Jerrold	Class C	The Legacy at Cragun's
Jared Kalina	Class A	White Bear Yacht Club
Jacob Fenno	Class C	Alexandria Golf Club
Daniel Peterson	Class C	Riverwood National GC
Ethan Ringold	Student	Medina Golf & CC
Jake Isaak	Student	Rochester Golf & CC
Peter Marsolais	Class C	Mendakota Country Club
Lucas Palczewski	Affiliate	MTI Distributing Inc.
Jacob Wiescamp	Student	Medina Golf & CC
Zachary Foltz	Class B	Detroit Country Club
AJ Lewis	Class A	Majestic Oaks Golf Course
TJ Wohlever	Affiliate	Turfwerks
Bruce Halvorson	Facility	Sioux Creek Golf Course
Joshua Jennings	Class C	Little Falls Golf Club
Dale Pfaffenstein	Student	Medina Golf & Country Club
Andy Hopko	Affiliate	Professional Turf & Renovation
Tiffany Kozojed	Student	Forest Hills Golf & RV Resort

at least we didn't have to freeze ourselves using a biff in the winter. I think it's important to view advocacy the same way, it doesn't seem like we are making progress, but when you step back, you can see the small steps were taking forward. Every room that we walked into that said, "I remember you" is progress, now if we can only get into more of those doors!

The new bathroom at Meadowbrook was mostly completed before I left for this new role, and I got to use it only one time, but I am grateful I was able to help finish a conversation that will support the current and future staff there. As we continue fighting for golf's needs, we must remember that we didn't get to

this point on our own, we are standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. Let's always work to ensure a stronger future for those who will follow.



The almost finished product, nothing special, but it'll do, if you dont need to fill a water bottle!



Superior Tech Products
Leading Edge Turfgrass Solutions
Golf Courses | Sport Fields | Parks

952-546-3678
www.stproots.com
stp@stproots.com



smooth
healthy
consistent
greens




- * Liquid & Granular Fertilizers
- * Organic Fertilizers
- * Post Patent Pesticides
- * Aerification Tines & Bedknives
- * Natural & Artificial Turf grooming equipment.













