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# HOLE NOTES

Official Publication  
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## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT'S DESK

### National Show in Florida Was A Nice Respite From the Frozen Tundra



As winter loses its grip, we look forward to another golf season. The GCSAA National Conference and Trade Show in Orlando was a nice respite from the tundra and gave hope that we would again see green grass soon.

Educational opportunities were again the keystone to this year's show from multiple seminars, to getting a first hand view of all the new products and equipment, to comparing experiences with fellow superintendents, and developing ways to incorporate the latest research into our golf courses. The MGCSA reception on Friday night was a great chance to socialize with fellow members and meet spouses and families. A big thanks to our associate members for their sponsorship and to Butch Greeninger for setting up the details and arrangements for this reception.

\* \* \* \*

**Coming up in March**, we have a couple of super educational seminars available to the MGCSA members. The Mini-Seminar on March 13 concentrates on employee and employer relationships bookended with agronomic talks. On March 14 & 15 a two-day seminar is being offered by the GCSAA called "Design, Construction and Renovation for IPM." Golf course architect Micheal Hurdzan leads this outstanding and informative seminar. Remember you don't have to be a GCSAA member to sign up for this seminar. Call 1-800-472-7878 to register for this seminar.

As you can see we have a lot of educational vehicles available for us this spring. In turn, we must also continue to educate the golfers and the members of our clubs. Two great media venues to make them more aware of our profession and responsibilities are ESPN's "Par for the Course" and USGA's "Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program." Please contact myself or the MGCSA office for more details. Another way that MGCSA reaches the golfing public is by having a booth at "The Great Minnesota Golf Show" staffed by superintendents.

\* \* \* \*

**The GCSAA membership approved some new by-laws** this year in Orlando pertaining to chapter affiliation, dual membership and Assistant Superintendent classifications. These by-laws all passed by a wide margin. The chapter affiliation by-law insures tax and insurance compliance between national and local chapter. The key details to the dual membership by-law affect only Class A and B members. The definitions of Class A, B and C members for both our chapter (MGCSA) and the GCSAA are the same after we passed the MGCSA by-laws at our December annual meeting. The new membership definitions will be in the new MGCSA roster this spring. The GCSAA dual membership by-law only affects **new Class A & B members after July 1, 1997** and requires that new members join both the MGCSA and the GCSAA. All Class A and B members who are currently MGCSA members in good standing or those which join the MGCSA prior to July 1997 will not be required to join both associations.

Class C (Assistant Superintendents) membership, again relating to MGCSA's amended by-law definitions, dues will be half the amount of Class A and B dues in the GCSAA. However, your right to vote at the national level will be lost. Your right to vote on the state level (MGCSA) will continue to be allowed. I have attempted to condense these by-law changes and will be happy to answer any further questions about them.

*(Continued on Next Page)*

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## President's Message—

*(Continued from Page 3)*

The MGCSA is continuing to pursue association health insurance, so please fill out and return any insurance related questionnaires or forms as we continue on this venture.

\* \* \* \*

Your club should have also received a request for four tee times in the MGCSA Turf Tourney on June 10-14. Please contact Fred Taylor with your date and tee times.

\* \* \* \*

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture will again be running the Waste Pesticide Program with collection sites scheduled for counties north of the Twin Cities this spring. This is a great program to responsibly

dispose of any waste pesticides you have at no cost. Call the MDA at 1-800-657-3986 to register your products and for a list of collection sites and dates in your area.

\* \* \* \*

In closing, my sympathy goes out to Randy Nelson's family. Randy was a friend and mentor to many people in the golf course industry...we'll miss you and God Bless. — James D. Gardner, CGCS

*President*

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# The BIG Mini

March 13 at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Minnetonka

The March 13th Mini-Seminar is in production!!!  
**Our Keynote Speaker is Vic Osteen** at 1:00 p.m.  
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Vic is juggling a successful career, graduate education and life. Today, his skills as a professional speaker, trainer and consultant are allowing thousands to enjoy more productive lives.

Vic has over 20 years in the "Green Industry" as an employee, owner and educator. He says "I've seen the good, the bad, and the unbelievable." He is a

degreed horticulturalist from Oklahoma State University and obtained a Masters degree in Trade and Industrial Education. In 1989 he became the director of the Landscape & Golf Course Management program at Rogers State College. Vic is known as "Mr. Greenthumb" and heard weekly on a radio call-in show.

His purpose at the BIG Mini is to teach people how to enjoy more productive professional and personal lives.

Also joining us fresh off the USGA Green Section Tour is **Mr. Robert Vavrek, Jr.**, Great Lakes Region Agronomist. Bob's view of the weather problems and their consequences in 1995 might make us feel better. Experience is the great teacher and Bob's experiences are always interesting and enlightening.

**Dr. Phil Larson** from the University of Minnesota will have his views on the Turf Diseases we experienced last summer. He is, also, involved in the Rosemount Educational Project. This will be an experiment we can all get excited about. Our profession, our leadership, our show case for our lives.

The GCSAA will be represented by **Tommy D. Witt**, CGCS. Tommy is the Golf Course Superintendent at Wynstone Golf Club and a director in our national association. Tommy will be here to answer the question, "What do I get for my dues? eh." and "Can Minnesota have your hockey team?"

**Bruce Anderson**, PGA Golf Professional/Manager at River Oaks Golf Club, is the head of the Education Committee of the Minnesota Section of the PGA. Bruce en-

thusiastically accepted our invitation to speak on his view of "Team Work, the Pros, Supers and Managers have one job!"

**Don Wohlenhaus** is from Buffalo, Minn. He works for the Center for Personnel Development. As superintendents, we rely on eager employees to perform difficult duties under stressful situations over extended periods of time. How do we find and keep the good ones and feed their enthusiasm? Don will have the answers.

The BIG Mini will offer timely information that is sure to grab your interest. Plan to attend by sending in your early registration, TODAY!!

— Pat Walton, CGCS, Rolling Green C.C.  
Leif Erickson, The Scotts Company  
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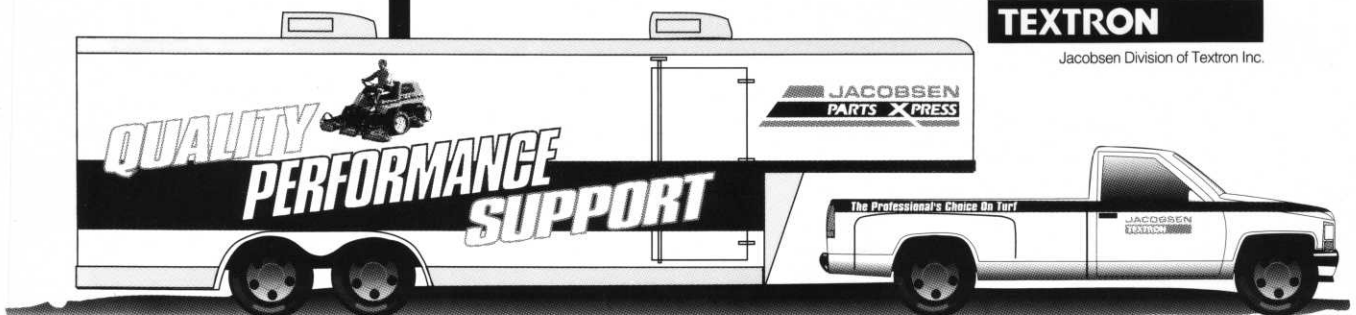


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# Good Friend

"Hey, this is your Good Friend D.K., looks like we're playing phone tag again. I'll be home about 8:30, after church choir, I'd like to talk to you, call when you can." January 25.

I left another message on his machine about 11 a.m. the next morning. I didn't feel, or hear the urgency in his message, and he never got mine. January 26.

As I sit in this funk of emotional loss, I am surrounded by the huge technological advances of our lifetime. I can contact nearly anyone at anytime for any reason and they can get back to me via E-mail, modem, answering machine, voice-mail or fax. However, there is one message I will never be able to tell Randy, the one thing I should have told him years ago.

**Not so long ago, our friendship wasn't left on machines.** A smile went with a greeting but the smile possessed the meaning. A handshake was firm and held long and no words were needed. Many dawn hours passed as we drove in excited silence to our favorite hunting places, and the wind was the only sound as it passed around the truck and from the dog. His sheepish grin was his apology for making birdie on the 18th for the win, again. These are the communications that had value and remain priceless today. No matter how hard I work the machines around me, they will never be able to communicate what the heart feels, nor the memories we had planned to make.

We gave Randy a lot of nicknames, "D.K." was an old CB name from the '70s, "Click" was his hunting name and "Slim" was his weight class. He recognized any friend's voice no matter what we called him. Strangely, I can never remember him using any of these names, before that last message.

**We were shirt tail cousins, but I considered him a brother in every way.** We had the good fortune to have families that belonged to the Austin Country Club, and at very young ages we became "dew golfers." Bob Carlson let us keep our clubs in the caddy shack where we could climb through the window in the early morning and get started playing in the dew.

We caddied a lot then and decided to go into business together shining shoes at the club. We were 11 and the club gave us a closet to get started in, and Randy's father, Don, built us a buffing machine. When business was slow, we hit lots of golf balls, retrieved them and hit them again. He had that same smooth swing, even then, and he could putt!

Our golf kept us together all our lives. We worked on the course at ACC for Irv Novak. Our first job was to dig, by hand, the two side bunkers on what now is the third hole. The trailer we loaded had steel wheels and Irv could hear that squeaky old thing every time we would dump it.

Randy thought it would make a good flower garden, and today, it sits just off the 11th tee, buried to the axle in soil and flowers.

Through high school and junior college, we won two Minnesota State team titles and finished second once (my fault). Randy was the competitor. He was unpretentious; he performed with humility and sportsmanship. He loved golf, it was never a game; it was life.

After junior college, Randy went to the University of Minnesota for a short time but the best school for turf in his mind was Penn State University where he graduated with Honors. After graduation, Randy went back to work for Irv Novak in Fargo, North Dakota. He met Julie there. It was 1974 in Alexandria, in the middle of the winter. Mike Nelson and I stood up with him on one of his happiest days. Soon after that, Randy got his first Super job at Owatonna Country Club, where his profession rooted and his obsession with perfection built his reputation.

He built a family, too. Erica, now a junior, and Drew, his enthusiastic son, is a 7th grader. Randy brought Drew along every time we hunted this fall, and there were some bonding memories developed. Drew will be on my call list for opening day pheasants, forever.

We often talked about building our own course and in 1991 he got his opportunity. The Willingers Golf Club in Northfield is a wonderful course and Randy poured his profession and his heart into its refinements. With one success comes opportunity and Dean Hartle, from Owatonna, wanted to build Hidden Creek Golf Club on his farm just east of town, right in Randy's backyard. It was a perfect fit. Randy was so excited. I had never seen him so directed and happy. He was building greens, buildings, bridges and loving the work.

Something else was building, which we will never know about, nor understand, and I hate it for taking my Good Friend, our brother. Randy left behind many friends and memories, and we will always be haunted by "If I had's" or "what ifs."

There must be some allergies in the air as I feel him near me always, now. I know Randy would have liked to thank everyone for their friendship through all the years in our profession and maybe that is what his last message was meant to be.

If I had one more chance to grasp his hand, I would remind him of the riches of his life, and the love that surrounded him. The most precious of moments are those spent together and the pain of loss is the greatest when there is no recourse. His message on the 25th is quite clear now. "*Good Bye Good Friends, I Love You.*"

So our lives go on in memory, Good Friend, good bye.

— Leif Erickson



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# ICE ALERT

By Don White, Brad Pedersen & Troy Carson  
*University of Minnesota*

When we left for Orlando and the GCSAA meetings, there was little, if any, ice on the turf, just lots of dense snow. During the time we were gone, however, a substantial (up to 2") ice cover had developed. This happened even in some places with good surface drainage. So it is important that you evaluate the situation, at least on greens and tees, so that you can develop a strategy to deal with the situation if ice has formed.

This note will be primarily in the form of a discussion because every situation is going to be different. And, we are not sure that there is much that should be done for a while. We know that different turfgrass species will tolerate ice cover for different lengths of time.

In fact, under extremely cold conditions and while the soil is frozen, ice can be somewhat protective by limiting the intensity of cold that plants are exposed to and by protecting the turf from rapid changes in temperature. And for this reason, it may be important to leave the ice in place until just before things start to melt.

Because this ice formation is recent, one could expect that the critical exposure time may not be reached for some time yet. Most observations indicate that damage is most likely to take place during the transition of winter to spring when temperatures fluctuate widely above and below freezing and melt water is abundant.

We also need to consider the kind of ice we are dealing with. Although there are many ways to describe ice, a two level description is convenient for our situation and fits with ice commonly found over turf. However, each results in a different condition and requires a different response. 1) White ice is less dangerous because it is filled with air bubbles and usually allows for gas exchange. 2) The more dangerous ice is "black" or "clear" ice, which is a dense clear ice that can be seen through and has few bubbles. This ice can restrict gas exchange resulting in dead turf plants. When black ice is found, it is normally important to create air passages through it. This can be accomplished by spreading Milorganite or other dark material over the surface, if the ice is not too thick. Or by cracking or breaking up the ice to allow for air passage. This is critical just before the ice starts to melt.

Most of the damage to turf appears to take place during the transition of winter to spring and the freeze-thaw cycles that result in exposure of crowns to melt water and above freezing temperatures during the day and freezing temperatures during the night. Under these conditions, crowns and annual bluegrass, as well as other grasses, when exposed to free water can become hydrated. Hydrated

crowns are very vulnerable to freezing damage at temperatures that would not normally bother the turf plants. Crown hydration takes place at above freezing temperatures and when accompanied by exposure to temperatures in the low 20°F range can kill plants by freezing and macerating the crown tissue.

**The most critical thing at this point** is to reduce the potential for exposure of turf to free water (melt water). This means that we need to ensure that surface drainage is operating at the best possible level. It also means that we can expect to lose turf wherever water accumulates, in depressions, behind ice dams, in the low places, etc. It is imperative that the melt water be removed from the site immediately or that the snow or ice be removed prior to melting.

Anything you can do to enhance surface drainage, including physical removal of ice or snow, should help. *Please read on before running out to remove snow and ice right now.*

So after all this, what should we do? Frankly, I'm not sure, because so much depends on the weather (and we all know how fickle weather can be in Minnesota) but I will share some observations that I hope will be helpful.

1. If everything goes wrong, like it might, conditions are right for substantial damage to many grass species this spring, but especially the annual types of *Poa annua*, perennial ryegrasses and tall fescues.
2. Temperatures over the next few days are predicted to be substantially above freezing which can be expected to result in substantial melt water.
3. In addition, rainfall is predicted to accompany the thaw.
4. The soil is still frozen and ice on the surface can be expected to intercept water from rainfall or snow melt for a while.
5. We still have substantial opportunity for cold temperatures and more snow before the thaw.
6. If we experience rainfall in the next few days and the ice maintains its integrity, the ice may protect the surface from free water. In addition, if we experience substantial snowfall before the real thaw, having the ice on the green may actually help in the snow removal process (which ultimately removes melt water from the greens or tees.)

With the above in mind, I am inclined to wait this out a little longer and be prepared to do all that I can to remove the potential melt water as run-off, snow or ice just before or at the start of soil thawing.\*

However, if we end up with no snow cover and "black

*(Continued on Page 29)*



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