

HOLE NOTES

An aerial photograph of a golf course. The image shows a large green fairway with distinct mowed stripes. There are several sand traps (bunkers) scattered across the landscape. The golf course is surrounded by dense green trees and a small body of water on the left side. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

2024 Stewardship Grant Program:
Forest Hills Golf Club

Tag Soup:
Eric Counselman

Roll it Forward:
Tyler Lewellyn

Get to Know Em:
Evan Wright

february

HOLE NOTES

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Above: Shop Tours

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Event Calendar:

SE/Border Battle	5/21
NW Exposure	6/9
Brainerd Exposure	6/25
SW Exposure	8/4
NE Exposure	8/25
MGCSA Championship	9/9
The Scramble	9/22
The Wee One	10/6

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PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

Nikk Dickerson
Faribault Golf Club

Once again, we find ourselves in the middle of winter here in Minnesota, with very little to no snow on the ground. Remarkably, some courses have even allowed golfers to play over the past few weeks. With any luck, we will see more precipitation in the second half of winter to help us stave off another early start to the season.

As I mentioned in my last message, I believe networking is in-

valuable to our industry. Whether to share ideas or simply decompress with like-minded professionals, these opportunities are essential. I hope you were able to attend the Northern Green, National Hospitality Night, or one of the Outreach Events our association has hosted this winter. But if not, you're in luck, there are still a couple more events remaining, so be sure to check them out. To me, these social and networking events are more

important than ever, especially after such a long season last year—fingers crossed we are not heading down that road again.

I would like to extend my gratitude to John Cameron at North Oaks Golf Club and the rest of the Education and Research Committee for organizing another excellent lineup of speakers for the Northern Green at the RiverCentre in St. Paul. I also want to recog-

nize Jason Scharfencamp at Pebble Creek for stepping up as the next chair of that committee. If you have any thoughts or ideas on speakers, I encourage you to reach out to one of us on the board. We are always looking for fresh perspectives and want to ensure our topics appeal to a broad audience, plans are already in motion for speakers in 2025 and 2026.

Additionally, I want to acknowledge recent changes to our board. A sincere thank you to Jacob Dixon with Par Aide for his time on the board, and a warm welcome to Jay Yonak with Superior Turf Services for stepping up to fill the open affiliate role. I also want to express my appreciation to JT Hauser, formerly at Rochester Golf & Country Club, for his service over the past two years. We also welcome Wade Huesman from Riv-

er Oaks Golf Course and James Westendorf from Indian Hills Country Club to the board this year. Thank you all for your willingness to contribute to our association.

In the last week of January, the board held its biannual strategic planning meeting, where we discussed numerous topics and generated several new ideas. Be on the lookout for upcoming initiatives rolling out in the next few months, as well as the continuation of existing programs. The Member Scholarship Fund remains in effect to support ongoing education efforts for members, as well as the Stewardship Grant. If you have a project that has been delayed due to budget constraints, I encourage you to explore the grant program. Last year, we did not receive enough applications to allocate all the funds we had ear-

marked for that program.

Another key takeaway from our meeting was the release of new data from the most recent MN Golf Economic Impact Study. Since 2020, we have all witnessed the growth of golf, and it is reassuring to see updated figures reflecting this trend. Every golf course in the state will receive the new Minnesota Golf Coalition handbook, spearheaded by our very own Chris Aumock in collaboration with our allied associations. Our hope is that this document will help us present a unified message at events such as DOH and serve as a valuable resource when engaging with club members and industry professionals alike.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our industry, and I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events.



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MGCSA Stewardship Grant Program

Forest Hills Golf Club

By: Brian Brown

Forest Hills Golf Club is a private 18-hole golf course located in Forest Lake Minnesota. The course plays 6531 yards from the back tees and as the name indicates

is a parkland course with dramatic hills with extensive trees. Forest Hills opened in 1960 as a 9-hole course and expanded to 18 holes in 1965. The course is

aply named after the hilly terrain with all the holes tree bordered. Unfortunately, many of those trees have been decimated by emerald ash borer. The course is



a golf focused “community” private club with a large majority of the nearly 300 memberships from those that live in the neighboring homes or surrounding communities. The modest clubhouse provides a center for member activities and allows for an accessible dues structure.

The golf course is segmented into three distinct topographic regions. The opening holes play with tree lined rolling hills. The middle section includes dramatic elevation changes such as the 10th hole. A signature 125 yard par three with forty foot drop

to a postage stamp green.

The third region is twenty acres of low peat ground that is adjacent to 27-acre Shields Lake. This would be a beautiful picture if there was not a golf course underneath the water. On multiple occasions four holes became inaccessible with two greens and two sets of tee complexes that we were able to maintain.

The problem with the area is that there is one outflow from Shields to Forest Lake and in that $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile distance the elevation drops a mere 12”. In 1992/1993

the course completed an extensive installation of sea wall, bridge, and raising of the fairway under the direction of Superintendent Marlow Hanson.

The project offered an immediate improvement to the hole however longevity was lacking. With the underlying peat soil, the weight of the added material compacted the peat significantly to where the later added sump pump on the left (north) side of the fairway dropped to 27” below the static water level of the lake. Additionally, critters like our current beaver residents like to block the watershed channel to Forest Lake.

As the new Superintendent hired on December 2023, I found out why “solutions” became difficult. The wet spring into summer saw my assistant’s and myself



in hip waiters to get to the water pumps to fill them with gas through July. Architect Kevin Norby was hired to design some possible long-term solutions for the area. The cost of redesigning and rebuilding the area holes came in at nearly \$2 million when all is said and done. While this is the probable long-term solution the club was so hurt by the downturn in the golf market during the twenty teens that membership dipped to as low as 189 memberships by 2019. Like most clubs, covid has been such a boom and brought a 50% increase to Forest Hills memberships. The

club has turned the corner and is now in rebuild mode however the lean years of “survival” built up a list of capital needs. Leaning from the many years of experience from Marlow, I found out just how many different ways have been tried or debated to “fix” these golf holes. The leading solution has been to utilize foam under the soil over the entire area to float the soil. \$\$\$\$\$\$. With expensive fixes unattainable at the time the standard operating procedure was to add sandbags along the sea wall to slow the water. The

problem with this solution is that the water would trickle through or over the sandbags and create a continuous wet area that was unmaintainable. At some point electricity was brought to the lowest areas and 230-volt sump pumps were installed both on the lakeside and on the opposite side of the fairway. These electric sump pumps helped however with the immense water volume additional gas pumps were needed. This year, outside of approximately 10 days, we have had gas pumps running 24-hours per day. During wet periods we used three 230-volt sump

pumps, two 2" gas pumps, one 3" gas pump, and one 6" floating gas pump. The gas pumps were placed on stacks of pallets to keep them above water. Unfortunately, on two occasions the water rose so fast that the pumps became submerged before we got to them. Our mechanic Brad Bush had to drain the oil and gas to get them operating again. He came up with a great idea of creating a floating dock using old barrels, so this will not happen again.

As a fresh sight of eyes I saw that this was a losing battle. Bringing my experience with a comparable situation that was on a

much smaller scale I began to formulate strategies to improve the area and make it playable outside of extreme weather conditions. I began to experiment with creating small dikes of sand to stop the water from flowing into low spots and killing the turf through suffocation. This helped, however, with the tremendous amount of rain this year the area become overtaken by water that flowed over the sandbag wall. We even had some visitors during the flooding. This is my assistant Jarod Baker doing a little fishing on company time.

Throughout the year during flooding the hole

became unplayable, and we tried different ways to play the hole. These included using a temporary green on the fairway before the water, a 220-yard blind "drivable par 4" to the 15th green, or simply skipping the hole. Looking creatively, I noticed that by utilizing the 16th hole white tees to the 15th hole green it would create a nice challenging 145-yard par 3. To make this happen only a couple of ash trees and some scrub trees along the drainage channel would need to be removed. The par-5 16th was played from the gold and green tees. Outside of a long walk this also allowed us to work on the fairway without distrac-





tions. The solution that I came up with for the flooding problem and requested funds from the MGCSA grant program was to purchase materials to build up the shoreline sea wall to stop the water from coming through and over the sandbag wall during high water events along with creating a central swale utilizing existing soil to create surface drainage. A product that I have become fond of is manufactured trap rock sand from the Dresser Quarry that I live nearby. The material packs well and is the least expensive that I can find at \$4.90 a ton, \$17.90 delivered. Prior to

restoring the shoreline, we needed to create a swale so that any water from the lake or in rainfall it would surface drain and move to the sumps. By mid-summer we had so much dead turf from being underwater I

thought it was game time, and I started ripping things up.

All construction was completed in-house and began by using the soil that was there to create a water diversion breakpoint swale line on the middle to lake side of the fairway. In counterintuitive thought I dug down on the lake side to create a channel so the water close to the lake would drain to that sump pump. The soil generated provided the material to create the elevated swale and allowed for slope so that surface water would flow to the north side



sump rather than stalling out and drowning the turf. Between the sumps soil was removed so that if the lakeside sump is overwhelmed by surface water it will overflow to the north sump. The north sump is the lowest area of elevation on the hole. The key theory to the project is to stop water from entering the area and when there is excess, providing surface drainage to the sumps to be pumped back to the lake or watershed channel.

The fairway side of the swale was completed first and seeded in early September. Regular play on

hole 15 and 16 returned in late September with the lake side of the swale to sea wall played as ground under repair. Construction became determinant by weather conditions with the area along the sea wall so soft we worked to add material to restore the shoreline as it firmed up with dry weather. A good indication when the area was too soft was getting a machine stuck.

Utilizing our equipment of a skid loader, tractor with box blade, Tycrop material handler, and John Deere Prognator the project is mostly completed. As I

write this in late November last night's 15 degrees put a halt to the project. We are mostly done outside of possibly adding additional material to a couple of low areas along the wall that we think may need additional elevation. Once the soil firms up in the spring the area will have a final grade along with seeding.

The MGCSA grant provided most of the money needed to cover the outside expenses of purchasing the manufactured trap rock sand. I want to thank the MGCSA and my fellow members for their financial support on this project.





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TAG SOUP

By: Eric Counselman, Superior Turf Services



In hunting communities, the term tag soup refers to the end of a hunting season, and a tag holder not having harvested his quarry, is left with only his tag to make his soup.

I became interested in elk hunting about 4yrs ago. I have grown up hunting (deer, turkeys, & small game) and have done my fair share of back country trips. Adventure-based hunting presented itself as a perfect blend of the two, and elk hunting seemed like a good way to start. I began discussing it with friends and family to weed out a group interested in a reasonable level of adventure. Then began applying for preference points (a process to manage the number of hunters in a specific area). We did our first trip in 2022 & contracted with an outfitter for some of the gear & trans-



portation. We hunted an area that didn't require any points (over the counter), which led to lots of people & few elk. Great learning experience & adventure, but not good hunting. Although leaving more to be desired, the appetite was wet, and I couldn't wait to try again.

With plans refined, me & two cousins Randy & Eric Hans, (father/son duo, and brother/nephew to Steve VanNatta that many of you know) who both had been on the first adventure

and long-time deer camp members began putting the pieces for my second elk hunt. Both having more experience and my younger cousin (Hans) significantly. We finalized the hunt area, applied, and in June got drawn for the 3rd Season elk tag, which was the second week of November. With the big decisions made, we began working on logistical details of gear, travel plans, etc. This was not to be a bougee private ranch with lodge and guide type deal, we were heading the other way, all on



our own, hunting public land in the mountains of Colorado. Full disclaimer, Hans is a wildlife biologist for the State of Colorado, with enough experience in the field to qualify him as a guide and my elder cousin, Randy, was no rookie in the outdoors and backcountry. I am fortunate to have a team with such experience.

Researching and learning about the variety aspects of the hunt was fun, but the real work needed to

get started. Elk hunters generally fail due to fitness, lack of experience with their weapon, or poor footwear. I had good footwear that was easy. Most of my adult hunting had been done with a bow or shotgun, which meant I needed to brush up on my rifle competency. I sought out the help of a local shooting coach and refined my skills. I solidified my fundamentals with him and then spent time on my own practicing at the range. I

put many rounds through my Christensen Arms 300 Win Mag and, in time, I was very confident at 200yds, and mostly confident at 300yd (situationally dependent). The biggest hurdle was to get rid of the 'dad bod' and get as fit as this 47yr old can get. I committed to healthier eating and drinking and began working out at least a couple times a week. I joined the gym and took to hiking with a weighed rucksack. I had learned from previous

protocol that if you start too hard and fast, injury is likely. I gradually increased work outs over the next 5 months. I saw any small window as an opportunity to move. I found ways to slip small workouts into our busy schedule by exercising between drop off & pickup of kids, doing some simple morning calisthenics, and replacing screen time with exercise. By the time fall rolled around I was in a good spot. Bring on the mountains.

We departed on a Wednesday afternoon, drove 17hrs mostly straight through in an effort to get to high altitude as soon as possible to allow for increased time for acclimation. We kept things low key Thursday and got a last good night sleep in a hotel at 8,000ft and an hour drive from our hunt destination. Friday morning, we grabbed a hearty breakfast and headed into the mountains. We were essentially car camping at 9,500ft in a 15x25 wall tent with a buck stove for our

primary source of heat. We had brought some dry wood but cut up a couple dead trees for much of our fuel. This activity continued the acclimation to the high altitude. We had base camp set in time to get in a quick hike before dark. Encouraged by the sight of 2 bulls near camp, it was a restless night in anticipation of opening day.

A storm had rolled through during the evening adding to the existing snow, totaling up to a couple feet in





some areas, but generally less than a foot. This was ideal for visibility of elk yet didn't hinder our travel. Temperatures throughout the week ranged from single digits many mornings then daytime warm sun pushing temps above freezing, occasionally even into the 40's.

We were up ahead of the sun and set out hiking in the dark. We each had our packs, weighted with food, ½ gal water, extra cloths, safety kit, and other miscellaneous gear (mine started at 20lb and diminished through the day with water

& food consumption). We were encouraged by fresh elk sign in the new snow, and by 9:30 Hans had a 5x5 bull down. This was a huge milestone in the success of the trip. It allowed me to experience the butchering and hauling of an animal of such magnitude, which was no easy feat. And with the agreement that we would split meat evenly it ensured I'd have some meat to take home. Although my significantly more fit younger cousin bared the largest portion of meat hauling, I still was whupped by the time I'd gotten a 35lb front quarter

2.3mi back to camp. Encouraged by my cousin, it was all I could do to down lots of liquids and an intentionally over salted meal, before snoozing.

Sleep was never constant, as the buck stove needed restocking every few hours. I'd awake to realize my now numb hand had slipped out of my sleeping bag, throw a half dozen logs in, step outside to pee, then hustle back to the warmth of my cot for a few more hours of sleep while the stove warmed the tent back up. This became the routine, up in the dark, hunt the

11ish daylight hours then eat hearty dinner and rest/sleep, repeat. By mid-week, I was exhausted. With the daily exercise and constant cold temps we were always operating on a caloric deficit. Camp got quieter, our bodies were holding up, and it was now the mental fortitude that mattered. I constantly reminded myself to eat and drink to the best of my ability and not get lax on safety. Positive self-talk was crucial and a

team that did the same was invaluable. When everyone is exhausted it is easy to get 'chippy', but no one did. Whenever there was a meal to cook or chore to be done, we all helped. Tuesday, we concluded that we should realistically be done hunting by Thursday afternoon, to get packed up and start the journey home. With that said, Wednesday was the last full day, and we decided to swing for the fences. We left camp earlier

than normal. And got up to hunting spots, we were now familiar with, to watch first light creep in over the 10,600ft peaks. And it paid off, by 7:30 I heard shots ring out from the other side of the ravine, 1/2 mi away, where I knew my cousins were. The excitement was immediate, and soon the satellite phone message confirmed. Big bull down. I conceded my hunting to hustle to them and share in the exhilaration and emo-



tions. Not even the fresh mountain lion tracks in my footprints from the day before were concerning. My 67yr old cousin had shot his first bull with his son by his side, and it was a doozy. A big 6x6 lay dead in a picturesque opening in the aspens. Even in writing this I get a lump in my throat, it was awesome. We spent the remainder of the day reveling in the magnificence of the animal, soaking in the success of the hunt, laughing & joking as we butchered & hauled meat, head, & hide (many hundreds of pounds in total). Hans said he got excited when he watched the elk easily itch its ass with his antler, we all wore perma-smiles.

I hunted briefly near camp Thursday morning, knowing that a 3rd elk at this point would be a lot to handle, then we went back in the 4.5mi round trip together for the third and final load of Randy's bull. We broke camp, maybe had a few beers in the process,



and headed back to town for a restaurant meal and heated nights sleep in a hotel, before heading east toward home Friday morning.

I saw 13 legal bulls while on this trip but never had a real close opportunity on one. In total I hiked over 40mi during the 7 days (10mi hauling elk) and lost 10lbs (fear not, it was quick to return).

While I have not kept the intense diet & exercise,

many things have stuck with me. I realize I have time to work out or at a minimum be active. Reality is, it has never been about time, just motivation. Eating healthy is always an option, often even a tasty option. I continue to focus my diet on real food, all things in the form they were grown; fruits, veggies & proteins. It isn't hard now because it is part of my daily practice. I pick a salad or protein bowl instead of burger & fries. And many of these healthy

options are available & similar in price, even when not at home. Kwik Trip has good salads, Wendy's salads are fantastic, Jimmy John's unwhich, Chipotle & Qdoba have many healthier options too, they are all readily available and won't leave you wanting a nap.

I described it to my kids as being on the winning sports team even though

I didn't score the goals. I know we are all busy with work, kids, & life, but dare to throw a challenge on your plate and try something new. It may allow for a new level of confidence and personal pride. This was a highly successful trip as it allowed for personal growth and achievement. There were many unforgettable moments throughout, leaving me with greater

bonds to the natural world and the guys that were with me. So much of it is hard to put into words. But it was well stated as we entered our hotel room, Randy looked at me and said 'this is the greatest hunting trip I've ever been on. Maybe one of the best things I've ever done in my life.' I couldn't agree more. And that is some great tasting tag soup.



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Tyler Lewellyn
Equipment Manager
Spring Hill Golf Club





Thank you Jesse Trcka for Rolling it Forward to me. In the short amount of time I have known you, you have always supported others in achieving their goals in any way you can. For me it is nominating me to tell my story. My goal is to help other people who are wrenching in this wonderful industry, whether you are an Equipment Manager, Mechanic, or a Superintendent/Mechanic combo.

I may not have the most experience in the indus-

try, but in my time, I have learned quite a lot and continue to learn everything I can. My passion in the industry has always been the equipment and what it can do to achieve such beautiful views. What I have noticed through all my travels is that nearly everyone in the industry struggles with the same issues, whether its budget, equipment or staffing issues. My specialty lies with helping people troubleshoot, repair, and maintain their equipment. Educating when I can and learning

everywhere I go.

My start in the turf industry happened slowly, but quickly and unavoidable at the same time. I honestly had no clue it even existed. I had not golfed and knew nothing about the industry. I currently have clubs that have seen maybe 3 rounds since I got them over 8 years ago. I have adopted the phrase that I golf the course 6 feet at a time. I am hoping to improve my game as time goes on, but it alludes me. I also knew

nothing about golf courses. The only thing I knew about grass was mowing it at 2" and keeping the lines straight in the front yard. You also must mow it in various directions to keep the grass guessing so it doesn't lay over. I could lay lasers, but nothing impressive like our operators do daily.

It all really started when I enrolled to Hennepin Technical College for the Marine, Motorsport and Outdoor Power Equipment Technology program. When I picked the program, I was gearing up to

work on boat motors, motorcycles, or ATVs. I wanted to do something I enjoyed fixing and could take for a ride. Growing up I was a tinkerer, and I created a few abominations that the neighbors probably did not appreciate being run down the street. Looking back now, the industry is a perfect fit for a fella like me. While I was in college, two things happened that could not be planned but put my life on a course I never expected. First thing was that I met Weston Lehner in the program, we instantly hit it off and have been nearly inseparable since. The sec-

ond thing that happened was John Malloy walked in looking for an Equipment Manager for Bearpath Golf and Country Club. When the instructors walked him over and introduced us, I had no idea what was to come.

Weston Lehner ultimately became the EM at Bearpath. I fought the industry a little bit and thought I was heading in a different direction, but the industry pulled me in quickly after that. I started my career in the Spring of 2013 splitting the week between Bluff Creek Golf Course and Deer Run Golf Club. I had the honor of learning under Bob Tindal for the first couple seasons as he worked closer to retirement. That first season holds fond memories of quick learning for me. They had Simplex Ideal Peerless



Reel and Bedknife Grinders, one of the few courses I have seen with those and I believe they are still running them to this day. The bedknife grinder is quite interesting as it runs two motors, one specifically for the front face and another for the top of the knife. They ran majority Toro reels including a few sets of the awesome single point adjust reels. Bob Tindal was great to learn from and taught me quite a bit about reels and repairs. Much of what I learned from him I still think about today.

After that, I continued to still split my time for a few more seasons, but instead of two courses it turned into three. I was at Bluff Creek Golf Course, Halla Greens Golf Course, and Spring Hill Golf Club. I worked alternate days at Bluff Creek and Spring



Hill and spent my evenings maintaining and repairing the equipment at Halla Greens. I was extremely fortunate to learn from Bob Tindal and Glenn Sigmon, two guys that had combined experience of over 60 years in the industry. Glenn Sigmon was a phenomenal mentor. He taught me that there is a proper tool for the job, more often than not it's a puller or a press, not a hammer and a welder. He furthered my knowledge of reels, introducing me to backlapping and Foley Grinders, and how backlapping can play a crucial part of maintaining

cut quality. To this day I still consider myself a backlapper, not a grinder. Glenn taught me the importance of budget maintenance, strict record keeping, equipment maintenance and how it all feeds into excellence on the course. Years later, I am in Glenn's position at Spring Hill Golf Club, hoping I can fill the shoes he spent 20 years wearing.

After learning from Glenn for multiple seasons, it was time for me to pursue an EM position of my own. I got lucky to be close to home when I accepted the Equipment Manager



position at The Links at Northfork with Jay Yonak as the superintendent. I was granted the freedom to spread my wings and focus on how I wanted to maintain the equipment. I was also able to clean up the shop space and organize it in a way that I felt would be more efficient. While I was maintaining the equipment during the day, I was also maintaining the reels and cut quality at Cedar Creek Golf Course in Albertville. At this point in my career my family started to grow as well. Funny story, during fairway aerification with

the tried-and-true GA60, pulled with a good ole 3 wheel Cushman, my wife went into labor with our first child. My time at The Links at Northfork was short lived, but many memories and relationships were made.

An opportunity came up quickly that I couldn't pass up. It was to be a Service Technician for TurfWerks. I was at TurfWerks for 6 years following The Links at Northfork. During my time with TurfWerks I was privileged to be able to work at two of their

locations, the Twin Cities location and the Omaha, Nebraska location. If anyone has heard that one year at the dealer is 3 at the golf course, it is absolutely true. I learned a tremendous amount and met so many great people along the way. I wouldn't give up that experience for anything. Being at the dealer, we took on issues and repairs people did not want to take on themselves. From whole engine replacements to just general servicing. Troubleshooting was a skill that was used on a daily basis, sometimes without

even seeing the equipment. Troubleshooting over the phone is a unique skill that can only be successfully done by knowing the equipment and people. While in Omaha, my family grew by 2. It was then we decided to move back up to Minnesota to be close to the rest of our family. TurfWerks was more than accommodating in allowing me to move back up to the Minnesota location.

I learned an incredible amount about the equipment and industry while I was with TurfWerks, but when Spring Hill Golf Club was looking for an Equipment Manager, I felt it was a great time for a new opportunity. At Spring

Hill Golf Club, I am able to grow as an Equipment Manager and as a parent with rapidly growing kiddos. I have also been given the opportunity to get involved with the MGCSA. The MGCSA has recently formed an Equipment Manager Committee. Between the other 3 members and myself, we are striving to bring more education and community to the equipment side of the industry. We are currently planning more EM content within Hole Notes that I am excited to contribute to as well as read the contributions from others. If anyone wants to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out. New faces and



ideas are always welcome and most of the time, much needed for progress.

Now it's time to Roll It Forward to someone I didn't work with for long, but someone who has grown their own career recently. Matt Mosso, Superintendent at Manitou Ridge Golf Course.





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- Construction Sand & Black Dirt Mixes - 50/50, 70/30, 80/20
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- Dry green topdressing sand
- Dry early-green black topdressing sand
- Dry 70/30 green divot mix



NEMADJI OUTREACH



Thank you to our host Superintendent, Vince Dodge, our sponsors, and all of our attendees!



GET TO KNOW ‘EM

EVAN WRIGHT

Light Equipment Specialist (EM)

Three Rivers Park District - Baker National Golf Course

PUBLIC/PRIVATE/#HOLES 27 Holes: 18 & 9 Hole par 30

FT EMPLOYEES: 6

SEASONALS: 35

ROUNDS/YEAR: 42K, 27K

CAREER/JOBS: Ford Dealership, National Guard - 91 Bravo
Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic

SCHOOL: Dunwoody

GREENS MOWERS: 6

TEE MOWERS: 3

FWY MOWERS: 3 (2-3555, 1-5410)

ELECTRIC/GAS: 2 electric triplexes for greens, a couple every year for the park district. I think those electric motors could be real good for stuff like veritcutters, dethatching. Electric units should have more torque for those tasks.

COURSE NEED: Material Handler, with the spreader and the arm, to help load topdresser in the field more efficiently. Having it fill the 1550 a few times, will save us time.

SHOP WANTS: Air conditioning might be nice. I got some fans, and two garage doors that open up. It's good being with the park district, with them supplying shop tools. As long as I'm reasonable, and don't go crazy, I get what I ask for.



HOW DO WE GET STUDENTS INTO GOLF TECH?

Continue expanding awareness of golf as an option.

ANYTHING DIFFERENT OR UNIQUE YOU DO IN YOUR SHOP THAT COULD BENEFIT OTHERS?

One thing that's been big, is the documentation of your work and parts. I have a system where I catalog every single thing in my parts room, so I'm not wasting time digging for parts. I can enter part numbers and go in and grab the part I need. It's nice to document things that way so a year, 2 years later, and can see the notes I wrote on that fix. Just make sure we're documenting things better.

HAVE YOU MET A CELEBRITY? WHO?

Larry Fitzgerald, caddied for him several times at Hazeltine.



FAVORITE VACATION SPOT?

Me and a friend took the bikes out to Sturgis. Whenever I can visit my parents in Ft. Myers, I can't complain either. I like to tinker with bikes, I'm picking up a bike lift in a coming days, that will make working on them much easier.

**FAVORITE MEMORY OR
FUNNY STORY STARTING YOUR
TURF CAREER?**

I really didn't know how to grind reels when I came here, so I learned from Phil and after grinding all the reels in the winter, hoping everything was good, it was great to see that the first cut of the year went well and everything looked good. That is probably my favorite moment, actually seeing them go out and cut, seeing the labor of our your love.



FAVORITE TASKS: Checking reel to bedknife contact, its satisfying.

LEAST FAVORITE TASK: Anytime theres a hydraulic leak, that's gotta be everyones least favorite thing. Luckily, I only had one last year.

HAVE YOU PAYED ANY FAMOUS COURSE? Nothing famous outside of Minnesota, but played Hazeltine a lot. Played my favorites around Minnesota like Giants Ridge, Mad-dens, Olympic Hills, and Bent Creek. Played one year of high school golf and those were our courses.

WHOSE IN YOUR FOURSOME? My dad, brother in law, and probably my uncle.

WHATS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'VE RECEIVED IN YOUR CAREER THAT STILL RESONATES WITH YOU? When I was at Dunwoody, my instructor told us, the day you decide to stop learning, is the day you can just go home and be done. So just keep learning, furthering your education, just keep learning and staying up to date with all the new technology. Thats the one that resonates with me the most.

**IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'VE
LEARNED IN THE NATIONAL
GUARD THAT HAS TRANSLATED
TO GOLF?**

Patience. Trying to rush through stuff, you're often going to do it wrong, having the patience that something isn't going to happen overnight or right at this second. It helps a lot to know things aren't always going to get done now.

*Listen to the full conversation with Evan on the
HOLE NOTES PODCAST! Available on many of
your favorite podcast sites!*

MGCSA NEW MEMBERS - Jan/Feb 2025

Andrew Campbell	Forest Hills Golf Club	Class C
Keaton Heide	Interlachen Country Club	Class C
Colin Kerslake	Versatile Vehicles	Affiliate
John Fisher	Wayzata Country Club	Class C
Avery Brandt	TPC Twin Cities	Class C
Cody Johnson	TPC Twin Cities	Class C
Matt Foss	St. Cloud Country Club	Class C
Nathan Maas	MTI Distributing	Affiliate
Shawn Hilliard	Helena	Affiliate
Alex Tucker	Van Diest Supply	Affiliate
Jordan Hill	Forest Hills Golf Course	Class B
Chris Strange	Tepetonga Club	Class A
Jeremy Clayton	Legends Club	Class C
Griffen Studier	Austin Country Club	Class C
Ed Thomas	Deacons Lodge	Class A
Ryan VerNess	The Silo Club	Class A
Hunter Vollbrecht	Monticello Country Club	Class B
Paul Suralski	Emerald Greens Golf Course	Facility

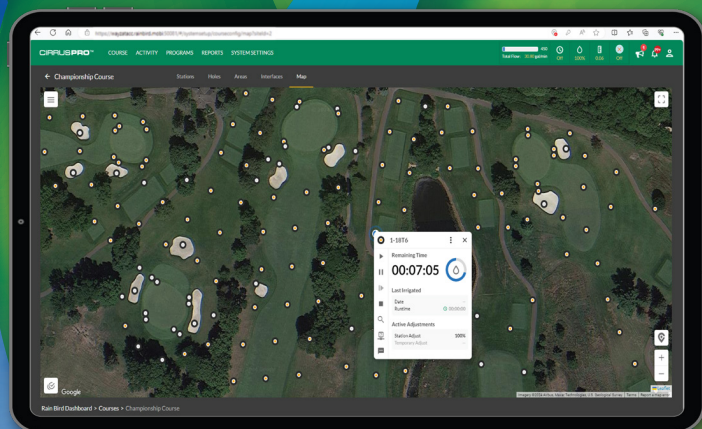
SW OUTREACH: MINN-IOWA GOLF CLUB

Thank you to our host Jason Lloyd, and all
of our event sponsors!

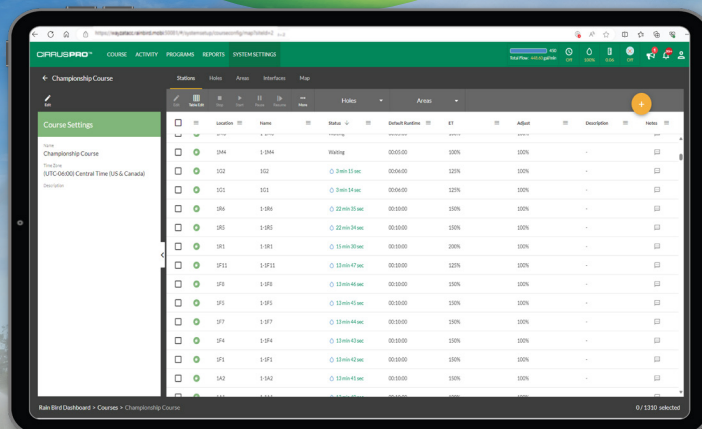


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UMN RESEARCH



*Revisiting an Older Strategy:
Dormant Seeding to Renovate
or Improve Turfstands*

*Jon Trappe - UMN Turfgrass
Extension Educator*



Is it possible to renovate to newer cultivars on putting greens using dormant seeding? In the fall 2024, the University of Minnesota turf lab initiated a trial to find out.

Dormant seeding is a strategy for establishing or renovating turf stands by spreading seed knowing that it will not germinate immediately. This is a strategy that has been used in the turf industry for decades and by farmers for centuries. So why are we at the University of Minnesota revisiting this as a strategy?

We have known through decades of turfgrass research that the fall is the best time of year for establishing a cool season

turfgrass stand by seed. Generally the heat and drought stresses from the summer months have subsided, and more frequent rainfall events help with seedling germination and emergence during a period with optimal temperatures for growth. Additionally, fall has reduced weed pressure as summer annual grassy weeds are no longer a threat. You might remember the last couple of falls in Minnesota have had moderate to severe drought, resulting in the need for more supplemental irrigation or have resulted in overall poor establishments. Even in areas with irrigation systems, fall seedings can be problematic due to the irrigation systems needing to be blown-out

by mid to late October. The threat of a hard freeze may loom in some falls, when there may still be weeks of growing weather to fully establish the fall seeding.

Enter dormant seeding. We initially started revisiting this practice as a strategy to renovate to newer and improved cultivars or species. Newer and improved cultivars may have higher disease or drought tolerance or better overall turf quality, but the effort to transition to these improved cultivars or species was likely slowing their adoption. We have been having tremendous luck with renovating or establishing most turfgrass species through this technique with and with-



Photo: Andy Hollman

out supplemental irrigation. We have also begun exploring using dormant seeding to establish new turf stands with little to no herbicides for ultra-low input scenarios.

Dormant seeding can take place anytime soil temperatures fall below 40°F (typically November through early April). Earlier winter timings may benefit from more freeze/thaw cycles and winter precipitation, allowing for better seed to

soil contact. We recommend using an erosion control blanket on slopes or in cases of bare soil to help hold seed in place. Otherwise, the existing residue on the soil surface should be sufficient for holding the seed in place. Dormant seedings will be more successful if the previous stand is weaker or terminated, but it is not necessary. In the case of a full renovation, using a non-selective herbicide like glyphosate in the late fall may be necessary.

Dormant seeding still has some limitations. The biggest setback has to do with summer annual grassy weed pressure at the same time you are trying to grow in the turfgrass seedlings. Most pre-emergent herbicides will have negative effects on turfgrass seed emergence, so one or two post-emergent applications may be necessary to ensure complete establishment of the turfstand. In rare circumstances, like in the case of April

2023 when we went from snow cover to 80° temperatures in four or five days, you may need to start irrigating before you would otherwise normally pressurize your irrigation system. Of course if you don't have an irrigation system in this circumstance you might need to run some hoses to ensure the seedlings do not dry out before their root systems develop.

At the University of Minnesota, we have initiated a few research projects to help answer some basic agronomic questions around dormant seeding with today's turf genetics. One of these is an experiment to determine various strategies for using pre- and post-emergent

herbicides or no herbicides at all for establishing and renovating turf stands with dormant seeding.

Another strategy that we are investigating is whether or not golf course superintendents can transition their putting greens, tees, or fairways to new and improved cultivars of creeping bentgrass with dormant seeding. Some of the questions we are hoping to answer include non-selective herbicide timing in the fall, whether a late season top-dressing is beneficial as a mulch layer, and if cultivar growth rate differences are important for the transition to these newer cultivars.

Other unknowns we hope to research include optimal seeding rates by species or with mixtures and proper timing of terminating the existing stand in renovations. There are certainly many unknowns that remain with dormant seeding. As we have more unpredictable weather patterns, we will continue to investigate new or revisit older strategies for golf course superintendents to have better tools for maintaining their golf courses. In the next several years we will share the results of this research when we have an opportunity to have a few different growing seasons and locations for proper evaluation.

UMN TURF BLOG



NATIONAL HOSPITALITY NIGHT THE KNOTTY BARREL - SAN DIEGO

This year saw almost 150 attendees for our annual hospitality night! Thank you to all of our attendees for continuing to support this event, and to our partners for providing the free food and drinks for all of our members and guests! Your support is invaluable to the success of this and all of our MGCSA Events!





FROM THE HIGH GRASS



Are you sustainable?

Those of you who were at the GCSAA Conference and Show in San Diego, definitely noticed the prevalence of electric and autonomous equipment. Other products showcased technological advances and achievements. All of this was focused on the sustainability of golf. The industry is focused on sustainability, so are Superintendents and individual professionals doing so as well?

There are many different sectors affecting sustainability, not just equipment, irrigation, but also labor,

safety, and personal time. All aspects of the operation could be more sustainable, including some areas that you may not be thinking of right now. There is an opportunity to assess your complete operation, your facility, and your practices, to adjust or adopt more sustainable efforts.

Having these conversations makes me think, what is MGCSA's role in encouraging sustainable practices? As we continue to advocate for golf's future in the state, we have continually highlighted golf's sustainable efforts, our successes, and our intentions for the

future. Talking with legislators often deals with how successful we have been at addressing the issues facing our industry, issues they have potentially negative perceptions of.

Another component of industry sustainability is linked with our BMP efforts. For some time now, GCSAA has been pushing hard for facility adoption of these state BMP's. Locally, we haven't really promoted them much yet but going forward it needs to be a more important part of our efforts. After speaking with some of my colleagues around the

country, we are starting to see some political gains directly related to these BMP documents. At the national level, these documents have helped strengthen golf's position related to the EPA and Endangered Species Act conversations.

Getting these done is easier than ever, as our state BMP now autofill's your facilities BMP file. At a minimum, all you need to do is edit the basic course information. However, this is not the ideal situation, as reviewing the document and ensuring it is accurate to your facility, is an essential step in the process. If Minnesota golf courses adopt these BMP's, we can strongly say that MN golf is working to be more sustainable.

So, are you doing your part, is this something that you support, do you believe that you have a role to play? Maybe you don't see the value in being more sustainable, or the importance of adopting a facility BMP document, but these efforts only better support the golf

industries' future legislative outcomes.

Who am I to tell you?

During my time in this role, I have come to learn more about these efforts, talking with my colleagues at other chapters, the public affairs teams representing golf around the country, and they all use every tool at their disposal. Minimal effort from you could be substantially impactful to our group of professionals. These issues will affect our industry for the foreseeable future, and our response will be critical in the public arena. We have always prided our industry on being proactive, now is the time to ensure we are proactive in any sustainable efforts we can. Make sure we are responsible users of resources, but also establish sustainable labor expectations, safety standards, and personal time allowances.

Any environmentally sustainable effort will still fail if you haven't fully considered the expectations and

realities of the schedule and timeline. Ensure you have considered the workload for you and your team and assess if it is sustainable within your team's capabilities. Whichever area you apply sustainability efforts; it should align with other team or personal goals.

For years we have said we are the most responsible resource and land managers. We have prided ourselves on the professionalism of Golf Course Superintendents. If we keep saying that's who we are, then it's time that the MGCSA, and all of you individually, put our money where our mouths are! Sustainability isn't just a social buzz word; it is in the basic definition of our role. A Superintendents goal is to work to be more effective, more efficient, with the resources we have at our disposal to maintain our facilities. Sustainability is inherent in our industry and duties, and we continue to be responsible to each other to live up to our own hype.