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Official Publication
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From Your President's Desk

Use of Phosphorus Fertilizers Will Be Issue for Legislators



The new board has had it's first meeting and by the time you get this we will probably have had our second. The transition of committee chairs has gone smoothly and the committees are hard at work completing their needed tasks. The focus of the board is the budget for fiscal 2000/2001. We tend to get the budget done just in time for its start, so we are trying to get this task completed before we all get too busy.

The business office is currently updating our database system so if any of your personal information has changed or you have a new e-mail address please call Scott and let him know. Once the new system is in place we will be better able to customize our mailings or possibly cut down on mailings through e-mail mailings instead. Watch for the changes.

Many of you may have heard the discussion on talk radio and the articles printed in the papers touting the detriments that golf courses pose to the environment. Some of our members wrote responses to the printed items including one written by me on behalf of the association. I normally view these people as radicals who don't even deserve a response however, since this one topic was so widely spread I felt we needed to respond. Time will tell if we had an impact.

On the heels of this push by environmentalists comes some legislation written by the Department of Ag. which will limit the use of phosphorous fertilizer. At this time the legislation is just a draft seeking support in the current legislative session, but the initial input to draft this legislation came from the office of the Governor so you can bet that someone will bring it forward. I have a copy of the proposed statutory changes and at first look they look benign enough. But upon further examination the statutes would not only limit the use of phosphorous in the metro area but will eliminate its use all together. The thrust of the statute is clearly aimed at the general public but it does specifically list golf courses and public lands. If action becomes necessary we will certainly be there with support from the GCSAA to be sure that the golf industry is not adversely affected.

Steve Shumansky and I attended a chapter leadership forum held at the GCSAA national headquarters in Lawrence, KS. (GCSAA paid for the trip) It was a very informative meeting. For three days we planned and discussed with 23 other chapters how to grow our chapter as well as the national. The GCSAA staff outlined all of the programs and materials they have available to us at no charge. There are many programs we can and will be taking advantage of in the future.

*-Respectfully,
Paul Eckholm
President*

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Table of Contents

- 5** My First Year By Brett Hetland
- 9** PDI Has Potential To Improve Lives Of Everyone in the Profession
- 22** Three Members Receive GCSAA Awards as Environmental Stewards
- 23** House Research Bill Summary: Phosphorus Fertilizer Control
- 26** Lebanon Goes Online To Benefit The GCSAA Foundation
- 27** GCSAA Online: Water Conservation

Departments

- 3** From the President
By E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS
- 32** Membership Report
By Rick Traver, CGCS
- 38** Editor's Corner
By Steve Shumansky

Advertisers

Century Rain Aid.....	12
Classified Ads.....	19
Country Club Turf.....	35
Cushman Motor Co.....	IFC
Double Eagle Golf Construction.....	38
E-Z-GO.....	17
FMX Turf Products.....	8
Glenn Rehbein Companies.....	32
Greentrac.com.....	BC
Hartman.....	4
Herfort-Norby.....	29
Hydrologic.....	14
Hydrologic.....	IBC
J.D. Turf.....	18
Leitner Company.....	33
Minnesota Golf Cars.....	28
MTI Distributing Co.....	20
MTI Distributing Co.....	21
National Mower.....	11
North Star Turf Supply.....	6
North Star Turf Supply.....	16
North Star Turf Supply.....	30
Novartis Turf & Ornamental.....	36
Par Aide Products Co.....	13
Paskvan Consulting.....	22
PBI/Gordon Corporation.....	15
Plaisted Companies.....	37
Precision Turf & Chemical.....	7
Premier Services, LLC.....	26
Prinsco.....	34
Turf Partners.....	10
Williams & Gill.....	3



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A Year to Remember

By BRETT HETLAND

Brooks Golf Club

Wow! That's all that comes to mind as I sit at my desk and ponder on all the vents that took place in my first year as a golf course superintendent at Brooks Golf Club in Okoboji, Iowa. First, I have to thank my instructors at North Dakota State University for the great education. Second, thanks goes to Craig Vigen of Fargo Country Club and Robert Schmidt of Bristol Ridge Golf Course for giving me hands on knowledge and preparing me to be a superintendent. Lastly, I would like to thank the ownership of Brooks Golf Club for believing in my abilities to take on the duties of superintendent as we expand to 27 holes in 2000.

I came to Brooks in January with great excitement and anticipation. I had finally been given the opportunity to be a Superintendent. The first two months were spent getting acquainted with my mechanic and assistant. I was very fortunate to have two very competent and hard working individuals. They serviced our fleet of 80 golf carts; ground over 100 reels; and performed winter maintenance on our equipment with little or no supervision. This allowed me to prepare my first budget; hire a seasonal staff; develop an employee manual; and learn the hole layout. March was spent creating a chemical and fertility plan, organizing files, creating an emergency plan, setting up mowing patterns and pin rotations, meeting the ownership and interviewing golf course contractors for our 10 hole addition.

Spring couldn't have come soon enough. I was bursting at the seams to get outside. Little did I know the mess that was to follow! We had just built a new clubhouse scheduled to open April 5 that didn't officially open until the end of May. The road leading to the new clubhouse was a rainwater collection site. There were times when four-wheel drive wasn't enough to get through the mud. To say the least, we had few golfers the first two months of the season. Fortunately, they built a beautiful clubhouse overlooking a spectacular set of four tees that are virtually completely surrounded with colorful annuals.

My first project of the year was to grow in a new hole (#2). The clubhouse was built on land that eliminated a hole. Unfortunately, planning wasn't the greatest and they put the cart before the horse. Our new #2 was built September of '98 and was not ready for play at the opening of the '99 season. There was extreme pressure from the clubhouse to get #2 open so we could be a full 18 holes. We finally opened the hole for play as a temporary on May 14 and the entire hole on Memorial weekend, although, it wasn't anywhere near what I would have liked it to be.

Project No. 2 was the complete renovation of our existing hydraulic irrigation system to electric. There were over 400 Toro 670 hydraulic heads replaced with Toro 750s and wire was pulled to new LTC plus satellites. The soil around 75% of the heads settled to appoint where they had to be re-level-

led. The biggest headache with this project was coordinating a hole to be closed so the irrigation contractor could work safely without dodging golf balls. This normally would not have been a problem but our new hole, #2, wasn't open for play yet thus leading to a 16 hole layout. This led to some dissatisfied golfers and added tension with the pro shop.

As if it wasn't enough, Project #3 started April 1st when Terry Johnson Construction broke ground on our 10 hole addition. I felt like I was running in circles. I tried to give the necessary time to the existing course as well as the new construction but it just wasn't possible. There were contractors pulling in all directions. If it weren't for a good crew and trusty Motorola radios I never would have been able to cope. Luckily, we hire out most of the work to be done. We had a landscape contractor for the clubhouse; three different cart path contractors; an engineering crew to stake the new course; a rural water representative that told us we were going to build our irrigation pond right over the top of an 8" rural water line; a county conservation representative wanting to know what steps were being taken to preserve the surrounding areas; an irrigation designer for the system and pump station; an irrigation contractor for installation; a golf course contractor with subcontractors; a golf course designer, and an excavator.

Project #4 was trying to provide PGA tournament like playing conditions on bent grass greens, tees and fairways on a moderate budget. The success of the golf course was directly related to projects 1-3 above and how synchronized our crews could be. Scouting would take up my mornings on the existing course as well as checking with the irrigation contractor and clubhouse discussing their progress and defining a plan. My assistant, Rod Johnson, was left with the task of getting hole #2 ready for play. He did a terrific job! My afternoons were spent making a loop through the new construction site and finished the day off with irrigation scheduling for the evenings run.

Many nights were spent checking the irrigation pumps to make sure they were running correctly. On the morning of May 28 the system had shut down. After further inspection, the intake screen on the check valve was completely clogged with bull heads. I have pictures for those of you who don't believe (YUK!) The water supply for that pond comes from East Lake Okoboji where the bull heads must have made the trip as eggs. As you all experienced, the summer heat took its toll on turf. We were no exception. A lot of the Poa checked out in the fairways. We began an aggressive overseeding program only to see the viable Poa seeds in the soil fight the new bent grass for dominance. September was very exciting as we seeded our new greens

(Continued on Page 7)



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My First Year -

(Continued from Page 5)

on September 2 with *Poa annua* var. *reptans*; September 7 fairways and September 8 tees with L93 bent grass; September 9 roughs and native areas.

The first green mowed on the addition took place September 24 and the first fairway on October 8. Due to the lack of moisture this fall, very little of the rough has germinated. I hope to see a warm wet spring!! The irrigation system was blown out November 4. I am told this is the latest it has been but wish I would have left in on two more weeks. Mother Nature is tough to figure out. We put down our winter snow mold application on November 22 and the course was officially put to sleep for the year.

Without a doubt, this has been the busiest year in my life as well as the most gratifying. The thrill of my first year as a superintendent, the satisfaction of seeing the new course take shape, and the responsibility of making major decisions is very rewarding. I could not have done this without my education, the guidance from my old employers, and the help from all of you, my peers. There are few professions that are ready to help each other so willingly. There is a definite feeling of camaraderie among golf course superintendents. Thanks to all of you.

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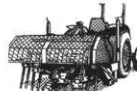
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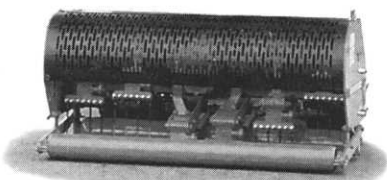


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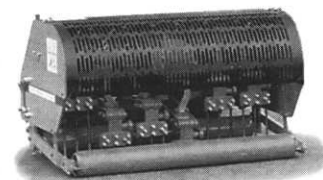


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PDI Has Potential to Improve Lives Of Everyone in the Profession

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The purpose of the Professional Development Initiative (PDI) is to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of the professional superintendent that will contribute toward improved playing conditions and the enjoyment of the game of golf.

As golf has evolved from a pure sport to a multifaceted business, the role of the superintendent has evolved from a traditional greenkeeper to a high-level manager. Recognizing this, GCSAA will be developing a state-of-the-art curriculum that will provide superintendents the tools needed to meet the challenges they face in managing agronomic, staff and budget facets of the golf course operation. Furthermore, GCSAA will be positioned to recognize the accomplishments of the professional superintendent with a competency-based classification system.

In order for golfers and employers to truly value superintendents, we need to enhance the knowledge sets through an integrated, competency-based curriculum. Furthermore, it is important that we measure the impact of this education and its effects on the playing conditions of the golf course. We need to give employers language they can understand, a bottom-line financial impact and a return on their investment.

The Member Standards Resource Group (MSRG), a member group appointed in 1997 to focus on PDI, has helped create this presentation. It contains their recommendations on how membership in GCSAA should be based on a set level of competencies, combined with formal education and experience as a golf course superintendent.

From October 1999 to May of 2000, members of the MSRG will visit GCSAA chapters to discuss the proposed classification and continuing education program. This time will be important because the MSRG will not be selling the project, but will be listening to the membership and collecting questions and concerns so that the PDI can be adjusted to what the membership need.

The Professional Development Initiative is perhaps the most important undertaking of the GCSAA since it was founded. If adopted, the PDI has the potential to change and improve the lives of everyone currently in the profession as well as those who will eventually join us. Because it involves change, parts of the PDI may feel threatening to some members.

It's critical then that members do two things:
Understand the proposed elements of the PDI.

Express any concerns or reservations about the PDI and help us resolve them

To explain the Professional Development Initiative. We want you to be fully informed about the PDI purpose, process, and projects. Your understanding, involvement, and buy-in are critical if the PDI is to be successful.

To gather your feedback on the PDI and communicate that feedback to GCSAA Headquarters. We will gather feedback in several ways:

A form that can be mailed in to GCSAA headquarters anytime between now and May 2000.
Comments made on the web site.

Let's outline the major parts of the presentation.

Point 1 outlines the mission, goals, underlying assumptions and history of the PDI.

Point 2 explains the concept of competency-based performance assessment and why it is a necessary and desirable part of the PDI.

Point 3 explores the impact of the PDI on membership classification issues.

Point 4 talks about how the education program will be re-designed to support the superintendent competency profiles and membership requirements.

Point 5 explains the Communication Plan for sharing information about the PDI with members.

Let's look at the mission statement for the PDI.

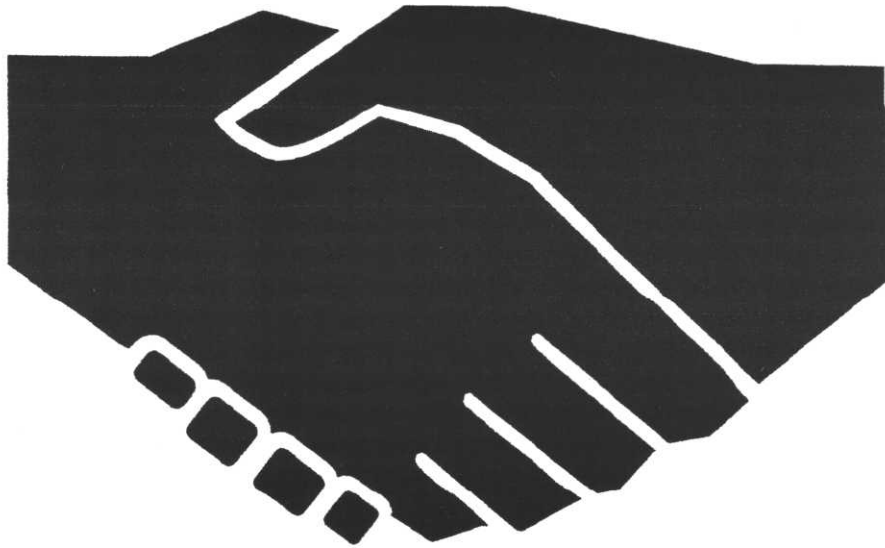
The mission of the PDI is two-fold: to improve the competencies of superintendents and to improve playing conditions resulting in greater enjoyment of the game for all who are involved.

PDI goals: The success of the PDI will be measured in the following areas: Increased salaries of golf course superintendents; Enhanced job security of golf course superintendents; Intensified recognition by employers and influential golfers of the golf course superintendent as a viable member of the golf course management team.; Improved job opportunities for golf course superintendents. Substantiated credentials that can be marketed to employers through improved playing conditions.

The underlying logic of the PDI is simple and based on principles that have been proven again and again in many industries. The PDI model shows the cyclical inter-relationship of the component parts that are driving the project.

(Continued on Page 11)

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