

HOLENOTES

The Official Publication of the MGCSA
V. 58, #5 October 2023



MGCSA BOD
Candidate Profiles

Fred Taylor, CGCS
2023 DSA Award

Elevate Your
Equipment Manager



On the Cover:
Fred Taylor with daughter Allie on
the flight deck of the USS Tripoli

On this page:
MGCSA Championship at
Fox Hollow Golf Club

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HOLE*NOTES*

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October 2023

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Presidential Perspective

By: Matt Cavanaugh
Biolawn



In the summer of 2006, I met Dr. Eric Watkins at the University of Minnesota while looking at creeping bentgrass NTEP trials to determine the best bentgrass that Rush Creek would use for the planned greens renovation in the fall of 2007. At the time I had no interest in pursuing higher education, but that started to change in the fall of 2006 when a saturated job market saw my resume continue to be rejected and thus delaying or maybe even derailing my advancement in the superintendent world. I continually tried to find ways for my resume to be more appealing to perspective employers, but rejection continued.

The fall of 2006 I had it. I finally had the missing piece to my resume that would get me that next job. I reached back out to Eric and started discussing potential educational opportunities available that could help with my problem of advancing in the superintendent industry. January 2007 saw me taking the GRE (Graduate Record Examinations) and in the fall of 2007 I was taking classes and starting my field research project at the University of Minnesota while at the same time still the Assistant Superintendent at Rush Creek Golf Club in the middle of a full in-house greens renovation. What did I get myself into?

It was difficult four years after that. I had classes from the fall of 2007 through the spring semester of 2009. Field research was conducted at the TROE Center and at Rush Creek through the spring of 2010. With all of that completed it took an additional two years to complete my thesis. All of this while still being an Assistant Superintendent at Rush Creek.

There were some hectic and long days that saw me going to Rush Creek in the morning, then rushing to class at the University of Minnesota St. Paul campus, then back to Rush Creek to finish off the workday, then staying at Rush Creek to collect field research plot data, then heading back to St. Paul to collect data at the field research plots located there...then heading home. Add on to that the greenhouse research trials that continued during the winter. It actually hurts to think that my life continued like that for 2 plus years. In reality it just about killed me, but it also set me on a unique path in the world of grass.

When I first started talking

with Eric about coming back to school the best thing he said to me was that he didn't know what doors this would open, but it would open doors. This has certainly been true for me since the completion of my graduate degree which then saw me leave Rush Creek and the golf course industry in September of 2011. Leaving was the best thing for me at the time. The only job I had from 1995 to 2011 was on a golf course. I had zero perspective of what else I could do and frankly I did not have the confidence or guts to try anything else. I had been comfortable in the golf course world, but it was time to get out of my comfort zone. Fast forward 12 years and I'm finding myself at that same crossroad.

Last winter I looked at my wife and I said that I can't do this job forever. I wasn't unhappy with my job at Rush Creek, and I was not actively looking for anything, but I knew I was not going to end my working career at Rush Creek or frankly even as a superintendent. I figured I had 3-7 years left in me as a superintendent. A few months ago, I was contacted about a position

with a lawn care company that focuses on applications for residential homes. I had an initial conversation with the two owners of the company about what position was being offered and then discussed why I would even entertain the thought of leaving Rush Creek. I discussed how I was always looking to challenge myself in every step of my working career. Be it changing paths to sales, changing again to research scientist, to tackling two in-house green expansions as a superintendent. I have always been up for change and something new to challenge me mentally. After the initial conversation the two parties were still interested in moving on with the process.

A second interview and viewing of what the day-to-day company is all about was completed. I was able to see the ins and outs of the company. From the current people and operations to the vision and drive on where the company wants to go. It was an impressive day and an impressive company on the rise. That evening I was discussing the day with my wife, Lisa. At

the end of our conversation, I asked her, "What do you want for me and us as a family." Initially she gave me the typical, "I want you to enjoy your job...I want you to be happy...". Not wanting to push it more at the time I took the stereotypical answer and went to bed.

More conversations were had with the potential new employer, and it was getting closer to the position being officially offered. I again asked Lisa, "What do you want for me and us as a family." This time though I looked at her and said, "Don't give me the basic answer you gave me last time. That is not the answer I need and the answer we need as a family. Tell me what you really want to say. We can only make the best choice if I truly know what you are feeling." Before I go on, I must say that my wife is a very private person, and it is not often that she really lets you know what is on her mind. Lisa looked at me and she said, "The boys and I need you to be less angry and I think it is time for a change away from the golf course." Ouch, that one hit me in the soul.

She was not wrong though and I could feel it happening to me with each passing golf season. Unfortunately, we often hurt the people closest to us and that was slowly happening at the Cavanaugh household. I enjoy Rush Creek, I enjoy the work that I do, and I love the people that I work with at Rush Creek, but I love my family more. I accepted the Operations Director position at the local company bioLawn owned by Aaron Johnsen and Will Haselbauer.

It was always going to take the right situation for me to leave Rush Creek as I have had other opportunities over the years, but this one made the most sense for me professionally and personally. Even with that it was the hardest decision of my life. The superintendent work becomes a part of who we are because so many of us start this path as just a summer job that turns into a career. Sometimes the problem with that is we get scared to try something new and it often becomes too late to make a change as we get older. I have been lucky enough to have several opportunities in the green

industry and none of this would have been possible if I had not gone back to school and spent the hardest four years of my life grinding through that. It has opened the door to meet new people and thus the opportunity to make career path changes. So with that, I'm off to a new adventure. Many of you have my number and I still welcome more of the conversations that I have had with you. I welcome the conversations with individuals that are at a crossroads with their career. I welcome the conversations with individuals that are frustrated and just need to vent. I welcome the conversations with those that still love the work. To be honest, I'll only welcome the conversations until my retirement in 628 weeks. Until then, I'll talk to you soon.

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2024 MGCSA Board of Director Candidates

Election will run for 1 week online, from 11/10 - 11/17.

More details and election link will be sent out in the coming weeks.

Winner will be announced at Annual Meeting on 12/5.

For President Mark Michalski, Chisago Lakes Golf Course Golf Course Superintendent

I started working in the golf course industry when I was 16 years old in Silver Bay, MN. I didn't know much about the MGCSA or GCSAA other than that they were organizations that the superintendent I worked for belonged to and that through the relationships built from others in those associations there was always someone to bounce ideas off of for potential issues you were having, whether it be equipment related or turf related, or simply an idea for your course that you were considering implementing, there was someone you could call and talk that through with them.



member of an association? Sure you could, however belonging to an association gives you the opportunity to meet new people more easily and grow your knowledge base. To me the association doesn't exist to "serve" its members but it exists to give its members opportunities to serve one another. I don't know about you, but I learn

Could you do this without being a

best from others and their experiences, and association events provide an avenue to be exposed to different ideas and the opportunity for me to grow as a superintendent.

One of the things I have always found appealing about this industry was the camaraderie between fellow superintendents. As a high school student it was definitely one of the things that drew me to this profession. Playing golf with fellow superintendents is one of the most enjoyable activities to me. Not only is it an opportunity

to play golf but it's also an opportunity to talk shop and bounce ideas off of one another. Just about every time I play, I see or hear something that is a great idea that I bring back to my course. For me, this is the same reason to be involved in the association. Selfishly it makes me a better superintendent. I learn at each board meeting. I'm stretched as a professional by those I have the privilege to serve with and their ideas.

I look forward to getting to know more of you this coming year. - M.M.



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For Vice President Nikk Dickerson, Faribault Golf Club Golf Course Superintendent

(2013) 18-Hole
Superintendent of the Year
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(2020-2022) Grassroots
Ambassador MN-01 - GCSAA
(2021-2022) Director
- MGCSA Board
(2021) Melrose Leadership
Academy Recipient - GCSAA
(2023) Secretary/
Treasurer - MGCSA
(2023) First Green
Liaison - GCSAA



Why are you running for office?
When I first ran for office I wanted to help the association with what seemed like an insurmountable task of finding a replacement for Jack. Now that Chris is at the helm, I feel we are in very good hands for the future, and I want to continue to serve by seeing through some of the changes we have adopted over the past 18 months. I would like to help steer the ship down the path we've started

with Chris, while continuing to work with all the other board directors as we chart the path for the future of the MGCSA.

What are the biggest issues facing the MGCSA today?
Getting people to come into the industry is still a very large problem and one I believe we have only scratched the surface on. The MGCSA is going to be a shell of its former self if we don't find a way to get more young people engaged and entering the fold. - N.D.

For Treasurer/Secretary John Cameron, North Oaks Golf Club Golf Course Superintendent

Bachelor of Science Degree
from the University of
Wisconsin-River Falls 2014
11 years of Private Country/Golf
Club management experience

Why are you running for office?
I'm running for office with
the intention of helping the
MGCSA remain active, exciting,
and successful. I participated
on the Education Committee
during the 2023 season and
hope to continue in 2024.
Please reach out with any
speakers, topics, or ideas that
you may have for upcoming
MGCSA educational events.

What are the biggest issues
facing the MGCSA today?
Advocacy - Without continually
advocating the "good story of
golf" we are prone to be on the
chopping block in regards to
water usage, pesticide usage,
labor shortages, etc. The MN golf
industry generates 2.5+ billion



dollars in economic output
and provides 25,000+ jobs!
We need to remain active in
promoting the industry to
our legislatures, communities,
members, guests, employees,
family, friends, and naysayers.
Water Usage - Several golf
course utilizing surface water
that reached "critical low" levels
during the summer of 2023
received phone calls and/or
letters from the MN DNR stating
that it was time to implement
the contingency plan stated on
their current permit or they'd

need to create and implement a contingency plan. Some areas received timely rains to return the water source levels above the “critical low” benchmark so these golf courses could return to normal operations without utilizing the contingency

plan. Members of the MGCSA should remain proactive during these times by reaching out to local legislators to build relationships and hopefully gain strong support from Golf Course Owners, Managers, Members, and Guests while doing so. - J.C.

For Director Kyle Stirn, Baker National Golf Course Golf Course Superintendent

I have been part of the golf industry now for over 20 years. I started as a seasonal at Willow Creek Golf Course in Rochester MN. After working as a seasonal at Willow in high school I decided this was something I truly loved and wanted to become a golf course superintendent. I have a 4 year degree at University of Minnesota in horticulture with an emphasis in Turf Science. I am now going on my sixth season at Baker National as a golf course superintendent and a Class A Superintendent with the GCSAA.

Why are you running for office?



I have been thinking about becoming more active within the MGCSA over the last handful of years. With my twenty years of experience on private and public golf courses I have a diverse

background in our industry. I would also like to continue getting students/young adults involved in our industry as the numbers continue to decline on interest. Recruitment is the utmost of importance for any organization or industry to stay successful. It's the membership that makes the MGCSA what it is and I would like to help continue moving us forward.

What are the biggest issues facing the MGCSA today?

In order for any organization

to remain relevant recruitment is the utmost importance! Recruitment will always be a concern however with a proactive board and membership we will hopefully continue to have a strong group of superintendents, assistants, and students.

Additional comments:

I have been wanting to become more involved in the MGCSA and this would be a great way to do so! - K.S.



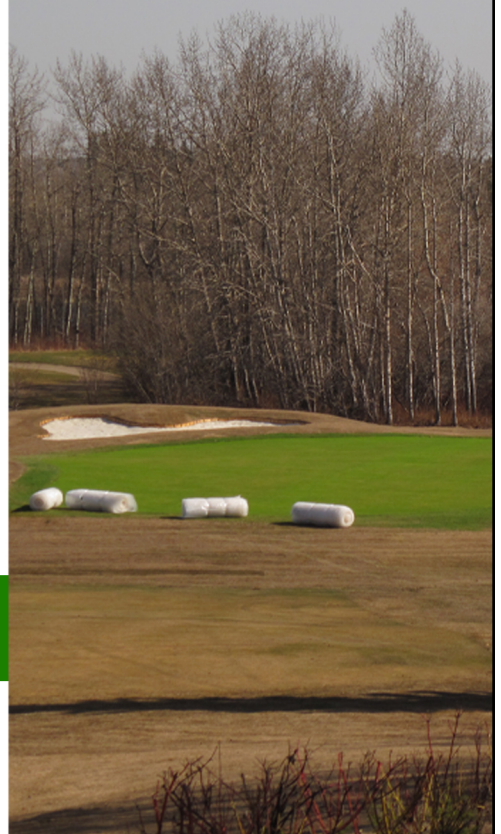
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For Director James Westendorf, Indian Hills Golf Club Golf Course Superintendent

Awarded Toro's Assistant Superintendent Experience 2021, Research Committee Member 2016,2017, Northern Green Planning Committee 2023

Why are you running for office?
I am excited to express my strong interest in the Board of Director opportunity at the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association. With a track record of excellence in golf course management, a deep passion for maintaining world-class playing surfaces, and a proven ability to lead teams to success, I am eager to contribute to the rich legacy of the MGCSA.

Over my 11-year career, I have honed my skills and expertise to deliver exceptional results. As the Golf Course Superintendent at Indian Hills Golf and Country Club, I have successfully directed all aspects of course operations, including conditioning,



renovations, and tournament preparations. We have exceeded expectations by implementing operating standards that improved efficiency and plant health, ultimately enhancing green speed and consistency. In addition to my practical experience, I have actively pursued continuing education through the Golf Course Superintendents Association and Penn State University, enhancing my knowledge in agronomy and facilities management. My educational background

including an A.A.S in Turf Management underscores my commitment to excellence in golf course management. Throughout my career, I have fostered a culture of dedication and excellence, leading teams to maintain superior conditions. I have interviewed, hired, and managed over 100 employees, implemented safety training programs, and maintained open communication with golf professionals, general managers, and members.

I am confident that my dedication to communication and team leadership align perfectly with the values of the MGCSA. I am excited about the opportunity to work closely with the other Board members and build on the historic legacy of the MGCSA and drive its future success.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of contributing to the continued excellence of the MGCSA. - J.W.

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Low Net - Adam Lesmeister, Clesens

Team Low Gross - Maxton Kelly & Riley Soderstrom, Victory Links

Team Low Net - Adam Kelvington & Kurtis Kunkel, Olympic Hills





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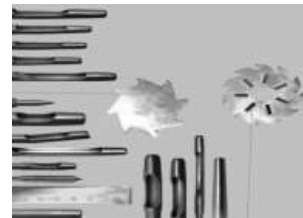
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FRED TAYLOR, CGCS

2023 MGCSA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT

By: Joe Berggren, with Fred Taylor

During the 2023 golf season, Mankato Golf Club has undertaken something that hasn't been done at the club in 91 years -- a search for a new golf course superintendent. Fred Taylor is retiring as Superintendent after a 46-year career at MGC. There have been 3 superintendents at MGC since 1932: Irv Fuller Sr., Boots Fuller Jr., and then Fred Taylor. Fred Taylor is the 2023 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the MGCSA.

Fred Taylor started his career at MGC in an internship role under the former Superintendent, Boot Fuller Jr. in 1977. He was working on his

AAS degree in Horticulture from U of M- Waseca and graduated with that degree in 1978. After graduation he returned to MGC as a full-time 2nd Assistant Superintendent, but Taylor wasn't done with school yet! In 1983, He returned to Mankato State University and acquired a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a minor in Economics. His goal at that time was to work in turf industry sales.

Near that time, Boots went to Europe for a vacation. Back home at the course, there was a minor conflict that the lead assistant had to deal with. In a time where communication



Fred Taylor with Al Starke and Matt Marzinske, representing about 32 years of stellar assistance in running our operation.

**“I WOULD CONSIDER FRED
TO BE THE GOOGLE OF TURF
BEFORE THERE WAS GOOGLE.”**

wasn't instant, Boots came back to the president of the board, waiting in his office, red faced with steam coming out of his ears. The conflict was resolved, the lead assistant moved on to greener pastures and Taylor was promoted to the lead Assistant Superintendent. He served in that role until 1992 when Fuller retired and Taylor was promoted to the Head Superintendent role. He has excelled in that role for the last 41 years.

During his career, Taylor

has seen many things come and go. In 1977, MGC had manual irrigation with 1 row of quick couplers down each fairway. They ran 3-wheel Cushman's that had no governor speed control with "3 on the tree". They used Jacobsen walk mowers on the greens. National mowers for green and tee banks and the 'tank' of the Toro fleet, the Parkmaster, to mow fairways. After the drought of 1988, the club was ready to automate the irrigation system. They installed a full electric irrigation



Taylor with Past President Rob Panuska, retired U of M Professor Brad Pedersen, and Mike Brual, CGCS.



The Iron Seven: Tyler Schlaak, Al Thom, Matt Marzinske, Fred Taylor, Devin Sanke, Scott Ness, and Phil Runck.

system, satellites, central computer, and a holding pond for a cost of \$300,000. 34 years later, MGC is ready for an updated irrigation system. Estimated cost: \$3 million.

The MGCSA played a big role in Fred Taylor's career. Early on, Boots Fuller encouraged his assistant to join and network with a great group of guys. "I attended one of the early annual conferences at the Sheraton NW in Brooklyn Park. Boots liked to have fun at these events and introduced me to the fun Superintendents

in the association." He said.

Taylor has contributed immensely to the MGCSA. My research into Mr. Taylor found that he wrote 19 articles for Hole Notes Magazine, winning the Watson Award twice. One for an article about networking called 'Heard it through the grapevine' and once for the use of a new trend, using a whiteboard to organize staff. The article is called 'Board Silly.'

Over the course of his career, Taylor supported U of MN research, participated in numerous MGCSA events,



Some of the best golf course crew members in the universe.

served 2 terms on the BOD and he served as MGCSA president in 1997. He achieved GCSAA-CGCS status and has recertified 5 times.

In the 1990's, Taylor attended MGCSA annual conference and he started to inquire on how they can make it bigger and better. "The goal was to increase education and participation for the turf industry. We wanted to create a conference with equipment vendors and education all in one spot," Taylor said. He along

with Brad Pedersen, (then a professor at U of M-Waseca) and Larry Thornton attended the Iowa conference and saw that they had combined with allied associations to create a larger show with more opportunities for the turf industry. This laid the groundwork for the creation of the MTGF.

Many people have had an impact and been great mentors on Fred Taylor's career. In the early days, Boots Fullers' assistant, John Granholt, taught Fred about mechanics and agronomy. He spent 20 years

or so working with Al Starke, and he has had current lead assistant Matt Marzinske with him for over 20 years. Greg Iden, Mike Bruel, Tom Meier, and so many more industry peers have been beneficial to bounce ideas off, offer support as needed, and are just great friends.

Marzinske has worked at MGC since 1994 has been Fred's right-hand man for many years. "I would consider Fred to be the google of turf before there was google. He is the smartest guy I know and

pretty much an encyclopedia of knowledge," he said. "He is warm and welcoming to all, from members to bunker rakers. Fred needs to write a book on all his experiences, and I will buy the first copy." Marzinske said.

During the season, MGC's morning meeting ends with a quote from Taylor. "Well, lets go see what we can't do." It has gotten so popular that if Taylor forgets to say it, one member of the crew will make sure it gets said. "It's going to be way different without Fred here. I



Amy, Maggie, Allie and Fred at his daughter, Maggie's graduation.

will miss saying good morning to him.” Marzinske said.

The only way that Fred Taylor was able to create the legacy that he has is from support from Mankato Golf Club. “If they didn’t treat me well, I would not still be here,” he said. “They are sometimes demanding but they are also very reasonable.” Recently, Taylor has been impressed by the many members who have volunteered their time to the club helping with tree work and it shows their dedication to the club. The club threw a retirement party for Fred, and he received very humbling quotes from members. “Fred, you are like part of our family.”

Fred is married to Amy, who has endured his demanding schedule and constant turf-talk for 28 years. Over the years she has learned to expect the unexpected – irrigation issues and turf diseases in the summer, and snow removal in the winter. Their children, Allison 25, and Maggie 22, are also used to work-related changes in the family’s schedule, having been recruited several times in their

childhood to clean up the golf course following a storm. Allison currently lives in San Diego and is a Naval Officer assigned to the USS Tripoli, while Maggie is in the process of moving to the Valencia area of Spain where she will teach English to elementary students.

After Fred’s last days at MGC, he is looking forward to traveling with Amy to visit their children in California and Europe. To keep busy and active at home, he has become an MHSL volleyball official and has started an LLC devoted to treating ash trees to combat the invasion of the Emerald Ash Borer. There may be more turf-related opportunities ahead as the passion for grass is still strong!

Fred Taylor has been an exceptional representative of the MGCSA, a fantastic manager of turf, and a wonderful friend to many. He is truly deserving of the MGCSA Distinguished Service Award.

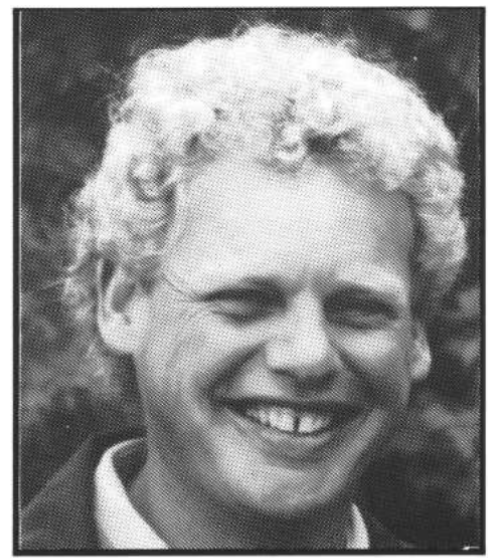
Opposite Page:

Top left: Fred watering

Top Right: Hole Notes, 1992

Bottom left: Fred with Maggie at US Capitol

Bottom right: Night watering, there’s something peaceful about it Fred might miss!



FRED TAYLOR
Mankato Golf Club

I enjoy the people, from the office staff to the kitchen, dining and the golf shop staff especially our grounds staff. The comradely and personal interactions make our club special. We strive to be a team, but a team that cares about each individual member of that team.



Heard It Through The Grapevine

By FRED TAYLOR
Mankato Golf Club

In the history of the world, there has been more information shared by word of mouth than any other method. There has also been a good deal of *misinformation* shared the same way. Go back about 30 years or so to the era of Andy Griffith and Aunt Bea — an era of sewing bees and barbershop gossip. The town of Mayberry was an open book for anyone who as much as walked down the street. Everyone knew all the business of everyone else. Whether it be the brand of hair creme Goober used to slick his hair, or Floyd's personal financial picture, all information was common knowledge. So it was in small town America. So, too can it be in a small circle of professionals.

When we were kids, there was a game that we played called telephone. The rules were simple. A child at one end of the line would whisper a short statement to the next person in line. That person would in turn whisper the same message to the next person, and so on. At the end of the line the last person would announce out loud what message he or she heard. For example, Tommy begins the game, "The big, red fox is dumb to go into Uncle Bob's cornfield." This typically childish statement slowly makes its way down the line, whispered with a giggle and a gasp, finally making its way to a proud Billy who excitedly renders the words he's just heard. "The red fox took a big dump in Uncle Bob's cornflakes!" he exclaims.

It's easy to see in this small example that stories get turned around and meanings get changed as information goes through the grapevine. In the last six months I have heard at least three tid-bits of "news" that turned out to be categorically false. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing where the news started, or where it got turned around. There are probably many examples of information that you have heard through the grapevine that turned out to be less than factual and true. Most of the time this misinformation is harmless; however, there are a few cases where a person's or organization's reputation is at stake. These are the cases where, as professionals, we must be very careful to screen what we hear, and not to repeat untruths.

I must admit that I like to be on top of the news. I read the daily paper, watch the national and local television news, listen to radio news, (KQ92 is preferable, I'm not old enough to enjoy 'CCO yet) and yes, wait with ears perked for grapevine rumblings about happenings in our industry. The grapevine is the place where you typically hear who got what job, what courses lost some turf, where the new course is being built and which suppliers are changing corporate philosophies. In other words the grapevine is the conduit for news — and gossip — therein lies the challenge for news hungry superintendents... separate

fact from rumor, news from gossip and never repeat things you don't know for sure.

In an effort to reduce the amount of misinformation that goes around the industry, I invite you to join me in following a few guidelines with regard to grapevine news:

1) **Never pass information about a person that could be considered detrimental** or slanderous to him or her or their career. For example, if you hear Jim-Bob has been drinking like a sailor on shore leave lately, and his job is in jeopardy, don't repeat it. What if it isn't true? Even asking a leading question like "Have you heard anything about Jim-Bob being a slobbering lush?" is enough to give him the reputation even if he has been sober for months. Rumors that are untrue travel just as fast as those that are true.

2) **If you hear something that is unbelievable, it probably is.** In other words, check out rumors that common sense tells you are false. In these cases, either forget you ever heard it, or go to the source and ask him or her.

(Continued on Page 25)

**From the MGCSA
archives! Fred's
1998 article
about news and
misinformation.
Still very timely in
our current age.**

Exchanging Thoughts About The Early Golf Season



Pictured from left to right at the April 16th MGCSA meeting at Bearpath Golf & Country Club are Brad Klein, Northern Turf Services; Tom Fischer, Edinburgh USA, and Ross Galarneault, executive director of the MGA.

The Grapevine—

(Continued from Page 17)

A case in point was the “Jacobsen bought Ransomes” rumor. Although true to a degree, it was a case where the facts should be heard from authorities before repeating them with their permission.

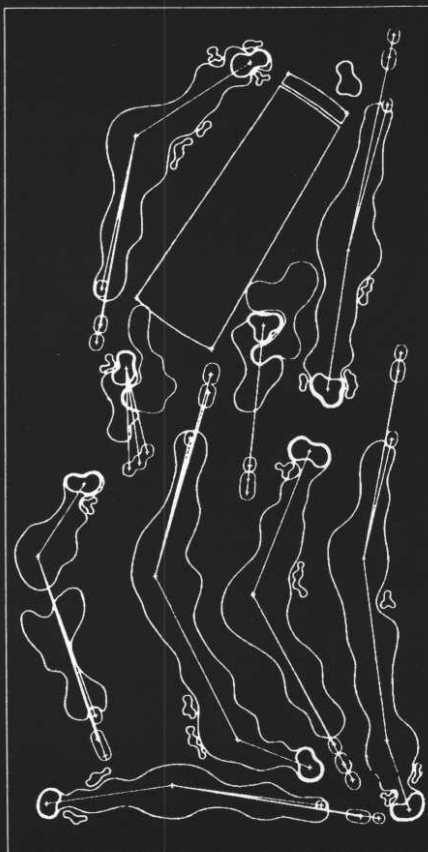
3) **Forget some information as soon as you hear it.** Sometimes what people hear is more than what they wanted to know. It’s like hearing your parents talk about their sexual fantasies: You just wish the conversation would have never started.

4) **Always be suspicious of the statement:** “This is just a rumor, but...” If that’s all the substantiation that a news source has, then it’s best to tune it out. Similarly, it’s just as bad to inform someone else of information that needs such a disclaimer. If it’s just a rumor, then bury it.

5) **Remember that if your talking about someone else, then there is probably someone talking about you.** If you spread negative information about someone else, those negative vibes will return to you.

Having an ear to the ground and a sense of what is going on around us is good business sense. After all, it is said that knowledge is power. But, at the risk of endangering careers and reputations, let’s all think twice before we attempt to share information that may be of suspicious origins or negative in nature. We know that the grapevine will continue to be a source of information, but hopefully one that is truthful and kind.

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2023 MGCSA Member Event Rebate Program



The MGCSA Board of Directors is working hard to reduce limitations to participation. In-person events are essential to the growth of our industry and the professionals within it. MGCSA has the opportunity to support those engagement efforts by implementing a member rebate program this year for all class members. We are offering an event registration rebate of up to \$35 to all class members. This will allow for free or reduced entry into one of our association events!

Use Rules:

- Must be active MGCSA member. Use will be monitored and recorded. One time use only, regardless of event registration costs, no redeeming cash value.
 - If using credit, the individual must register separately by choosing that ticket option when signing up for an event and entering the promo code below. Member cannot use credit within a group registration.***
 - Credit will be good for one calendar year, April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024.
 - Applicable to most MGCSA events, except Don White Match Play, The Wee One and The Scramble.
-

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Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The University of Wisconsin Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program (TAP) consists of a 12-week, in-person educational bootcamp and a field-based apprenticeship at a golf course, athletic facility, or other turfgrass facility. The program provides participants with the hands-on, real-world experience needed to succeed in the turfgrass industry. Successful completion of both the bootcamp and the apprenticeship is required to earn the Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program Certificate.

Step 1: Educational Bootcamp

The bootcamp takes place over two 6-week terms during the late fall and winter. The fall term will begin the first week of November and end in mid-December. The winter term will begin the second week of January and end in late February. Each week will have class on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10 AM until 3 PM CST with a 1-hour break for lunch.

Program cost is the same for in-state and out-of-state students. Check the website for current rates. Housing is not provided by UW-Madison, but we provide a number of affordable hotel options in the Madison area.

Significant scholarship funds will be available to support student tuition and housing costs from a variety of turfgrass associations. More information on scholarships and how to apply for them will be provided in the first week of class during the fall term.

Step 2: Field-based Apprenticeship

Students in the TAP are required to complete a field-based apprenticeship at a golf course, athletic complex, or other turf management facility of their choosing. A list of tasks to complete during the apprenticeship have been developed in cooperation with associations in the turfgrass industry and can be viewed on the program website.

How to Enroll

Please visit <https://turf.wisc.edu/academics/> and add your name to the enrollment form. Alternatively, contact Dr. Soldat or Dr. Koch via email (djsoldat@wisc.edu / plkoch@wisc.edu). The deadline for enrollment in the fall term is October 15th.



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TURF.WISC.EDU/ACADEMICS



GREAT LAKES SCHOOL
OF TURFGRASS SCIENCE

Great Lakes Turf School registration is now open! The 2024 session will begin on Monday, January 8th and run through Wednesday, March 27th. Register soon.

[Register Here!](#)

Roll It *Forward*

By: Corey Heasley



Chris said to make sure I include pictures of myself, so here you go (the stache is fake btw). Thanks to Cavanaugh for nominating me. We all work with such a tight-knit group of peers in a very unique field, so I always enjoy hearing other people's stories of how they got wrapped up in this business and what

keeps them around. Here's mine.

It was 1997 and I was 16 years old living in Onalaska, WI just outside La Crosse for those who are not familiar. I just got my driver's license and was eager and excited to enter the real world with a real job. I was way more interested in working



Photos provided by Corey Heasley



than I was studying so I took the first job I could get, flipping burgers at Wendy's. Not good. After two weeks of coming home from work and having to shower with simple green to get the grease off I decided it wasn't for me. Luckily, a family friend asked if I wanted to work with him at the golf course he

mowed fairways at. I loved golf, being outside, working with my hands, running equipment, and getting dirty so I thought it was a great fit. I got the job and on my first day my boss handed me a weed whip and 8 hours later I was home, sore, and wondering what the heck I had gotten into. I guess I passed the first day

test because in the weeks that followed, I had been taught how to run every piece of equipment in the shop. And I was off and running for my 4-year high school stint at the 9-hole public Coulee Golf Bowl in Onalaska.

After high school I moved to Eau Claire and started taking generals on my way to a bachelor's degree. I started working right away at Wild Ridge and Mill Run golf courses, a 36-hole facility in Eau Claire.



I enjoyed working there and would have rather been out on the course working than in the classroom any day. After I finished my generals, I needed to figure out what I was going to major in. So that's when my career was decided, and I knew I wanted to be a superintendent. It was an easy decision. I finished my bachelor's and had plans to supplement that degree with a Turf degree. After doing some research and getting some advice from my boss, I applied for the Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management program in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Before I had to head out to New Jersey to start school and this career path, I wanted to have some kind of adventure. I knew once I finished school and started working full time, I wasn't going to be able to do something like that. So, I got a backpack and good pair of boots and headed out to Vermont with a college buddy. We parked at a trailhead and spent the next month hiking across Vermont and New Hampshire on the Appalachian Trail. I had no idea what I was getting into, but I guess life is all



about jumping in with both feet.

We ended up doing 300 miles across the green and white mountains and made it all the way through Vermont and New Hampshire. We basically lived in the woods for a month. I know you are probably thinking that doesn't sound like a great time but honestly those are some of my favorite memories. We would hike for 3 or 4 days at a time, and then any road we came across we would stop and hitchhike into the nearest town to get supplies. The scenery was amazing and the people we met were incredible.

After that it was go time. I

never really cared about school leading up to Rutgers, but when I got out to NJ, I hit the ground running. I wanted to learn as much as I possibly could. I kept the partying to a minimum, studied like crazy, and left 2 years later with a 4.0 GPA.

It was at this point in my life when I learned how to take on a challenge and I also developed a desire for success and began learning how to do that in this industry. I enjoy taking on a challenge and having a million things going on. Almost like I have a need for it. This is what makes it fun. You have to



constantly be thinking ahead, watching the weather, adapting to any number of things including equipment breakdowns, weather extremes, golf events, staffing challenges, golfer expectations, the condition of your turf, and so much more. Since leaving Rutgers I have worked at numerous golf courses and maintained my love for the work along the way. In 2016 I took the job at Fox Hollow and have been there ever since. It was definitely a challenging job to walk into at the time, which made it a great fit for me. The golf course and myself have

evolved a ton since starting here.

So what motivates me to keep going? That's a great question. There are almost too many things to name, and I don't think I can pinpoint one exact thing. The job is too complicated with so many moving parts to pinpoint one thing that motivates me. It's a combination of everything and as long as the good continues to outweigh the bad, I keep working to dominate this property.

Some examples for me include learning all the details that go into the job and all the

details of a specific property that no one else knows. I enjoy learning about and trying new products and techniques in fungicide use, fertility, and cultural practices. Learning what works and doesn't work best on my property and using this information to put together specific programs that I can call my own. It's a very rewarding part of the job for me, especially when people take notice.

Another example is training, getting to know my staff, rewarding them for excellence, and motivating them. I truly enjoy working with my crew in this ongoing attempt for constant improvement. This year I was fortunate enough to get 6 H2B visas. It's been a crazy year with extreme weather conditions, but with having these guys here, along with my dedicated local staff, it's been my favorite year as a Superintendent. Much thanks go out to these guys for their hard work and great attitudes. Thanks to Mauricio at Rush Creek for hand picking these guys for me and Cavanaugh for guiding

me through the H2B process.

Another motivating factor and one of my favorite things about this industry is the constant change. Nothing is ever the same from one day to the next and definitely from one year to the next. It keeps me on my toes and makes it very difficult to get complacent. One day you are working with mother nature in peace and harmony. The next day she is kicking you in the teeth and then standing over you laughing hysterically. You just get back up and keep going.



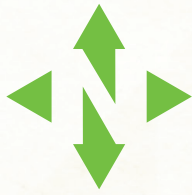
And pretty soon she rewards you with one of the most beautiful sunrises you've ever seen.

One of my favorite motivating factors of this career is being able to spend time on a beautiful 160-acre property with my son. He loves coming here and everyone knows him by name, even golfers. We fish the river that runs along the golf course, we work, we golf, we've even driven around with a spotlight at night looking for animals. It's incredible to be able to create and share these memories with him and teach him a little about how to work and be responsible.

The golf course is an ever evolving, living, breathing thing that requires a lot of attention, hard work, and early mornings. There is no doubt that it's a challenging job, very specialized, and not for everybody. That's what makes it great though. It's a rewarding job that has evolved into a career that I consider more of a lifestyle than a job.

I want to nominate Sam Bauer to go next. Sam and I have been good friends since 1999, when we met and worked together on the course during my college days in Eau Claire. Pretty much everyone knows the guy and I think we could all use some background info on him.





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PLT Relicensure and Pesticide Recertification will be available on Monday, January 22 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre.

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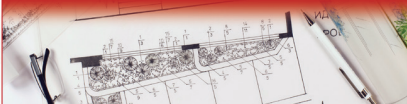
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Management Path

Management level courses will be available on this path to pop into and out of throughout the day.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24 Dedicated trade show day!

TRADE SHOW
9:00am-5:30pm

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THURSDAY, JAN. 25

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Watch NorthernGreen.org to keep up with the latest details...

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MGCSA MEGA SEMINAR

Rush Creek Golf Club

Maple Grove, MN

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

8:00 - 3:30 (*Happy hour to follow*)

Wednesday December 6, 2023

8:00 - 3:00

Supported by our Platinum Sponsor:



Featured speakers include:

Tyler Bloom - Tyler Bloom Consulting

Dr. Beth Guertal - Kansas State University

Jimmy Humston - Superintendent, The Lido at Sand Valley

Austin Wright - EM, Hazeltine National (frmlly. Sand Valley)

Jens Arneson - Senior Assistant, Hawks Landing Golf Club

Renovation Discussion - MGCSA Superintendents

Randy Robinson - GCSAA Field Staff

UMN Turf Team

MGCSA Annual Meeting (12/5, 2:00 PM)



Both Days - \$150

One Day - \$100

(Member Rebate Eligible)

Registration coming soon!

HOW TO ELEVATE THE ROLE OF TURF EQUIPMENT MANAGERS

By: Tyler Bloom

Tyler Bloom Consulting

Tyler will be presenting further ideas at this year's MEGA Seminar. Join us on December 5th & 6th to hear more from Tyler Bloom!



My gears were spinning after a recent podcast with Trent Manning, host of the Reel Turf Tech Podcast.

The exodus of experienced turf equipment professionals to industries offering better pay, growth opportunities, and improved work-life balance is creating quite a stir within the golf industry. Much of our focus was on how turf equipment managers can enhance their career development skills, and how to mentor the next generation.

I realized shortly thereafter there was another key point we missed. The importance golf course superintendents play in elevating the role of their turf equipment managers. Our team has taken on a dozen turf equipment searches over the last year, and anticipate this will continue as the demand increases. A consistent theme we hear from candidates is a lack of appreciation for the role. Several issues contribute to the

challenges faced by turf equipment managers including increased workload, physical demands, lack of recognition, perception of the career pathway, budget constraints, supply chain issues, lack of investment in equipment and technology, and not enough young students showing a career interest. While the primary focus of the job revolves around maintaining top-notch equipment, sustainability, and environmental stewardship, golf course superintendents must constantly create awareness, support, and ongoing advocacy to elevate the role beyond the basics.

Here are some best practices to consider:

Create a supportive environment
First and foremost, creating an environment that recognizes and supports turf equipment managers is an absolute prerequisite.

To elevate the performance and position of turf equipment managers, one must create a culture of respect towards the role not only externally to key stakeholders, but starting with the internal staff.

Work hand in hand with your turf equipment manager to create key results and performance indicators that contribute to the overall reputation of the golf course, operation, and organization.

Clearly articulate the club's vision

Communicate a clear understanding of the vision for the golf course and club.

Identify any skill gaps or areas where the turf equipment manager can enhance their contribution to align with the superintendent's goals and the club's vision.

Define strategic objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) related to equipment maintenance and management.

Training and Skill Development

Offer training programs, workshops, and resources to help acquire new skills or improve existing ones. This could include equipment-specific training online, regional workshops, or continuing certification programs offered by the GCSAA. Don't forget the role requires a significant amount of leadership,

organizational, financial management, and administrative skill sets.

Stay at the forefront of technological advancements by engaging with local industry representatives, and other professionals, and frequently consult with leading experts to help incorporate innovative technologies to improve the performance of the equipment.

Encourage relevant certifications or qualifications in HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and carpentry to provide additional value across multiple departments.

Most importantly, and often overlooked, a great turf equipment manager reduces the risk of accidents or injuries, mitigating potential liability issues.

Provide them with a seat at the table

Foster a culture of open communication to help overcome challenges of financial constraints, weather impacts, or member expectations.

Include your turf equipment manager in daily management meetings and planning sessions, so they do not become frustrated by having to hear second-hand. When onboarding new employees, ensure your turf equipment manager has a role in the process, and can

develop rapport immediately.

Regularly discuss equipment needs, challenges, and ideas. Collaboratively plan equipment maintenance schedules and initiatives, ensuring they align with the golf course's overall maintenance plan.

This individual should play a key role in educating stakeholders to invest in sustainable equipment or overcoming financial limitations to maintain and upgrade machinery.

Share the Spotlight

Lastly, it is your responsibility to highlight their accomplishments at Green Committee meetings, club communications, and out on the golf course in front of golfers.

There may not be a bigger role within the club that impacts the bottom line more than the turf equipment manager. Whether it is preventative maintenance, cost controls, or keeping equipment operating at peak performance, the role enhances the club's reputation and attractiveness to both members and guests.

The quality of the golfing experience depends on the dedicated professionals who maintain the equipment behind the scenes. It's our responsibility to highlight them as a strategic partner, and not just a wrenchhead.

Invest in your turf equipment manager, otherwise, you'll be doing more than grinding your gears!



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Thank you Superintendent Mike Mohn, and the entire team at Medina, for making the rainy day event still a success! Thank you to all of our sponsors and participants for ensuring we made a substantial donation once again! We will be donating over \$34,000 to the Wee One Foundation, a new record for the Minnesota Event!



Get to Know 'Em



Maxton
Kelly

TPC Twin
Cities

FACILITY INFO

Public or Private: Private

Number of Holes: 18 Holes

Full time employees: 7

Seasonal employees (not including full time): 23

Types of grass: L-93 Bent, Southshore Bent

Greens acreage: 3.5

Tee acreage: 5

Fairway acreage: 27



Twin Cities

PERSONAL TURF FACTS:

How many years have you been in your current position? I've been Lead Assistant for 2 years.

How many years have you been in the turf industry? 11

Where else have you worked?
Forest Hills, Bunker Hills

Turf School Attended (if any)?
Anoka Tech, back in 2016.

INDUSTRY THOUGHTS:

What is one "master plan" thing you would like to change at your golf course?
Bunkers

What concerns do you have the turf business and the future of golf? I think pay scale is a big one, from the Super all the way down. Its tough to compete with Mcdonalds. When some

places can't pay that much on a golf course. To get that pay scale more even is important. Also, automated machinery, I think its crazy. In 10 years, is there just going to be a bunch of random machines one guy is operating, maybe taking away the love some have for the golf business. Water Usage, is it going to become a time when courses start shutting down because of drought. You might lose courses that way.

What is needed to bring more young professionals into the industry? It starts with people enjoying the game of golf. They love golf and thats what gets them into it. Then the overall working environment, if guys





come in and you're involved with them, and showing them things. You might have a few that decide they want to get into turf. Just get the staff involved.

What piece of equipment do you want? Not a need, a want. Large unnamed core harvester for helping with aeration cores.

FUN FACTS

Have you ever met a celebrity? Who? I met Donald Trump one time. My sister was playing at Bedminster, and we're at the practice facility and he comes walking down. My old man introduced himself and we talked to him for a little bit.

What is your favorite vacation spot? Lake Vermillion, My grandparents used to live up there and I've been going up there forever. That's my type of thing, the woods or the lake.

What is your favorite memory of starting your turf career? My first time rolling greens, my first pass on the PG, it comes to a ledge, a 3 foot drop off. I didn't stop, I just went right over the ledge. I didn't see the roller again for a while after.

What is your favorite job on the golf course? I know it's crazy, but I would honestly say hand watering.

What is your least favorite job on the golf course? Laying sod is terrible. Having the tour event, there's a lot of sodding involved.

Have you played any famous golf courses? Which ones? Not really. Never been able to get out there to these courses, but I would want to, especially Pebble Beach.

Who is your dream foursome? Tiger, Jack, and my old man.

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? The overall fact that times do get tough, knowing that stuff like that can happen. You're not going to get your perfect season,

and working around that. Not knowing how, when we would come back. Staffing through those times is something we didn't know, but we learned how to manage through it. Through the drought, it makes you focus more on your water usage, and focusing on your greens and maybe let other areas go.



Don't miss the extended conversation with Maxton on this month's Hole Notes Podcast!

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



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Nick White
Golf Course Superintendent



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Dollar Spot

Brown Patch

Anthracnose

Gray Leaf Spot

Snow Mold

*Dollar spot, brown patch, anthracnose, gray leaf spot and snow mold were the five most common diseases according to a national survey among golf course superintendents.

ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL INSTRUCTIONS. Bayer Environmental Science, a Division of Bayer CropScience LP, 5000 CentreGreen Way, Suite 400, Cary, NC 27513. For additional product information, call toll-free 1-800-331-2867. www.environmentalscience.bayer.us. Not all products are registered in all states. Bayer, the Bayer Cross and Densicor are registered trademarks of Bayer. ©2021 Bayer CropScience LP.

GOLF COURSE MUSINGS

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photos from your time on a golf course?
Send your images to chris@mgcsa.org.



Hey, this Poa green doesn't look that bad!

MGCSA Scramble

Thank you Rush Creek, our sponsors, and all participants for another successful Scramble event supporting our scholarships and local turfgrass research!





Mixing Tall Fescue and Kentucky Bluegrass for MN Golf Course Roughs

By: Andy Hollman
University of Minnesota



The most common turfgrass in Minnesota for home lawns, athletic fields and golf course roughs is Kentucky bluegrass. Its dark green color, good mowability and soft leaf texture lead many consumers to favor its tactile and visual appeal. Its rhizomatous growth habit also allows for recovery from damage and the ability to create sod which can transform a bare dirt site to a lush green one in a short time period. However, to keep this species looking its best often requires adding inputs of fertilizer and water. When Kentucky bluegrass doesn't receive enough rainfall and encounters drought, it avoids the

stress by going dormant. Often a first sign is the grass appearing to have a purplish color, followed by the leaves rolling up to conserve water and then drying up and turning brown. Kentucky bluegrass stays dormant until adequate moisture is available to return to normal growth.

Over the past three summers Minnesota has experienced extended periods of drought, and dormant Kentucky bluegrass can be seen in most unirrigated sites. In some cases, even irrigated Kentucky bluegrass was going dormant as turfgrass managers looked at the long term forecast and water usage

and realized it wasn't sustainable, or irrigation systems weren't in a state to keep up with the water demand and temperatures. Past and current research at the University of Minnesota has looked into differences within and between species for their ability to deal with acute or chronic water stress, and we have found that tall fescue clearly performs better than Kentucky bluegrass in avoiding and recovering from drought due to a deep root system.

Even with studies showing the

benefit of tall fescue during periods of drought and heat stress, its use in Minnesota and similar cold climates has been limited. For some turfgrass managers it might be the notion that tall fescue is coarse bladed, light colored and sometimes a weed when found in a stand of finer textured grass. For older cultivars of the species that were initially selected out of forage grasses, that description holds true. Fortunately, turfgrass breeders have been working to improve the characteristics of this species for over 50 years



Figure 1. Picture comparison of A) 100% Kentucky bluegrass, B) 80% tall fescue with 20% Kentucky bluegrass by pure live seed to C) 100% tall fescue taken on 9.18.23 on the University of Minnesota St. Paul campus.

and the cultivars available today are darker green, finer textured and have a slower growth rate. Another factor affecting tall fescue use in Minnesota is the belief that tall fescue is not cold tolerant. We have found that this species can survive winter fairly well, and does much better than perennial ryegrass, a species that is used widely in Minnesota. There are three attributes that

can be a problem when using tall fescue. First, tall fescue is slower to green-up in the spring than Kentucky bluegrass. Second, tall fescue is very susceptible to snow mold, which combined with slow green-up leads to unattractive turf in the early spring. Finally, tall fescue is susceptible to ice encasement damage, so growing tall fescues in areas prone to water



Figure 2. Picture of tall fescue/Kentucky bluegrass mixture plots at the University of Minnesota St. Paul campus. October 11, 2023.

collecting and freezing might lead to significant stand loss.

By mixing tall fescue with Kentucky bluegrass a turf stand can be created that can moderate the limitations of each species. The biggest benefit is the potential to maintain a green turf longer during drought without irrigation because of the deeper root system of tall fescue. The Kentucky bluegrass in the mixture can go dormant until more adequate moisture resumes. It also helps in spring by greening up earlier than tall fescue and providing the aesthetics and functions of an actively growing grass for the period when tall fescue may still appear dormant. Because tall fescue is considered a bunch type grass and Kentucky bluegrass is rhizomatous, a mixture of the two has the added ability to recover quicker from the damage due to the ability of rhizomes to start growing in the open space.

If a mixture of tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass is desired, a couple things need to be considered when putting

together the seed mix. One consideration is the difference in the seed size of each species. In one pound of tall fescue there are usually around 230,000 seeds; this can vary depending on the cultivar and the year the seed was produced. Kentucky bluegrass seed is much smaller and can have 1.5 to 2.2 million seeds per pound. How much seed you will need to plant in an area will depend on what the mixture ratio is of these two species. We are currently doing research on seeding mixtures of these species based on a ratio of pure live seeds for a given area. In the current trial we have seen plots with high percentages of tall fescue performing well by preventing weed encroachment and also staying greener during drought (Figure 1). We hope with this research to help eliminate confusion on seeding rates for the mixture and are able to provide a solid foundation for its creation regardless of seed size.

A bigger concern when mixing Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue is the germination rate difference. Tall fescue under ideal conditions will germinate in 5

to 7 days. Kentucky bluegrass is usually described as taking 14 to 28 days to germinate but recent trials have shown that there are varieties that will germinate in 7 days. In picking varieties of Kentucky bluegrass to mix with tall fescue, efforts should be made to select varieties that show quick germination and establishment. Failure to do so will result in the tall fescue choking out the Kentucky bluegrass seedlings before they can become established and limit the amount of Kentucky bluegrass in the mixture, which we believe is the reason plots in our current trial are mostly tall fescue (Figure 2).

If there is already a golf course rough that is Kentucky bluegrass, a mixture of the two species might be created by dormant seeding the area with tall fescue. Dormant seeding around the

Twin Cities is typically done around the second week of November, when the soil temperatures have dropped below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. At this temperature, the seed is able to imbibe water but senses that it is too cold to germinate. When temperatures warm up during spring, the seed germinates and begins to grow. In most cases, no supplemental irrigation is needed during spring but there may be exceptions, such as especially sandy sites, drought or periods of unusually warm and windy weather.

With the increased frequency and duration of droughts in Minnesota, the use of tall fescue mixed with Kentucky bluegrass can provide superintendents a great option to maintain green golf course roughs with less irrigation.

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MGCSA NEW MEMBERS - *September/October 2023*

Trent Hanson	Class D	Somerby Golf Club
Jasper Bartels	Class C	Ridges at Sand Creek
Brad Peiper	Affiliate	American Peat Technology
Richard Fischer	Class A	Piper Hills Golf Course
Wyatt Blomseth	Class C	Detroit Country Club
Tate Carlson	Affiliate	J & W Asphalt

From the High Grass

By: Chris Aumock



Recently, I was in Las Vegas attending the Golf Business TechCon, and the Colorado Basin Golf & Water Summit. The week brought many new ideas forward from both events, thoughts that will greatly impact the future of our industry. One such topic was the integration of AI into our lives and industry. A topic that requires a great deal of further exploration. Throughout the presentation, the entire room was enthralled, excited, and a little bit scared of the future. The main lasting point was this, “remember that the AI we use today, will be the dumbest AI we ever use in our lives.” A little nerve racking for sure!

I could continue on that topic and other golf technologies, but the main goal this month is to discuss the water issues facing golf. Our colleagues in the south have been fighting with water scarcity for some time. Their realities are becoming more and more impactful. For instance, southern Nevada just had their watering budgets dropped from 6.4 ac/ft to 4 ac/ft per acre, per year. Now to me, this was still a

shocking amount of water use to begin with. A superintendent I sat next to shared his recent irrigation use totals from the last ten years or so. He was using 225 million gallons and has now dropped that number below 140 million gallons per year. Even extrapolating our 12 months, 225 million gallons was shocking. So yes, we are not apples to apples when we discuss our water use.

But how did he drop that amount? The main factor was that he decided to quit overseeding, and instead just started using pigments in the winter months. His course, in the Las Vegas area, doesn't have a dedicated membership, and relies on daily fees through some locals, but mostly tourists and travelers. They can get away with that as they are not necessarily focused on return customers. The cost savings from the reduced water

use and not buying seed has strengthened their bottom line.

A few other factors that stuck out to me and how it relates to our standing in MN. Cities in the southwest are lower priority users than agriculture in some areas but not others, and water rights are based on seniority in many regions. This is a much better classification than MN non-essential classification for golf. Golf courses in the SW are not at high risk of losing water access, but are likely to pay more in fines if they go over their allotments. The approximate price of water is \$3.50 per 1,000 gal. Why don't you calculate your own number from there.

Another term that came up quite often was "non-functional turf." This was a debated term amongst golf professionals in the room, but agencies and educators used it to define not just out of play turf, but also other turf areas, think about building lawns, parking lots medians, or even the edges of park space. One priority in this region is to remove as much of this non-functional turf as possible to focus water solely on the usable,

recreational value of turf spaces.

Below are the topics that came up repeatedly as easy, accessible options for many golf courses.

- Maintain your computer database accuracy. Ensure that the heads in the field, the nozzles, guts, arcs, all match what the computer thinks it's throwing.
- Along with the database, make sure you keep your irrigation heads updated. When was the last time you actually changed your nozzles? Those inefficiencies can add up quickly, and nozzles are a cheap way to make improvements. Albeit, it is a time consuming and tedious task, but the savings can add up.
- Utilize your database to water by inches and not minutes. With the likely differences in different heads arcs, radii, etc., make sure you're applying the water needed, and not the minutes. Is 10 minutes the same amount for every head, likely not.
- This one may not be available to everyone, but where applicable, grass conversions. When you are seeding or overseeding, make proper selections that support reduced water inputs.

- ET or soil-based replacement? “Why are we managing to the air temp and conditions, when the soil temps or conditions may dictate more accurate needs,” a local superintendent highlighted this emphasis on soil moisture, and his increased use of soil moisture meters along with ET. This line of thinking was later further supported by others on the panel.
 - As imaging tools increase in use and quality, they will be another helpful tool in turf management. Drones, satellite mapping, and new moisture mapping tools will all help us more efficiently monitor our turf conditions.
 - Utilize your GPS cart data to find areas that are less traveled, and mark for removal or alterations. As mentioned above, your courses’ non-functional turf could be assessed for changes. One tool you may likely have is your golf cart GPS data. A valuable tool to see how your property is travelled. (If you don’t have GPS carts, it is accessible to all courses, regardless of budget. Reach out to me for the options I saw at TechCon this week)
 - Install subsurface drip irrigation where applicable. Subsurface irrigation reduces water use by losing the inefficiencies and waste of overhead systems. Some SW courses are starting to do tees, and evens greens. Yes, I don’t understand how they aerify either, but the idea has promise for water efficiency. Those who attended the talk-about at Interlachen saw how they are introducing this idea to bunker banks. A very efficient way to deliver water to those areas while potentially reducing overhead inefficiencies.
 - Reducing rough irrigation is another large opportunity. Those who have large rough irrigation programs could consider changes and reductions in the management of those areas.
 - Dr. James Baird really promoted utilizing pigments as an important tool. (Action, Stressguard, Civitas, etc.). Pigments with plant health promoting ingredients are showing the ability to reduce water consumption as well.
- After the event, I was fortunate to spend some time with the Southern California Golf Association’s Public Affairs team of Craig Kessler and Kevin Fitzgerald. We spoke at length about the opportunities and

challenges of advocating for water use in golf. This was an invaluable conversation that will help us guide some of our legislative conversations in the future on the topic. With these two, I now have great, experienced resources available to aid in our efforts back home!

Well then, what about our situation in Minnesota? This year saw several golf courses lose their surface water permits. Groundwater issues are spreading throughout the country ([NYT article for context](#)), which will affect our local industry in the future. We will continue to work with legislators to gain assurances for golfs access to water in times of drought.

However, this is a large task, and we will work to continue our incremental progress. I recently met with my new State Representatives, who is very supportive of our efforts, but was completely honest with me in saying that this will be a very tough, and long-term task to create meaningful legislative change. I am scheduled to have this conversation with our US Sen. Tina Smith in the coming weeks,

to see how her perspective differs.

This highlights the important need for more of our members, industry, and partners to get involved with this discussion. We cannot win these assurances without all of us doing our part. Our next Golf Industry Day at the Capitol is coming up this winter. For now, you can begin those conversations with your local representatives. Tell them your concerns about the ability to do your job, the effects it will have on the property, people, and the community.

Overall, the key message is this; water will continue to be an issue for us moving forward, even if we get access assurances. It is now our duty to be ahead of the curve and become even more responsible users of this valuable resource. Take the time to learn more, or learn something new, and work to improve your operations use and conservation of water. Golfs future will not be decided around the rules, or the game of golf, but rather it will be based on maintenance efforts, and how you adapt and overcome the challenges that affect turfgrass management.