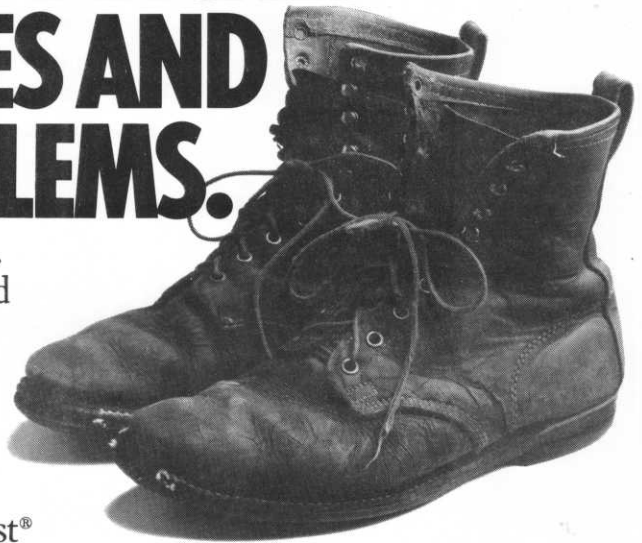


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# HOLE NOTES

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EDITOR: WARREN J. REBHOLZ  
6550 YORK AVENUE SOUTH  
SUITE 402  
EDINA, MINNESOTA 55435-2383  
PHONE: 612/927-4643

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: GUY R. GREEN  
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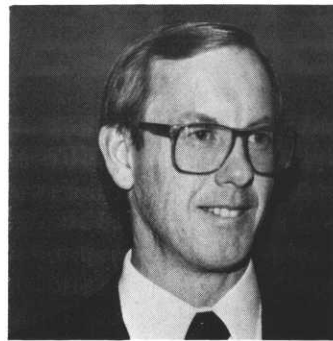
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FROM THE  
PRESIDENT'S  
DESK  
DOUG MAHAL

Season '87 is nearly history now. As one superintendent I know prefers to put it, "here come those Cala-Clor skies!" Most Minnesota golf courses stay open several days after the plows go on the county highway trucks. That's a real tribute to our hearty-souled Minnesota golfers. Eventually, it's one final flurry of outdoor activity and then the entire grounds staff experiences a welcome program change.

As stated many times, education is the prime purpose of MGCSA's existence. Our premier educational opportunity is coming right up December 2-4 at the Radisson St. Paul Hotel. Chairmen Jim Nicol, Rick Fredericksen and Fred Anderson have insured a top notch educational program for our annual conference. You won't want to miss the Friday evening banquet and "casino night" scheduled to close the festivities. The decor throughout the Radisson has had a facelift so I expect our accommodations to be even better than last year. Details and all registration materials will be in the mail soon. Do make early plans to attend.

Many thanks to superintendents Rick Smith and Tom Natzel for their hospitality during our October and November meetings at LeSueur Country Club and Burl Country Club. Fall can get pretty cool but not to the point which makes golf impossible. Your golf courses were great, guys. Good job!

This will be my last article as MGCSA president. Though the term is not quite over, I do think it's an appropriate time to say how impressed I am with the current board I've had the chance to work with. There is no task or committee assignment which does not require considerable time commitments so I must thank and congratulate each board member for his often unnoticed dedication to MGCSA.



## From The Lakes To The Mountains

James M. Latham, Director  
USGA Green Section  
Great Lakes Region

It's really too early to speculate on just what name tag will be placed on the golf/growing season. 1986 was the year of the Black Layer. Maybe 1987 will be called simply "The Longest". Golfers may actually wear themselves out if we are blessed with normal fall weather. Lord knows they are wearing out enough turf this year. But without them there wouldn't be a need for us. Just what the consequences will be depends on the quality and quantity of turf and soil rehabilitation provided this fall.

It's been a rather weird season. Lack of snowcover in many areas last winter cost

some courses a goodly amount of green grass this spring. The old fashioned techniques worked best to prevent desiccation. Greens were "adequately" top-dressed after the last application of snowmold preventers. Later, when no snow cover came, the thinking superintendents hauled water to keep some kind of moisture (ice, of course) on the surface. Cal Polsean, at Westward Ho, Sioux Falls recorded 400 man-hours were needed to supplement the 0.5" of precipitation over the winter.

Winter play got a good test at the Minnehaha Club there. They recorded 700 rounds of golf over the winter with no apparent turf problems on sand topdressed greens by early June. But, play had been stopped on March 1 and not resumed until the greens were fully thawed. Superintendent Gene Reiter hauled some water, too.

On the other side of the coin, a Minnesota club had no such restriction, and in mid-June the footprints of two golfers were still visible (dead grass), complete with heel and toe prints. Just two people playing one day interfered with the play of the rest of the membership for over two months!

The grass greened up early this year, but didn't get any real growth until the warm rains came along in May. The primary spring complaint was rough greens. The 75 degree days were balanced by the 35 degree nights to get a zero score on spreading, fill-in growth. Some courses, though, were still recovering from the fall rains - like the washout at Kohler and the 30" rain that fell at Bay City, Michigan. Now, the Minneapolis/St. Paul area is starting over again with 21" within 7 days beginning July 27 (Interlachen gauge).

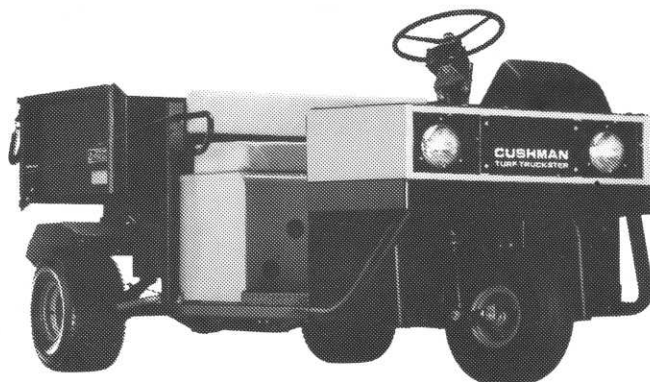
This season has been, in all but a few areas, a report of the effectiveness of irrigation systems. It should be a great selling year for multiple row irrigation. Between those toasty roughs came the centerline slops and the occasionally Pythium spots and ruts.

Enough talk about the weather. The lightweight, floating head mowers are getting the best of Poa annua in fairways. The bent has really moved out this year, especially where superintendents have been

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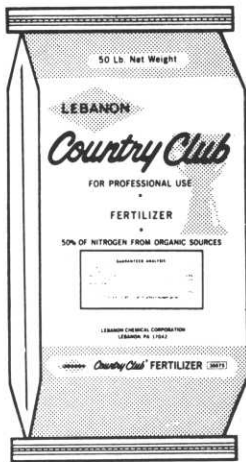
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able to adequately control the irrigation. Where the bent is well scattered through an area it can do its own thing without chemical help, but with patience.

Plant growth regulators have taken up the anti-Poa fight with a vengeance and are performing very well in bent, blue and ryegrass fairways. The only ill effects noted so far occurred when a crosswind blew one material around quite a bit and when a heavy rain washed another application into surface drainage areas. Good results were obtained on spring applications to fall seeded bent following turf eradication. There are still lessons to be learned, but the outlook is good. And there are other materials yet to be fully tested in this area.

None of these things are free and now that budgeting time is nearly upon us. let's look at some numbers. I note from the new Pannell-Kerr-Forster report that the maintenance cost per hole on Midwest courses in 1986 was \$19,610. That's about \$353,000 for 18 holes, a 9% rise over 1985. The national average was \$21,101 per hole, up 7.8% from the previous year.

Other areas: East \$17,607 per hole, up 11.8%; South, \$20,568 per hole, up 7.8%; the far West, \$28,177 per hole, up 3.5%. The numbers are interesting, but their meaning depends on what one is trying to prove.

An entomological note: The mild winter certainly helped increase the golf course bug problem this year. Just note the number of strange yellowed blotches on greens with a perfect green outline of a foot right in the middle. It's been a great year for cutworms and ants, too.

The Good Turn of the Year: Superintendent Vern Burks in Great Falls hired 30 Boy Scouts to transplant aerator plugs from the surviving parts of greens to the aeration holes on high mounds where the turf was lost to desiccation. His green cover, by the way, was a hydromulch fiber that had been successful for the previous nine years. This time it blew off.

The observation of the season: The development of grain on fairways from tee toward the green which can be worrisome at the start of a backswing. Golf cars. So



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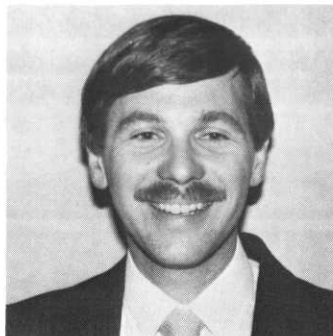
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get out the vertical mowers to go with the aerators.

And the worry of the year: Spots on some greens that look very much like the C-15 disease, except the grass isn't C-15. At this writing, tests are being rechecked at UW and MSU.

Remember When? USGA Championships were played on greens mowed at 3/16 inch - only 10 years ago at the Women's Open at Hazeltine. Maintenance programs have since then given the players the best conditioned golf courses they have ever seen. There are two operations responsible for most of this - light and frequent topdressing with properly sized sandy material (straight or mixed) and lightweight mowing of fairways. Both have their drawbacks but none are insurmountable. Both require additional operations but higher quality usually demands a higher price. Both demand enlightened operational management and that's why continuing education is so important to all of us today.



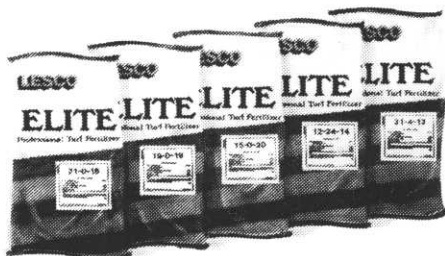
## EDITOR'S CORNER

TOM FISCHER

The close of another golf season is upon us. I am sure everyone is looking forward to a more relaxed atmosphere that the winter months bring.

A very important event took place last month. The Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association held its first annual Research Golf Tournament. Nineteen clubs helped sponsor the event by donating tee times. Southview Country Club graciously hosted the banquet. This tournament was for any golf course, public or private, having players who wanted to participate in a challenging event and raise money for the research trust fund. This year's participation was fair with

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the tournament raising \$2,030.00, a good beginning balance for the fund.

Next year we plan to make a few changes in the format. We would like to make aware the fact that everyone is eligible to play. These people would include managers, golf pros, superintendents, men's club members, people from private clubs and public golf courses as well. The tournament day will be one of good competition and camaraderie among all participants.

We would like to thank Richard Smith of LeSueur Country Club for hosting the October meeting. Turf Supply sponsored a great educational program.

Please don't forget to send in your December conference registration as soon as possible. We are looking forward to another great winter seminar. See you there.

---

## THANK YOU

The Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association would like to express its sincere thanks to the membership and staff of the nineteen clubs that donated use of their courses for our First Annual Turfgrass Research Benefit Tourney. The participating clubs were:

EDINA COUNTRY CLUB  
GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB  
HAZELTINE NATIONAL GOLF CLUB  
HILLCREST COUNTRY CLUB  
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INDIAN HILLS GOLF CLUB  
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