

Our Watered-Down Game

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Turn Off the Sprinklers and Play Some *Real* Golf

By Brad Faxon

Golf in America is too green.

I'm serious. What American golf needs is a good old-fashioned water shortage. Green is pretty. It's beautiful. It's pleasing to look at. I like green. But it doesn't make golf courses play the way they should—the way they were meant to play.

Green means lush. Green equals soft. And soft isn't good. Over-watered golf courses have become standard in America. The word "roll" isn't even in an American player's vocabulary anymore. I think that's unfortunate. The scope of the problem, however, goes way beyond the setup of PGA Tour courses.

America's obsession with green has changed golf. The way American courses are maintained has changed the way equipment is made, the way courses are designed and the way people swing.

Look at the courses. All of a sudden, we're playing courses where you've got to hit the ball up in the air and stop it. Architecture went from Tillinghast, Mackenzie and Ross to Nicklaus and Dye. The game went from horizontal to vertical.

Look in your bag. Perimeter-weighted clubs make the ball go higher. (The better to play those new courses.) Square grooves make the ball spin and stop quicker out of the rough. And then there's the lob wedge. (The better to escape Pete Dye death-bunkers.) The old Brits never had an L-wedge. They never needed one off those tight lies.

Look at the swings. We went from swings like Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson to more upright swings like Tom Watson and Jack Nicklaus, guys who hit the ball real high. The current popular swing has become more upright.

Go back to the history of golf in Scotland. Courses were just laid out on the ground somewhere near the coast. They had no irrigation. They relied totally on the weather. Golf was played along the ground. The elements made the conditions tough. And you had a sand-based soil that was easy to keep firm. There were a lot of tight, hard fairway lies and you had to bump the ball along the ground and allow for roll.

I'm not blaming American superintendents. If there's a brown spot on a country club these days, the greens committee calls an emergency meeting. I think the club members see the Bob Hope Classic or the Masters on television and say, "That's what we ought to have."

So their courses look great but they don't play the way they should. I grew up on a classic old Donald Ross course,

Rhode Island CC. The first hole is a short par 4, open in front of the green. When I started out as a caddie, the members would hit a 5- or 6-iron, land it 10 or 15 yards short of the green and let it bounce onto the putting surface. That's how you played. You used the contours and allowed for them.

When I went back to play there during college, maintenance had changed the course. I hit 5-irons out of the rough that backed up. Balls stuck on the greens. The course was so much softer and easier. People at the club said, "Brad, this is the best this course has ever been." I said, "No, this is the *greenest* it's ever been." And they didn't know what I was talking about.

Green is OK if it's firm. That isn't usually the case in the U.S., where over-watering reigns. Warwick Hills, home of the Buick Open, is one of the longest courses we play and always gives up some of the lowest scores. I played there Monday after the tournament and talked to the head pro. He told me the superintendent is scared to death the tour will starve his course and he won't be able to keep it green after the tournament. So he drenches it for two weeks before, but we had rain this year, our drives plugged and we played preferred lies the first few rounds.

You want to know why foreign players are dominating professional golf? Because they play firm courses in the wind and still play bump-and-run shots and have a lot of imagination. American players have had those shots taken from them. The courses are too lush.

Remember what Jose Maria Olazabal did at the final hole of the Masters? He pulled his iron shot and it ran down the slope. He was past the hump in the middle of the green. He played what I think was the shot of the tournament, a bump-and-run down the hill, and saved par. It was an incredible shot.

If that had been the Buick Open, say, he would've just pulled out a sand wedge, flipped it up and stuck it next to the flagstick. Where's the challenge in that?

The United States GA has the right idea. When it was deciding whether to go back to Newport CC, a true links, for the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Amateur, the club's membership was in favor of the idea and said, "Don't worry, we'll make sure you get a sprinkler system in by 1995." The USGA told them, "If you put in a sprinkler system, we're not going to hold the event there."

That's the way golf was meant to be. Now, what do you say we turn off the sprinklers and play some *real* golf?



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Colorscapes that provide seasonal color are a good way to draw attention to the property.

Two to six rotations of plants during a season provide the longest and best display. The length of the growing season and visual impact desired from flower beds determine how many rotations to make during one season.

Beds near entrances and around signs require more rotations because of their high visibility. Parking lots and areas with less visibility require as little as one or two plantings. For many properties, three rotations can be used. In the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast, the season begins with spring-flowering bulbs, which were planted the previous fall. The favorite spring bulb is the tulip.

Shortly after spring bulbs have finished flowering, they should be removed from the bed in preparation for the second rotation, summer annual installation. Daffodils can be dug and moved to other places on the property, but tulips do not reliably perform well the second year and should be discarded. Summer annuals such as begonias, impatiens and periwinkle perform well through the summer if they are properly watered and fertilized. Proper watering and fertilization help ensure that plants receive essential nutrients to keep them vigorous and strong. Some annuals need pinching back, deheading and/or pesticide treatments to keep them looking their best. Such plant maintenance helps ensure that your colorscape remains healthy.

The third rotation should be planted in mid- to late August. Plants that perform well in cooler weather, such as chrysanthemum, marigolds and flowering cabbage or kale,

Grounds & Facility Expo

A Smashing Success!!

The Green Industry gathered this past August 3 and 4 for the annual Grounds & Facility Expo at Resurrection Cemetery in Mendota Heights to view the very latest in grounds maintenance equipment and supplies.

The two-day event not only included vendor displays but also featured tree climbing exhibitions, chainsaw art, golf clinics and an answer booth manned by the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

Attendance, though hampered by heat on the first day and cool and misty weather on day two, was larger than expected by expo organizers. As MGCSA President Joe Moris said, “I was impressed... nicely set up, easy access... it was great!”

This event was the first effort of the Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation to host an industry-wide event with sponsorship and direction provided by the Minnesota Park Supervisor's Association.

are typically used. Sometimes only part of the flower bed is replaced with new plants.

Pansies can also be attractive in the fall, especially in the South. Pansies can be planted in the Southeast and Southwest from Oct. 1 to Oct. 15. They are popular in colorscaping in southern states but have not been used much in northern states.

Most northern colorscapers plant pansies in the spring instead of fall because of concerns of winter plant mortality. Grounds managers at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan, however, have been successful with fall-planted pansies (Sept. 15 to Oct. 1).

After these plants have finished flowering, spring-flowering bulbs can be planted. Bulbs can be planted as late as soil can be worked.

When designing a colorscape, keep in mind that large groupings of color are best. A kaleidoscope mixture, while more typical of nature, does not provide a strong focal point for the viewer.

Using several rotations can help ensure that flower beds retain high visual impact throughout the growing season. Careful selection and planting, as well as proper care, of annual plants can help your grounds remain vibrantly colorful from early spring to late fall.

—Davey Groundskeeper Care



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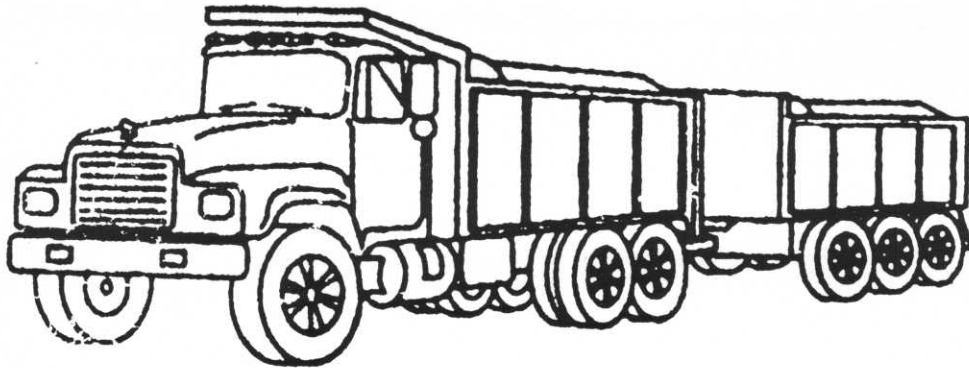
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Take a Load Off Of Your Back

Most of you are aware that there is a right way and wrong way to lift something. However, back injuries and hernias continue to be a major problem—possibly because these injuries often occur over long periods of improper lifting. For example, workers might not feel immediate pain over one box lifted incorrectly, but after lifting many boxes incorrectly for days, months and even years, the chance of injury multiplies.

Here are some steps for minimizing your risk while lifting and carrying heavy or awkward items. *If you are experiencing back pain or hernia, refrain from lifting heavy objects.*

1. Before lifting the object, look it over to determine if you can lift it alone, or if you should have someone help you. A good rule of thumb is: When in doubt, get help! If the item is in a package or box, be sure that the box is stable and sealed. Falling items often land on the feet of the person lifting.

2. Look over the area where you're going to be carrying the object to make sure it's clear of obstacles. Be sure to check for, and avoid, slick or wet surfaces.

3. Get a good footing close to the load to be lifted. Place your feet 8 to 12 inches apart.

4. While keeping your back straight, bend your knees to grasp the load. Bend your knees outward and straddle the load somewhat.

5. Get a firm grip on the load. If you have to handle the load awkwardly, then it isn't ready to lift. (For example, if you need to wrap your arm underneath the load so contained materials don't fall out, secure the load first. See item 1.)

6. Remember, you want to keep the load close to your body as you lift and carry.

7. Lift carefully and smoothly by straightening your legs. Do not jerk the load up, since the weight could suddenly transfer from your legs to your back.

8. If you are carrying the load in areas of pedestrian traffic, be sure to give vocal warning that you are approaching. This will ensure that fellow workers will not bump into you. If you are walking around corners and blind spots, be sure to make wide turns so you can see someone coming into your path.

9. Use your feet to change your direction. Do not twist your body, as this will

shift the burden of the weight to your back.

10. When you reach your destination and are ready to set the load down, simply reverse the lifting steps. Keep your back straight and the load close to your body. Slowly bend your knees. Watch your fingers as you set the load down. If you are setting a load down onto a raised surface such as a table or bench, set the object just over the edge and slide the rest of the load onto the surface.

Lifting Above the Waist

If you are lifting an item above the waist:

- First, follow proper lifting procedures.
- Rest the load on a firm object for support, change your

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U of M Update

By
Bradley Pedersen
University of Minnesota



Fall quarter is again up and running at the University of Minnesota. Fall is especially busy as a new crop of freshmen have arrived and the upper class students are scrambling to get all their required classes and credits in on schedule for graduation.

These days an undergraduate class is a very diverse group. About 40 percent are women, about 40 percent are 'older' (+26), about 15 percent already have a bachelor's degree in hand, and about 10 percent are fully employed in their chosen field and have returned for more information.

The area of Horticulture that I teach in, Environmental Horticulture, is also very diverse — that's good. Today's curriculum must serve the industry of the future. That means a broad scientific base, lots of business and lots of communication. The commodity (technical) courses that provide industry specifics are as important as ever, but, a very important piece of that is how and where to find the information they need. As the information 'bank' continues to grow, the process involved in finding it becomes even more important.

The Department of Horticultural Science has prepared a brochure that outlines the options available to prospective students. If you or someone you know is considering a course or career in turf or grounds, nursery landscape design and implementation or floriculture, call the department, 612-624-5300 and ask for the brochure *DISCOVER HORTICULTURE* or pick up a copy at the University booth at the December conference.

* * * *

Cynthia Ash, Extension Plant Pathologist, University of Minnesota, in cooperation with plant pathologists at North Dakota State University and South Dakota State University has published a *Color Diagnostic Guide to Diseases of Trees and Shrubs*. This is a fast, symptom-specific reference to 90 of the most common regional problems. Call your local extension educator to get a copy.

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Pesticide Applicator Training dates for Turf and Ornamentals have been set for 1995. These dates re-certify you for 1996. (Remember the re-certification you receive at this year's MTGF/MGCSA December Conference is for 1995). Help us pass the word to all turf professionals that they will now be able to receive their re-certification at next year's MTGF/MGCSA Greater Minnesota Turf and Grounds Conference and Show.

The 1995 re-certification dates are:

Commercial and Non-commercial applicators: Jan. 11, 12,

13, 1995, MNLA Convention and Trade Show, Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minn.

Commercial applicators: Feb. 6 or 7, 1995, Earle Brown Center, St. Paul Campus.

Non-Commercial applicators: Feb. 14 or 15, 1995, Earle Brown Center, St. Paul Campus.

Commercial and Non-commercial applicators: Feb. 22, 1995, Holiday Inn, Mankato, Minn.

Commercial and Non-commercial applicators: Dec. 11, 1995, MTGF/MGCSA Greater Minnesota Turf and Grounds Conference and Show, Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minn.

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The MTGF/MGCSA planning committee for the **GREAT MINNESOTA TURF AND GROUNDS CONFERENCE AND SHOW** in conjunction with the **67TH MINNESOTA GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS' ANNUAL MEETING** has been working very hard to put together a *fantastic* December conference and show.

The committee has operated with three major goals in mind. First, to bring you a state conference as good as you could find anywhere in the country. Secondly, to develop a program that fits the educational needs of all professionals in the turf and grounds industry. Thirdly, to do all this at a cost that nearly everyone can afford. I believe they have met their goals.

Now, we need your help. For a conference and show of this caliber to be successful, we need to reach a wide range of turf and grounds businesses and departments. This is especially important, and especially difficult, as this is the first year of a multi-association conference. *Many of the allied associations in the MTGF have not had the opportunity to attend a major conference and show.* We are asking you to contact the turf and grounds businesses and departments in your area. Share information about this year's conference and show and let them know how beneficial past conferences have been to you. You might even suggest ways for them to justify their attendance. Help the MTGF/MGCSA planning committee make this as successful an event for all turf professionals as it has been for the MGCSA in the past.

* * * *

This month's feature article is contributed by Robert Mugaas, Hennepin County Extension Educator for the Minnesota Extension Service. Bob is also a very active member on the University Advisory Committee to the Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation.

Water Conservation and Turfgrass

By Robert Mugaas

Extension Educator - Horticulture

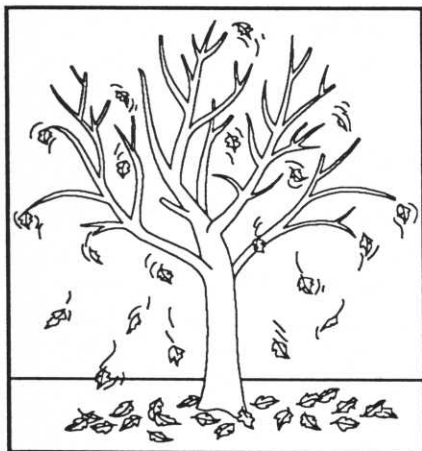
Minnesota Extension Service - Hennepin County

It is unfortunate when one element of our landscape (turf) gets pitted against another element (trees and shrubs) on the basis of its appropriateness in the landscape. This is often what happens when it comes to environmental issues

(Continued on Page 25)

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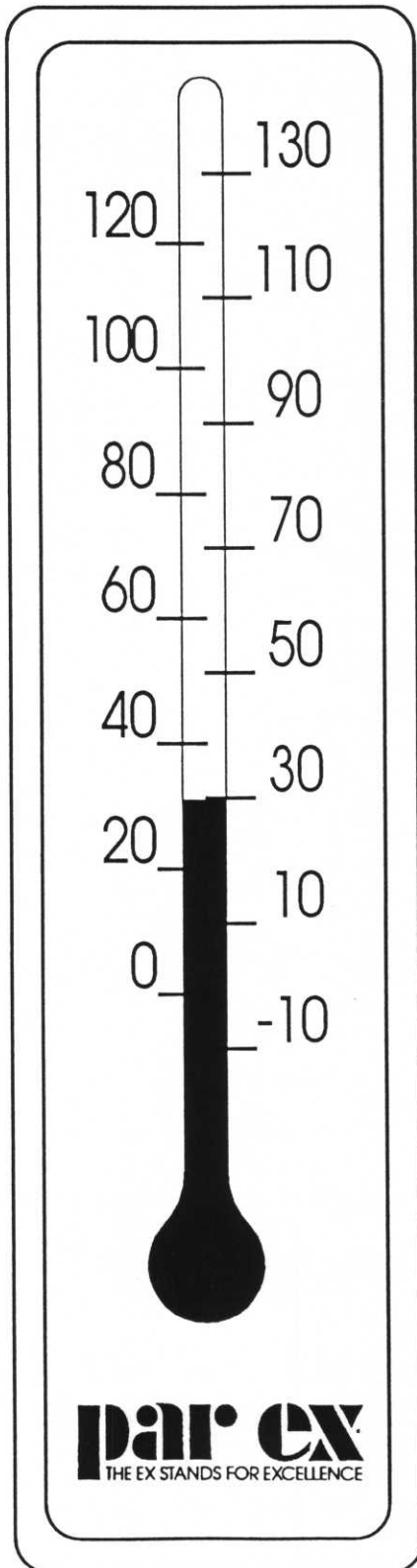
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