

HOLE NOTES



Building a Short Course
Ryan Paul

Mr. Sonnek Goes to Washington
Mike Sonnek

Roll it Forward:
Scott Wiek

Get to Know Em:
Greg Willman

june

HOLE NOTES

The Official Publication of the MGCSA
V. 60, #3 June 2025

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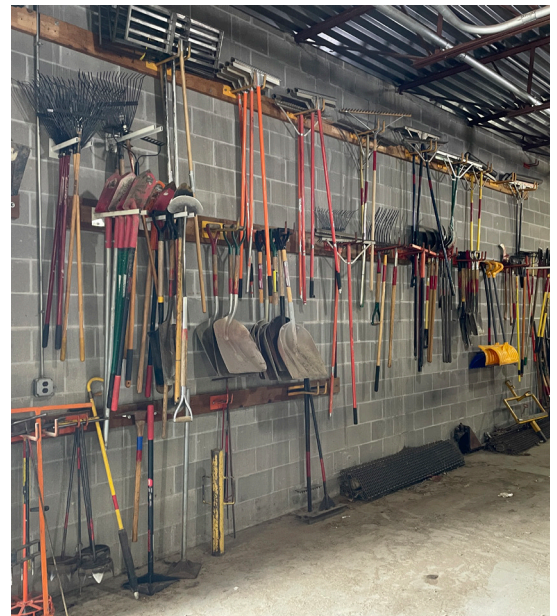
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Event Calendar:

Brainerd Exposure	6/25
Springfield Exposure	8/4
Grand Rapids Exposure	8/25
MGCSA Championship	9/9
The Scramble	9/22
The Wee One	10/6
The MEGA	12/2-3

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



PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

Nikk Dickerson
Faribault Golf Club

Riding the Roller Coaster:

Holy crap—it's already June. Not only am I getting the reminder text from Chris to get this article in on time (spoiler: I did not), I'm also still digging up broken pipes around the course thanks to frost heave from this past winter.

This season already feels like a bit of a roller coaster. We had near 90-degree temps in mid-May, and now we're waking up to 50-degree mornings

in mid-June. It's a clear reminder that, as much as we superintendents try to control everything, there's still so much that's simply out of our control—weather, irrigation issues, equipment failures, and the ever-present staffing challenges.

With all that unpredictability, I urge everyone to carve out a little time for yourselves—time when you're not thinking about turf, tools, or whether your seasonal staff is going to show up. I

was fortunate to sneak over to the Border Battle event at La Crosse Country Club in May, and it was exactly the break I needed. Hats off to Greg Willman—the course was in fantastic shape given the rain the night before. Even though Minnesota didn't take home the trophy, it was a great event at a top-tier facility.

Now, I know not all of us are big golfers, but events like the Don White or the MGCSA Exposure Events are excellent opportunities

to step away and recharge. It's too late to register for the Don White this year, but I encourage you to consider it in the future. In the meantime, there are still three Exposure events on the calendar:

Brainerd Exposure –
June 25 at The Classic at Madden's (unfortunately, that's Member-Guest week for me, so I'll miss it)
Southwest Exposure –

August 4 at Springfield Golf Course (I'll be there and hope to connect with

some new faces)

Northeast Exposure –
August 25 at Pokegama Golf Club in Grand Rapids (Honestly, this one is a bit too far out for me so we'll see what comes in the coming weeks)

Whether it's a family vacation or a one-day trip to another course where everyone gets it, take some time to unplug. It makes a difference.

As we head into the dog days of summer, I

wish all of you the best. Remember—you're not alone. Reach out to a friend, mentor, or colleague. Heck, call me if you need someone to talk to and can't get a hold of anyone else. I might not have all the answers, but I'm happy to listen—even if you hear a sprayer or mower humming in the background.

Until next time, keep your head up and enjoy the twists and turns the rollercoaster takes us on this season!

MGCSA NEW MEMBERS - May/June 2025

Nick Peterson	Bearpath Golf & Country Club	Student
Aidan Gutzmer	Ridges at Sand Creek	Student
David Stickels	Oak Marsh Golf Course	Student
Isaac Rapp	Cannon Golf Club	Student
Brian Haley	Brookview Golf Course	Class B
Kyle Ryun	Forest Hills Golf Club	Class A
Zach Page	Oak Marsh GC	Class B
Dominic Petrella	University of Minnesota	Class E
Dan Sanford	Grove Nursery	Affiliate
Adric Ryan	Minnewaska Golf Club	Class B
Brad Prisch	Turfwerks	EM
George Keller	Black Diamond Golf Club	Class A



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**Tanner Knudsen
North Oaks
Golf Club**

TECH TIPS

This month's tech tip: everyone receives their tires all deformed from shipping, and it is a nuisance. I have learned this trick on how to get the tire back to a workable form to be able to mount it onto the rim.

You will need to get a tube, it doesn't need to be the exact right size for the tire, but something large enough that when you inflate it, it will get the kinks out of the tire.

Then, you will need a ratchet strap, once you have the tire somewhat inflated with your tube wrap the ratchet strap around the center of the tire and just tighten it enough that it will not fall off.

Once you have it tight, remove the air from the tube and take it out from inside your tire. Keep the ratch on the tire for a couple hours and set it out in the sunlight if possible. (If you are in a rush and need the tire mounted right away, keep the strap on until you mount the tire on the rim and set the bead.) After sitting in the sun for a few hours, remove the strap and the tire will be how it is supposed to.



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CREATING A SHORT COURSE DURING GOLF'S LONGEST TOURNAMENT

Ryan Paul

Senior Assistant Golf Course Superintendent
Hazeltine National Golf Club



The first mow on Hazeltine's new short course

Golf seems to be getting longer and longer every year. In fact, many courses are renovating or redesigning to add length and appeal for future major championship potential. And while the big-hitters won't be going away any time soon, that doesn't mean that every round of golf needs to be played from 8,000 yards.

Hazeltine National Golf

Club is widely known for its history of hosting national championships, but when the Women's PGA Championship and Ryder Cup both return for a second time in the coming years, an added amenity will be enjoyed by both professionals and beginners alike.

Last year, Hazeltine embarked on a major development project that

brings a shorter flair to the Club's championship persona. A new 10-hole short course, conceived by Love Golf Design, will open this summer. Flexible and fun, the short course will provide an outlet for players who may also endure the demanding conditions of Hazeltine's championship course. The new course features five double greens, averaging roughly



Attendance for a semifinal match during the 2024 U.S. Amateur

13,000ft² and designed to be a challenging contrast to the championship course. There are no defined teeboxes, allowing for maximum creativity when it comes to daily setup. Only a few clubs will be needed, as holes will regularly be played from 60-120 yards.

Perhaps most uniquely, the development also features a 30,000ft² putting course, which has severe undulations, lights for evening action, and walkout access from the Club's six new Villas and Golf Performance Center. In order to meet the

summer 2025 opening date, construction of the short course began in June 2024, just one month before Hazeltine hosted the 124th United States Amateur Championship. The Hazeltine team was tasked with balancing both sides of "the fence": bulldozers and excavators on one, and TV cameras on the other. During the 8-day championship, frequency was found in morning stimp-sessions with USGA agronomists, followed by laying out and staking irrigation in the afternoon, then returning to the tournament to supervise

evening operations. Over 200 trucks of greens mix were hauled in during the week of the tournament, but thanks to excellent coordination from Duininck Golf and Plaisted Companies, spectators didn't notice a single truck. The tournament was played without a hitch on surfaces which received rave reviews from both competitors and patrons, an incredible testament to the efforts of the entire Hazeltine Turfgrass Team.

While the U.S. Amateur concluded and recovery began, attention turned

to preparing for grassing on the short course. An ideal fall seeding-window was hit, and grow-in commenced with the blessing of 40 days of minimal rain. Now, as the turf matures and the opening of the short course soon approaches, things are full speed ahead at Hazeltine National Golf Club.

It's hard to believe, but preparations have already begun for the 2026 Women's PGA Championship and 2029 Ryder Cup.



Duininck Golf's Paul Deis laying out several miles of 2" drainage

Daily data collection during the 2024 U.S. Amateur (Photo courtesy of Dr. Micah Woods)





WILDFLOWER EXPOSURE GOLF

Thank you host Superintendent Reed Bohm, the team at Wildflower Golf Course, our 22 players, and all of our event sponsors for another successful outreach event!!





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- Dry 70/30 green divot mix



MR. SONNEK GOES TO WASHINGTON

Mike Sonnek
Royal Golf Club

On May 1, I had the honor of representing MGCSA at National Golf Day in Washington DC. Since this was my first trip back to DC in 15 years, I was excited to participate. We arrived the morning before, so I had time to take in some of the sights and history. I made the most of it by visiting the Jefferson Memorial, FDR Memorial, MLK Memorial, National Mall and WW II memorial, Lincoln Memorial, and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 3 hours. At the World War II Memorial, I eavesdropped on some of the conversations that

students were having with veterans who were there to share their stories. In front of the Lincoln Memorial, I watched part of a program commemorating 50 years since Black April and the fall of South Vietnam. At the end of the program there was a moving procession over to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. I appreciated being there and I was able to share those sentiments the following morning. By coincidence I met up with the Minnesota contingent of Vietnamese citizens while visiting Senator Tina Smith's office.

Later that evening, courtesy of my fellow MGCSA representative Wade Huesman, I was able to attend an opera at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. A great bonus to attend a performance in that impressive setting. Thank you Wade.

Thursday morning, we hopped on the buses and headed to meet up with our Senators and Representatives. Our first stop was Senator Amy Klobuchar's office for her "Minnesota Mornings". The Senator hosts visiting



groups for a coffee hour and provides updates of her work in the senate. From there we went to Senator Tina Smith's for "Coffee with Tina" and she provided her updates as well. Good fortune for us to be there on a Thursday morning when these sessions take place.

After the meet and greets we spent the rest of the day sitting down with staff of both our Senators as well as our Representatives. The two bills we touched on had to do with ensuring golf is not excluded from

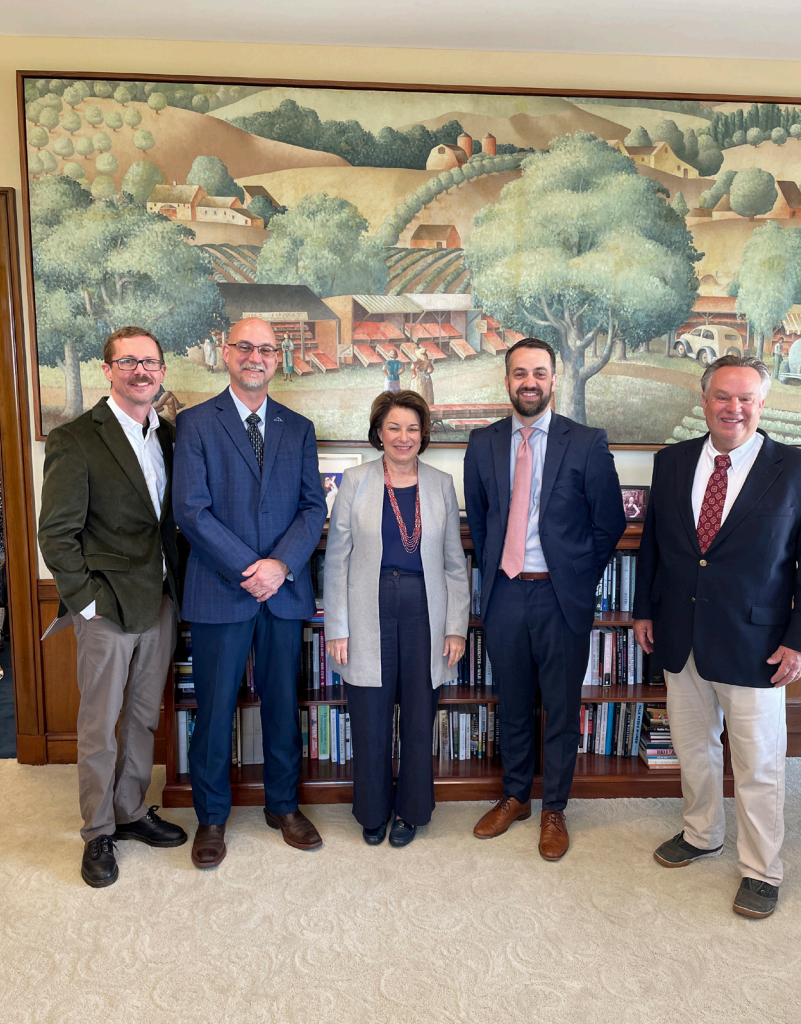
a Supplemental Disaster Relief Bill and the 'Phit Act', which would include golf as a healthy lifestyle option as it relates to the use of individuals HSA/FSA funds. In addition, we asked for support for turfgrass research to continue to be part of the Farm Bill. I am happy to report that our points were well received by our Minnesota contingent.

On Friday morning it was off to East Potomac Golf Links for our community service project. I pulled the glamour job of trash

pickup around the course perimeter. Turns out it wasn't a bad gig after all. It was a beautiful morning for a walk. I had a chance to visit with GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans who was toting a trash bag as well, and walking across the golf course, you could see the Washington Monument in the distance. An impressive backdrop.

Thank you for allowing me to represent you at this great event and I encourage all of you to consider participating in the future.





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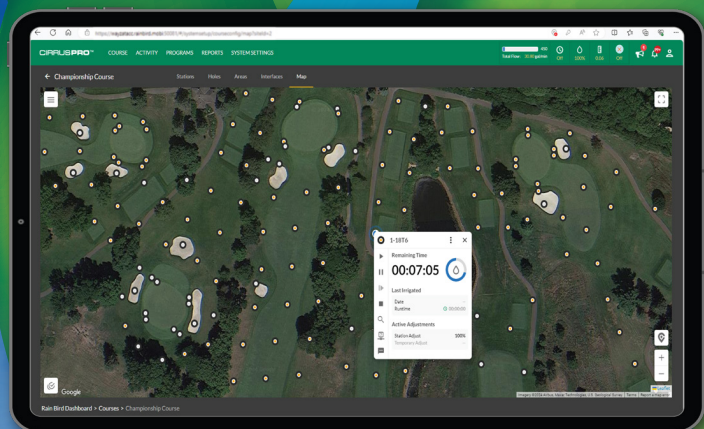
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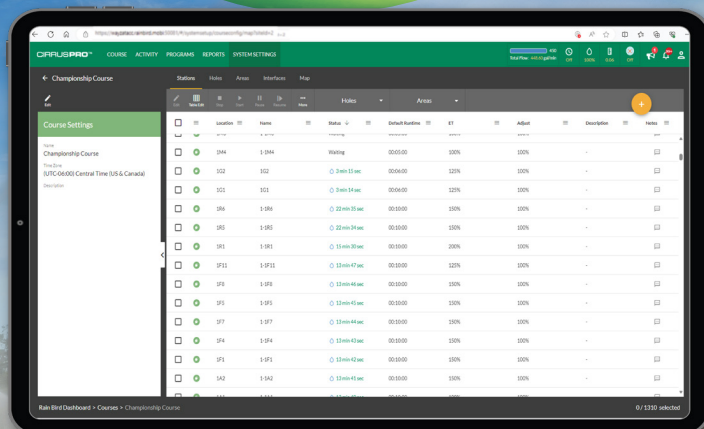
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ROLL IT FORWARD

Scott Weik
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Thank you, Matt Mosso for,
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work over at Manitou Ridge
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see your passion and leader-
ship making an impact!

Like many who find them-
selves in the turfgrass indus-

try, I didn't grow up dream-
ing about moisture meters
or fairway stripes. I didn't
have a childhood vision of
becoming a greenskeep-
er—but I've come to learn
that while most of us arrive
here by chance, we stay by
choice. That's certainly been
true for me.

Before turf, I spent 15 years

as a press operator. After
high school, I went to trade
school and learned to run
sheet-fed offset printing
presses, eventually spending
a decade in a union shop.
But in October of 2001,
I was laid off—and with
the decline in demand for
printed materials, the door
to that industry had all but
closed.

So, I made the choice to go back to school and pursue a degree in Sports Facility Management. That's when everything changed. During my internship at a golf course called Mulligan Masters—part of what was meant to become a PGA teaching center—I found something I hadn't felt in years: excitement, purpose, and a deep satisfaction in the work. There was something addictive about walking the 9-hole putting course surrounded by a creek and hundreds of plantings. The hum of the reel mowers, the clean lines,

the team camaraderie—it hooked me. Watching golfers enjoy the results of our labor gave me a sense of pride I hadn't expected.

That course eventually closed, but by then, I was already committed. I reached out to Charlie Miller to ask if I could use him as a reference. A few weeks later, Charlie called and asked how my job search was going. He told me there was a spot open at Goodrich if I was interested. I said yes—and I've been there ever since. That was 2006.

Ramsey County had, and still has, an incredible golf team. I was lucky to be mentored by great people like Charlie Miller, Paul Digneau, Greg Hubbard, and Rob Adams. They were always willing to offer advice, share knowledge, and show what true leadership in this field looks like.

Over the years, I've come to understand that this job is about so much more than grass. It's about problem solving, team leading, and reading weather patterns like a second language. It's a balancing act between science and art—one day you're adjusting irrigation heads and monitoring soil moisture sensors, the next you're walking the course with just a cup of coffee and your gut instinct. No two days are the same, and that's part of the magic.



I love the early mornings, the changing seasons, and the small, often unnoticed details that make a course feel right. There's a quiet pride in knowing your best work is invisible to most people—and that silence, when everything looks and plays exactly as it should, is often the highest compliment you can receive.

Most of all, I love the community. Especially here in Minnesota, the turf industry is a tight-knit group like no other. We support each other, share solutions, volunteer at tournaments, and show up when someone needs help. Whether it's lending equipment or lending an ear, we have each other's backs.

A heart felt thank you to



my amazing family for all the love and support through the years. To my wonderful wife Jane (30-year anniversary this November) To my incredible daughters Cassie, Carlie and Nate my son in law – your love means the world to me. And to my two awesome grandkids Cayden and Addison who bring so much joy to my life. Feeling truly blessed.

For me, “Roll It Forward” isn’t just a clever phrase—it’s a guiding principle. It

speaks to the interconnectedness of this profession and the importance of sharing what we’ve learned. So, to anyone new to the industry: Stick with it. Ask questions. Find mentors. Show up early. Stay curious. This career may not always be glamorous, but it’s deeply meaningful. Your work sets the stage for joy, competition, and connection.

And to those who’ve been in it longer than I have—thank you. Your resilience, innovation, and mentor-

ship continue to shape and strengthen this industry. Let's keep telling our stories, sharing our knowledge, and rolling it forward. Now it is time to roll it forward to and welcome the new superintendent at Keller Golf Course –

Daniel Ament. I had the opportunity to meet Dan while serving on the interview panel for the Keller position, and I was immediately impressed by his deep knowledge and passion for the golf industry. I'm looking forward to

learning from him, hearing his ideas and collaborating as part of the Ramsey County. Dan is a great addition, and we're excited to have him on board.





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2025 Border Battle

Thank you to our host, Greg Willman, and the beautiful La Crosse Country Club course for supporting our 3rd annual Border Battle Event with Wisconsin GCSA. WGCSA got their first victory this year, leaving the series record at 2-1 MGCSA!

Despite the poor weather, we still had almost 70 golfers, including our special guest, GCSAA Board Member, Steve Hammon, CGCS, Superintendent at Traverse City Country Club in Michigan (Next page, bottom right)







GET TO KNOW 'EM

GREG WILLMAN
Golf Course Superintendent
La Crosse Country Club

PUBLIC/PRIVATE/#HOLES Private, 18 holes
FT EMPLOYEES: 3
SEASONALS: 16
ROUNDS/YEAR: 18,500

YEARS IN THE POSITION: 7
YEARS IN TURF INDUSTRY: 30
CAREER/JOB: Des Moines GCC, Panther Creek CC,
Muscatine GC, City of Cedar Rapids

GREENS ACREAGE: 2.5
TEE ACREAGE: 4
FWY ACREAGE: 33

TYPES OF GRASS: Originally, Pennlinks everywhere, 007 XL on
2 new greens.

MASTER PLAN WANT: A bunker renovation would be nice. We did
one in house a few years ago. We ended
up going with a local sand, and no liners.
Kind of old fashioned if you will. We've
had a problem with the sand packing, so the
bunkers are soft. We only did greenside, so
we need to do fairway bunkers. So, do that,
then come in with an irrigation plan. It would
also be nice to have a Super 600, or large
capacity topdresser.

**ANYTHING DIFFERENT OR
UNIQUE YOU DO THAT COULD
BENEFIT OTHERS?** Coming up in the municipal golf course
world, starting at 9 hole course, learning to
do what you can with what you got. You're
grateful for what you get. You're hand
digging everything. That was a great way to
start in, to gain that perspective of what it
takes.



EQUIPMENT WANT: An out building for carts, we store carts here in the shop. Off of that probably put a chem room with water filling station, and a wash pad. I know how good it is here, and its mostly just luxury items at this point.

WHAT IS A CLASSIC MOVIE YOU RECMOMMEND TO OTHERS? Pulp Fiction, Goodfellas, Casino, and the Godfather. I am a movie buff, I keep a top 50 movies in my phone notes, and have my best movies from 2006 to present. When my wife and I got married, before we had kids, we never used to miss a movie premiere. I'm the right guy to talk about movies!

"My wife's name is Amber. She works as an RN/BSN, and we've been married 27 years in July. My son's name is Evan. He is 23 and attending the University of Iowa Studying Finance. My daughter's name is Emma. She just graduated on the 24th and is attending Western Technical College studying Business. Model Railroading is my hobby outside of golf, and spending time with family. Favorite teams are all Minnesota teams including the Gophers. I also am a LA Laker fan for the NBA."



FAVORITE VACATION SPOT?

We haven't done any overseas travel, hopefully going to Italy next year. We love going to Florida, Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, TN, I love our cabin in Grand Rapids area. We are Disney junkies too. Feet to the fire, probably Florida. But we've done 4-5 trips to Gatlinburg and it has been great for us. Need to do more local/regional trips, as I've never been to Mount Rushmore, Black Hills, so we need to take more local trips.

FAVORITE TASKS:

Changing cups. There's something about it, being still mobile, and you get to see every green. You get to see how players are taking care of them.



LEAST FAVORITE TASK: Raking bunker edges, getting up on the slopes. I get to be a perfectionist, I'm the worst guy ever on a bunker rake.

HAVE YOU PLAYED ANY FAMOUS GOLF COURSES? Got a list on my phone that I've played. Pinehurst, Atlanta Athletic Club, Streamsong, Bellerive, Settingdown Course. Lots of good courses in WI and MN I need to play.

WHO IS IN YOUR FOURSOME? My dad, who I lost in 2003. My son has worked his way into the foursome, and my brother. Family is everything, so that would be a good group.



**WHATS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE
YOU'VE RECEIVED IN
YOUR CAREER THAT STILL
RESONATES WITH YOU?**

Don't be afraid to pick up the phone. Don't be afraid to talk to people. Use your contacts, use others contacts, and get to know people. Reading people has helped me with Board of Director meetings. Just meeting people through people. People are willing to help, so don't close the book on people, use the contacts you have or could know. Make calls when you're on the road, that is a good time to talk with someone I haven't talked to in a while. Don't be afraid to ask for help, a letter of recommendation, and just never close those friendships off and keep relationships.

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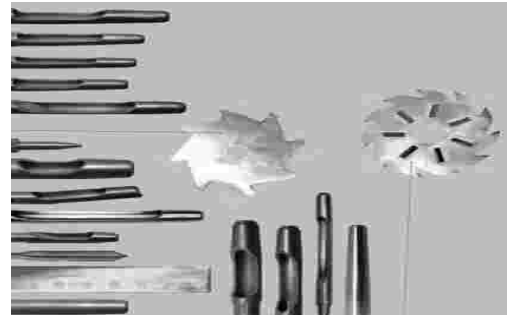
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INTRODUCING DOMINIC PETRELLA

Assistant Professor of Managed Turfgrass Systems
University of Minnesota

I am the new Assistant Professor of Managed Turfgrass Systems in the Department of Horticultural Science at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities . I wanted to share a little about myself, how I got to where I'm at today, and some of the plans that I have for turfgrass teaching, research, and Extension.

My Path Back to Turfgrass Science and University of Minnesota

I'm originally from Girard, Ohio, a small town near Youngstown, where golf is deeply rooted in the community. In the Mahoning Valley and Western Reserve region, golf isn't just a pastime for the rich, it's a shared, generational tradition. My family has

been playing the game since immigrating from Italy, and I grew up hearing stories about how they even sent my father golf equipment while he served in Vietnam. Golf, for us, is personal. It's woven into our identity, and likely into many of yours as well. If it wasn't for loving playing golf, I would not be where I am at today. I share this because I believe we

don't talk enough about the stories that inspire our passion for turfgrass science and management enough. There are so many young people out there who love golf or sports but have no idea that turfgrass management can be a career. I think our (your) stories can help more young people figure out what they want to do with their lives.

My own path was anything but linear. I earned a biology degree

from Youngstown State University with a pre-med focus, but after graduation, I realized my heart wasn't in medicine. Like many in our field, I stumbled into turfgrass science by accident. After a year of soul-searching following graduation (and putting in many hours at Toys R Us), I took a leap and enrolled at Ohio State University to study turfgrass science. At Ohio State, everything finally clicked for me, I was able to bring two things together that I've always

loved: biology and golf. Turfgrass biology really spoke to me - so much so that I devoted six years of my life to a Ph.D. focused on understanding how turfgrasses respond to light.

Upon completing my doctorate, I came to the University of Minnesota for a postdoctoral associate position with Dr. Eric Watkins. This was where I really learned how I could use my experience and knowledge on





turfgrass physiology to make a difference, linking physiology with breeding and turfgrass management. In 2021, I left for a position as an assistant professor of turfgrass management at Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI). At Ohio State University ATI, my primary job was to teach and train students to become turfgrass managers. I learned a lot in this role, further developed my teaching style, learned how to be a better mentor, and developed ideas on how

to get more young people interested in turfgrass related careers.

My Plans and Goals at University Minnesota

Now that I'm back in Minnesota, I have a lot of big plans and goals grounded in teaching, research, and Extension. My role is primarily teaching (60%), but my work spans all three areas, and they will inform one another.

Teaching: I will be revamping the undergraduate turfgrass curriculum. This will

include updating turfgrass management classes and working with Dr. Eric Watkins and others in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) to have multiple opportunities where students can learn more about turfgrass management and associated career opportunities. I will be developing a general education turfgrass centric course to try and reach more students outside of CFANS, and weave in information on careers in our industry.

There are numerous students out there like me (us) – they don't really know where they want to end up, like being outside and active, enjoy science, and are passionate about sports. A goal of mine is to try and fine these students, educate them about turfgrass science, connect them with job opportunities, connect them with a turfgrass network, and maybe they'll love the job enough to make it a career.

Research: My research will be focused on better understanding turfgrass responses to the environment, building better methods to measure these responses, and using this information to help breed better cultivars and adapt cultural management strategies. I plan to work in all aspects of plant and turfgrass physiology, but I am most passionate about plant responses to light. I will continue focusing on improving turfgrasses for foliar

shade (shade where light intensity is reduced, and the colors are filtered) and better understanding how light stresses interact with other stresses like drought. Beyond turfgrass physiology, I will also be embarking on research dedicated to better linking golfers and turfgrass management. For example, how much does the average golfers care about weeds? In this instance, we plan to survey golfers to discover how they feel about pests but also have them

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- 2 SAME VENUE!**
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- 4 LUNCH IS PROVIDED!**

hit golf shots in weedy patches and measure shot dynamics with a launch monitor. We can then use this data to see how much pests actually impact the game (i.e. shots spin more) and inform both golfers and golf course superintendents on what and when weeds should be controlled.

Extension: I aim to bridge my Extension program between my teaching and research and use both to guide the Extension work that I do. We will be developing more certificate courses, online and hybrid, to try and expand educational access to a broader group of stakeholders. I will especially focus on hybrid certification programs that have hands-on in-person components to help people build

skills. I plan to develop asynchronous online education programs for golfers and athletes and providing this tool to turfgrass managers to educate their clientele. The last big goal that I have is to connect the younger generation with turfgrass science. I plan to develop outreach programs for youth sports teams and junior golfer that connect the game with the science or management better. For example, a component of a junior golf tournament could have the kids help prepare the course in the morning, then compete that afternoon. That kind of hands-on experience can build a meaningful connection between the game and the science behind it.

Looking Ahead

It took me a long time, and a lot of detours, to discover that turfgrass science was where I belonged. Like many students, I spent years learning about “stuff” in school without ever being told how to apply it. For me, that “stuff” was biology and the application that I found was turfgrass science. I hope to help the younger generation find the connection between the “stuff” they enjoy learning about in school and how they can apply it in a career. I’m thrilled to be back in Minnesota and part of this community again. Whether you’re a superintendent, researcher, student, or passionate about lawns, I look forward to working with you, learning from you, and growing this program together.

UMN TURF BLOG



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MONDAY Pre-Conference Sessions:

PLT Relicensure and Pesticide Recertification will be available on Monday, January 19 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre.

TUESDAY, JAN. 20

Community day for these Villages with a full day of focused education. From trends to business strategies, find everything you need to thrive!



WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21

Dedicated trade show day!

TRADE SHOW
9:00am-3:30pm

BLOCK PARTY
3:30pm-5:30pm

THURSDAY, JAN. 22

Community day for these Villages with a full day of focused education, plus the trade show will be open in the morning!

TRADE SHOW
9:00am-12:00pm



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS NORTHERN GREEN 2026 SUPPORTERS:



**Thank you to our 2025 Rounds Fore Research
Supporting Courses and Superintendents.
Our 2025 R4R efforts and online auction raised
\$25,725 for UMN Turf Research!!**

GOLF COURSE

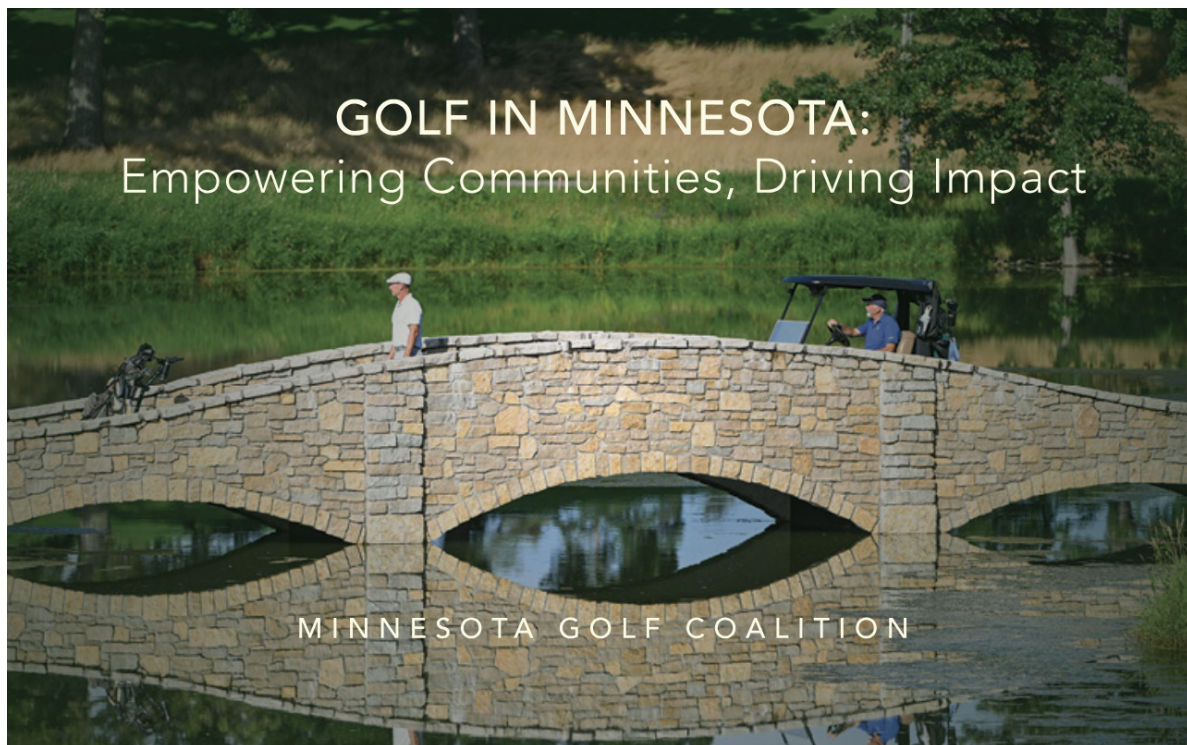
SUPERINTENDENT

Alexandria Golf Club	Donnacha O'Connor
Baker National Golf Course	Kyle Stirn
Bearpath Golf And Country Club	Jim Snell
Dacotah Ridge Golf Club	Cody Wersal
Eau Claire Golf & Country Club	Nick Peinovich
Giants Ridge Golf	Jeff Simondet
Golden Valley Country Club	David Phillips
Grand View Lodge	Mike Bohnenstingl
Hazeltine National Golf Club	Chris Tritabaugh
Indian Hills Golf Club	James Westendorf
Interlachen Country Club	Brian Boll
Legends Club	Zach Wignall
Mankato Golf Club	Chris Carpenter
Mendakota Country Club	Tom Schmidt
Minneapolis Golf Club	Jared Keller
North Oaks Golf Club	John Cameron
Northland Country Club	Jacob Ryan
Oak Ridge Country Club	Todd Kranz
Olympic Hills Golf Club	Jacob Schmitz
Oxbow Country Club	David Wood
Pebble Creek Golf Course	Jason Scharfencamp
Prestwick Golf Club	David Kazmierczak, CGCS
River Oaks Golf Course	Joel Hanson
Rochester Golf & Country Club	Logan Braun
Royal Golf Club	Mike Sonnek
Somerby Golf Club	Tyler Donaldson
Southview Country Club	Mike Paape

R4R Continued...

<u>GOLF COURSE</u>	<u>SUPERINTENDENT</u>
Spring Hill Golf Club	Tim Johnson
St Cloud Country Club	Troy Tschida
St. Croix National Golf Course	Will Reidel
Stoneridge Golf Club	Dan Kampa
The Jewel Golf Club	Lucas Grieves
The Legacy Courses At Craguns	Matt Mckinnon
The Links at Northfork	Robert Glavas
The Minikahda Club	Jeff Johnson
The Wilds Golf Club	Kris Johannsen
TPC - Twin Cities	Joe Rolstad
Wildflower Golf Course	Reed Bohm
Windsong Farm Golf Club	Jon Dailing

***CLICK ON THE PICTURE BELOW TO VIEW THE
MN GOLF HANDBOOK!***



FROM THE HIGH GRASS



HOW WILL THIS BE PERCEIVED?

I was at the University of Minnesota in 2009, working towards my Recreation degree, when the TV show *Parks & Recreation* debuted. As recreation students, my class and I were excited to see how our probable industry would be portrayed. We got together and watched the pilot episode in class one day. The initial response was rather tepid. We weren't thrilled, but the show eventually found its footing as many know, and it would go on to provide some accurate glimpses into the workings of a municipal department.

Now, there is a new golf show on Apple TV+ called

Stick. I find myself in a similar position, I wonder how they will portray golf in the current environment. Now it is not focused on turf management, but any portrayal of golf could have impacts on the entirety of the industry. Starring Owen Wilson, the shows first few episodes are a simple, light-hearted look at a has-been golfer teaching a young potential phenom. As of now, I don't see too much negative to our side of the game, but we will see how the season unfolds.

These portrayals of industry are important for us to be aware of, as the image of golf in society is

rather antiquated. Shows like *Stick* could be positive for golf, as golf is currently cool, or it could create fuel for those detractors that are waiting to pounce on any issue. I am constantly watching, waiting, for the next challenge facing golfs outward image.

At our most recent First Green event at Birnamwood Golf Course, we were lucky to have news crews from both Channels 5 and 9 attend. As we grow the First Green program in Minnesota, we want to highlight these events more, and we are grateful that they came out to learn about our program to educate students on

golf courses. In the back of my mind, I was also thinking, “how will the broader community perceive this?” It is hard to see a negative in a fun, educational field trip opportunity for students, but from my experience within Minneapolis and our advocacy efforts, there is always a way to turn those positives into negatives for someone.

This leads me to the recent article connecting a person’s living proximity to a golf course with increased likelihood of getting Parkinsons. I assume many of you have seen this article, as it has been getting traction both nationally and internationally. The report highlights the region around Rochester, which obviously hits a little too close to home. Currently, we have not seen much local news coverage of this research paper, but as mentioned, I am waiting for that to come.

GCSAA is aware of the issue and has created a

FAQ for our members, if you or someone needs further insight into the study. (That file is available to all GCSAA members after logging in to their website). Our colleagues at the UMN have reviewed the issue as well and followed up with the researchers to learn more about the objectives and considerations of the study. We will continue to monitor this research and the media response to it.

Unfortunately, we have become used to these specific, or possibly intentionally criticisms of golf and must be ready for any further efforts against the golf industry. Regardless of the facts and data of the current study, the headline is already damaging enough. Anyone who reads that headline will draw their own conclusions, and not enough will critically evaluate the information.

One of our goals as industry professionals must be to make sure we are actively doing everything

we can to be responsible stewards of our resources and environments. We must continue to be forward thinking and always work towards improving our operational efficiencies, so when these types of stories and studies gain national attention, we can present ourselves in a stronger position. One of my favorites sayings that applies to these situations, and we must always consider is: “We cannot just react emotionally, but must ensure we respond effectively.”

We all know that we are educated, trained, and experienced professionals, yet the broader community does not always give us that credibility. So, we must keep at it, and continue to exemplify our standards of professionalism, even if those outside the industry do not see it. We will continue to work towards a better story of golf, one that portrays the true realities of this industry of responsible, professional Golf Course Superintendents.