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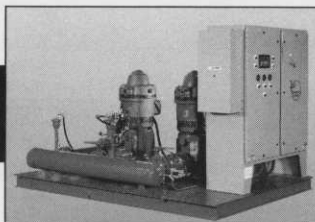
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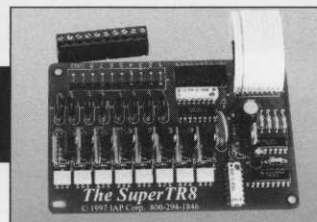
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HOLE NOTES

Official Publication
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From Your President's Desk

Dr. Brian Horgan Hired As Turfgrass Extension and Research Specialist at the U of Minnesota

I am one of the luckiest guys in the turf business. I am the one who gets to announce to all of you that the University of Minnesota has successfully hired a Turfgrass Extension and Research Specialist. This has been in the works for over a year and a half and has finally come to a successful conclusion. Dr. Brian Horgan comes to us with a long list of credentials and was by far the best candidate. We were able to keep him from accepting job offers from at least five other Universities. This proves the commitment the "U" has to the turfgrass industry in Minnesota. We welcome Dr. Horgan and look forward to his arrival on July 1st. I would like to thank all of those who participated in the process and especially Rob Panuska, who was involved from the beginning.

* * *

The February meeting in Dallas was well attended by those members who went to the big D. To me the show was a little bit convoluted. It didn't seem that the GCSAA really had their act together for this one. Hopefully things will be back to normal for the Orlando show next year.

* * *

This month I am announcing a personal initiative I am calling "Drive for the 'U'". It will involve a commitment to help support the U of M turfgrass working group. I have and will be contacting all of the vendor members asking for their support in equipment, materials or time, for the research plots at the St. Paul campus, which so far has been well received. I will be asking the Board to approve an individual research fund drive in addition to the vendor and club donations we already solicit. And finally I will be asking all of you to consider a commitment in time to help install any materials obtained through solicitations or help in maintaining machinery at the research plots.

* * *

I am sure you are wondering why I am asking for your help in this drive. The answer is simple, the 'U' has committed to us and it is time we give something back. Research dollars only go so far when you have to pay for everything, volunteer support will allow the research dollars to stretch. We are poised to have the ability to build a great turfgrass department at the 'U' and I feel we need to jump at the chance. In the end, we are the ones who will gain from the growth. The Turfgrass working group will be providing us with a "wish list" which we will publish in Hole Notes, if you have any of the items sitting around your shop not being used, consider donating them to the 'U'. It is tax deductible and would really help them out. Please consider joining me in this drive.

--Paul Eckholm, CGCSA
MGCSA President

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Inside This Issue of Hole Notes

- 5 GCSAA Lauds Superintendents,
Courses for Accomplishments
- 9 **Plow or Cover**
By Bob Labbanca
- 15 **Code of Ethics**
- 16 **A Business Plan for Success**
By Mark Battersby
- 20 **GCSAA Quarterly Report**
- 22 **MGCSA Seasonal Pay Survey**
- 24 **North Central Region Update**
By R.A. (Bob) Brame
- 29 **Industry News**
- 31 **Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
Receives \$10 Million Gift**
- 32 **Par Aide Acquires Accuform**

Departments

- 3 **From Your President's Desk**
E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS
- 13 **Membership Report**
By Daniel R. Swenson
- 34 **Editor's Report**
By Richard Traver, Jr., CGCS

Advertisers

Century Rain Aid.....	IFC
Classified Ads.....	6
Country Club Turf.....	26
Cushman Motor Co., Inc.....	14
Double Eagle Golf Construction.....	16
DBI.....	BC
E.H. Renner.....	22
Eureka Sands.....	27
Hassan Sand & Gravel.....	27
Howrey Construction.....	32
FMX Turf Products.....	33
Gill Miller, Inc.....	10
Glenn Rehbein.....	31
GreenImage.....	25
Hartman.....	20
Hydrologic.....	7
Leitner Company.....	13
MTI Distributing Co., Inc.....	18
MIT Distributing Co., Inc.....	19
North Star Turf.....	12
North Star Turf.....	28
Par Aide Products Co.....	24
Plaisted Companies Inc.....	11
Precision Turf.....	6
Prinsco.....	23
Superior Turf Services.....	8
Sustane.....	IBC
Turf Supply Company.....	30

INTRODUCING CAMERON JOHN HOYT

After a long day and night of some hard labor, Tricia and I are the proud parents of a baby BOY! His name is Cameron John. He was born at 8:39 this morning. Cameron weighed 8 pounds, 2.8 ounces and was 20 inches long. Mommy and baby are both doing quite well today. They are both resting comfortably. Hope to see you all sometime soon so we can show off our new little one.

Clayton & Tricia Hoyt
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2001 MGCSA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 5-6
GCSAA Seminars

March 7
MGCSA Mini-Seminar
Radisson South Hotel
Bloomington, Minn.

April ~ Open

May 8
Brackett's Crossing Country Club
Host Superintendent: Tom Proshek

June 18
Scholarship Scramble
Dacotah Ridge
Host Superintendent: Mike Nelson

July ~ Open

August 20
MGCSA Championship
Wayzata Country Club
Host Superintendent: Bob Distel

September ~ Open

October ~ Open

December
MGCSA Annual Business Meeting
MTGF Conference and Show
Minneapolis Convention Center

GCSAA Lauds Superintendents, Courses for Accomplishments

Sixty-three golf course superintendents have been named national, chapter or merit winners of 2001 Environmental Steward Awards, underscoring their commitment to stewardship efforts on the golf course through contributions that enhance local environments.

In recognition of the winners, program sponsors Syngenta Professional Products, Rain Bird, Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products and Pursell Technologies Inc., will donate nearly \$24,000 to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) Foundation. Winners will be formally recognized at 8:45 a.m., Feb. 15 during the Golf General Session at GCSAA's 72nd International Golf Course Conference and Show, Feb. 11-17, at the Dallas Convention Center in Dallas.

The 2001 Environmental Steward Award winners were named in three national categories (public, private and resort golf courses), with additional recognition given to the top entry for each GCSAA affiliated chapters. Merit honors were afforded those who did not earn national or chapter honors, but in the opinion of the judges, deserved special recognition. The national winners include:

National Public: Joe McCleary, CGCS, Saddle Rock Golf Course, Aurora, Colo., Rocky Mountain GCSA.

National Private: Scott Jorgensen, Spanish Hills Golf & C.C., Camarillo, Calif., Southern California GCSA.

National Resort: Dave Solga, CGCS, Giants Ridge Golf & Ski Resort, Biwabik, Minn., Minnesota GCSA.

The Environmental Steward Awards recognize golf course superintendents for overall course management excellence in the areas of technology use, resource conservation, water quality management, integrated pest management, wildlife/habitat management and education/out-reach.

"These awards speak to the commitment and the professionalism of the golf course superintendent," said R. Scott Woodhead, GCSAA president and certified golf course superintendent at Valley View Golf Course. "The terms golf and environmental stewardship were in the past thought to be incompatible. Today, we know that is no longer the case."

Syngenta Professional Products, Rain Bird, Textron Golf, Turf & Specialty Products and Pursell Technologies Inc., each will donate to The GCSAA Foundation in the names of all national and chapter winners: \$500 each for national winners and \$50 each for chapter winners. In addition, all four sponsoring companies will each donate \$5,000 to The Foundation. Since the Environmental Steward Awards began in 1993, participating sponsors have donated nearly \$150,000 to The GCSAA Foundation, and more than 200 golf course superintendents have been recognized.

In addition to the national winners, 41 chapter winners

and 19 merit winners were selected from GCSAA's 101 affiliated chapters.

2001 ESA Chapter Winners Public Facilities

Keith Greeninger, Baker National Golf Course, Medina Minn., Minnesota GCSA.

2001 ESA Merit Winners Public Facilities

Michael Davies, Superior National at Lutsen, Lutsen, Minn., Minnesota GCSA

Since 1926, GCSAA has been the leading professional association for the men and women who manage and maintain golf facilities in the United States and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to more than 21,000 individual members in more than 65 countries. GCSAA's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and enhance the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. Visit GCSAA Online at www.gcsaa.org.

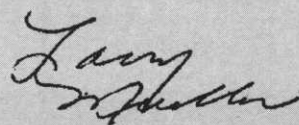
The GCSAA Foundation enhances the game of golf through funding applied research and advanced education in golf course management. Since its inception in 1955, The GCSAA Foundation has provided more than \$2 million in support of numerous research studies and more than 1,200 student scholarships.

Thank You

Thank you to the many members that attended my going away party, it was great to see each of you. Also, thank you to all that sent cards and letters but were unable to attend.

You're a great bunch of professionals.

Sincerely,



Larry Mueller

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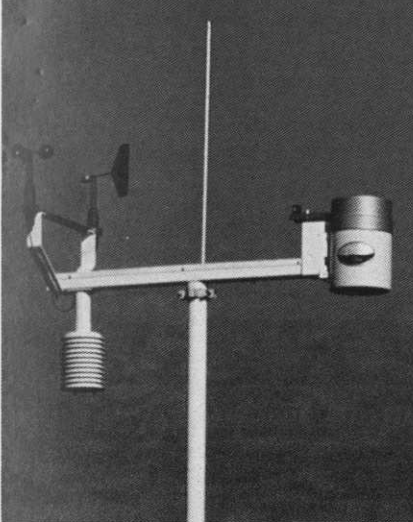
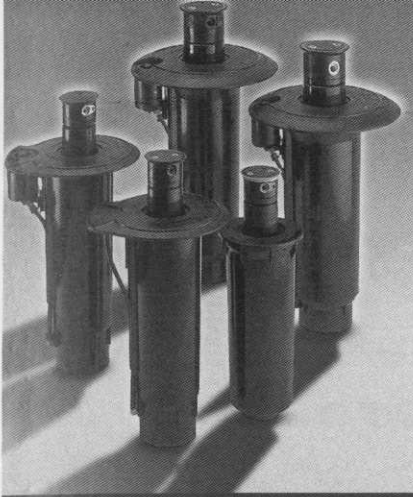
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Plow or Cover

Clearing Snow and Proper Covering Aid Northern Greens

By **BOB LABBANCE**
Golf Editor/Turf Magazine

By this time all but the most devastating winter turf problems have been solved and the golfers who frequent your course are once again happy campers. In March, as the snow and ice slowly dissipate and the mystery of how your grass survived conditions it should never have to put up with is revealed, it can be quite a different story.

The Case for Plowing

When snow and ice stand atop fragile bentgrasses for more than 75 days, turf managers start to worry. When its still there after 100 days they panic. When Mother Nature fails you, the easiest solution may be to remove the snow mechanically. Plowing the snow off the greens in March is not new. Manny Francis, the dean of New England superintendents began doing just that at Vesper Country Club in the 1940s.

It is possible for ice to get under the cover and become trapped. At the time, his contemporaries thought he was nuts. They figured he'd do more damage by running the old Willy's jeep with the plow attachment over the putting surfaces than if he just let nature take its course. Francis proved them wrong and established a practice of clearing down to the ice layer that resulted in Vesper's greens being ready for play earlier and healthier throughout the season than greens at many of the surrounding courses.

Today, many supers in the North Country have come to the same conclusion that dawned on Francis half a century ago. "We've been plowing since 1988," notes Ken Lallier, CGCS, of the 36-hole Quechee Club in Vermont. "Not necessarily every year, it depends on conditions. In the winter of 1987-88 we got really clobbered with ice damage and then hammered with snow. We had a heavy rain storm in early December and then followed by a cold snap and snow behind that, and we never saw the ground again until April. We had a good layer of ice under there and it basically smoked the bent and the poa. We had damage on 26 of the 36 greens. They were partially or totally dead."

Recovering from such an experience is time-consuming, expensive and frustrating. Prevention efforts are worth every dollar and every minute you can expend on them.

"After that experience we decided that we were going to clear them every year from then on," says Lallier. "But since then I've tempered that; every year is different. What we do now is monitor the ice under the snow cover. Figure out when we had the ice formation and start counting days from there and if we still have a pretty good snow with ice

underneath that in March, and its been there since early January or December, then its a no-brainer—we clear them."

Part of the challenge with covers is figuring out when to take them off.

Take Cover

The practice of clearing greens has been gaining favor with greenkeepers from Maine to upstate New York in the 1990s, especially with the recent surfeit of storms that start as snow and change to rain or sleet cementing an ice layer in the middle of the snow pack. The only other defense is covering greens, but that can be even more time consuming and risky, and mostly recommended for sites where desiccation from wind damage is a factor.

"All the greens are covered with Evergreen poly," says Mike Keohan at the windy, hilltop Country Club of Vermont in Waterbury. "First thing in the spring we pull the covers off, let the green cavity warm up, then before the end of the day we put the cover back on. We do nine holes at a time, then we keep the covers on those nine holes for the next full day. Obviously it's very labor intensive. There's a misconception that the greens covers are going to warm the green cavity for you. You have to get the heat inside it before it will insulate it for you. With the sun beating down on that cover, of course its going to warm up some, but what you want to do is get the cover off, let the greens cavity warm up a little bit and then trap that heat in and not let it escape during the night."

The problem with covers is that you may need to destroy them to break up the ice that will form on top of them, or at the very least they limit your options of how to deal with the snow pack. Superintendents in Canada, including Blake McMaster at Royal Montreal, have come up with an innovative solution that may work in some climates.

"They put six inches of straw on the greens first, then they lay the Evergreen cover on top of that," recalls Lallier. "Its not impervious, it lets water go through on top of the straw, but he swears this keeps the ice off the crown of the plant. They don't have any ice problems, but they've got a clean-up problem in the spring."

Pushing the snow banks far from the green will prevent the melting snow from re-freezing on the green. Lallier would rather have the labor crunch in March, when there aren't as many other time pressures to prepare the grounds, and he...All ice is not created equal.

(Continued on Page 10)

Plow or Cover-

(Continued from Page 9)

Lallier has become expert at recognizing the varying conditions of the ice as well as the techniques that will most successfully accomplish its removal.

"There's different kinds of ice, too. If you have snow cover and you get water through the snow pack that ends up sitting on the bottom and turns to ice, that's kind of a whitish milky ice with a lot of air pockets in it. That's not as bad as the stuff you can see right through." Clear, solid ice is the most worrisome.

"The worst thing about that is you get absolutely no gas exchange," says Lallier. "It locks up the exchange of gas. The turf is still respiring a little bit under that ice, and what its giving off is toxic gases and those are just trapped there and that's what actually kills the turf. If it's the milky ice there are some pore spaces in there, and especially if you open it up and get some material on it that melts down, you can get some gas exchange to go through the ice."

Most superintendents will spread Milorganite on the surface of the ice. The black granules work as mini-heat sinks, absorbing sunlight and creating holes in the ice that will eventually bore all the way down to the grass, allowing the turf to breathe. Once you've made it that far, you should be on the road to recovery, unless you've made another critical error.

"The key to clearing greens off is to get the snow banks way off the greens so that when they melt, they run away from the greens—you don't want them to melt and run back on to the green, or you'll have water on greens that will puddle up and freeze and cause problems as well. We try to dump a lot of the snow in the bunkers. They have drainage in them but more importantly where ever you put your snow banks you've got a potential snow mold situation under the snow banks. You put a snow bank on the surrounds that takes until mid-April to melt and you've got perfect conditions for snow mold right off the green. You don't have to worry about snow mold in the trap."

Sometimes you need to bring in the heavy equipment.

The Quechee Club, which also operates a small ski area for members, has the correct equipment to do the job, but when the snow is deep it may also be difficult to get the

machinery to the site.

"We have a four-wheel drive back hoe with a front loader and we have two other four-wheel drive tractors with bucket loaders that we'll put out there," notes Lallier. They also have another tractor with an eight-foot-wide snow thrower on the back, but unless the snow is uniform and without a mid-layer of ice, it may not be very effective.

Similar to the realization that snow can't be just pushed on to the surrounds, Lallier offers a few other helpful hints that he has picked up through his own decade of experience. "We have some greens where we only get one or two inches of mushy ice and if the guy gets real aggressive with the bucket he may take some of the contours out of the green for you. It's real important to get the snow off the surrounds, but you have to be careful not to dig up your surrounding mounds, also."

Timing is Everything

The timing is also critical. "If you push them off too early and get that turf exposed and then you have some sub-zero weather after the plants have hydrated you're going to kill them off that way," notes Lallier. Like any timing call in greenkeeping, "It's not an easy decision."

A great deal depends on knowing your own little micro-climate and how that affects the springtime freeze and thaw cycle. "The micro-climates mean a lot and people don't understand that," notes Lallier. Up in Bangor, Maine, where they know about snow and ice, superintendent Austin Kelly once said, "Something you do one year doesn't work the next, or one thing works for you and two miles away it doesn't work for the next guy." Just part of the fun of the job, isn't it?

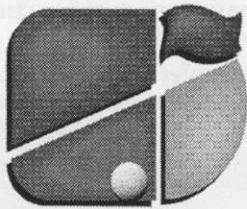
(Editor's Note: Bob Labbanca is Turf's Golf Editor. He resides in Montpelier, Vt.)

Plan to Attend the First MGCSA Golf Mixer of The Year

TUESDAY, MAY 8

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