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# HOLE NOTES

Official Publication  
of the MGCSA

## Editor

Jack MacKenzie, CGCS  
jmackenzie426@msn.com

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## Do You Have A Child, Relative Or Staff Member in the Military?



Our monthly newsletter, *Hole Notes*, is a great communication vehicle for our membership. From the local and regional news written by our members, to national news pertaining to golf course management from the GCSAA, we stay abreast of current events and trends. I especially enjoy reading the columns written by our own members. Many of our members may not know that the *Hole Notes* is self-sufficient. The advertisers pay exclusively for the production and mailing costs of the entire magazine from the revenue received from the ads -- including the nice, colored pictures.

To my dismay though, while reading our last month's *Hole Notes*, I came across an article written about a new golf course in Cloquet. The article was more advertisement than substance. An MGCSA member did not write the article and the "free" advertising was not about a member, either. Unfortunately, this slipped between the cracks. I am publicly apologizing to all our fine members who support our magazine because without you we would not be producing a 10-months-a-year, informative, up-to-date magazine. *Hole Notes* is a great vehicle to keep abreast of the happenings of the MGCSA Board as Rick Traver "Muses the Minutes" each month. Also, by reading *Hole Notes*, you realize that similar things happen to other superintendents -- like Jack MacKenzie wrote last month.

**I do not take our affiliates lightly.** Besides carrying our monthly newsletter, our affiliate members help better the association through research and scholarship contributions and by supporting our monthly meetings. A portion of affiliate dues help support our hospitality meeting at the National each year. It was no wonder I received numerous e-mails about the article. The e-mails were not only from our affiliates, but our members that buy from them. To all of our members, we will be more diligent in our screening of articles for future issues of *Hole Notes*.

\* \* \* \*

**The President's message for the March Hole Notes**, discussed the involvement of our service men and women in the war in Iraq. Regardless of how the military action is viewed, we have several members sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, in laws, staff members, and etc. that are actively involved. Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they are called into service. Please let me know if you have children, relatives or staff members that are stationed here or overseas. E-mail me at [r\\_fredericksen@msn.com](mailto:r_fredericksen@msn.com). We would like to be able to write or e-mail them.

In closing I wish you all the very best this fall and encourage you to participate with your State Chapter of the GCSAA. It wouldn't be the same without you.

Your President,  
Rick Fredericksen, CGCS


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# Ruhoff, Meyer, Deyak and Ramler Win 2003 Stodola Scramble at Oak Marsh

Brad Deyak, Wapicada Golf Club, Jeff Meyers, Koronis Hills Golf Club, Jason Ruhoff, Koronis Hills Golf Club, and Tom Ramler, Boulder Ridge Golf Club won a scorecard playoff, shooting a 57 to capture the 2003 Harold Stodola Research Scramble. They also won the scholarship scramble held in June of this year to sweep the MGCSA scrambles for 2003.

Finishing in second place was the perennial favorite from Albany and Wapicada Golf Clubs. Mickey Saatzer and Tom Kasner from Albany teamed with Mike Kasner and Scot Milstroh from Wapicada to fire a score of 57.

Field event winners included Long Drive champion Beth Hallatz of Dacotah Ridge Golf Club. Closest-to-the-pin honors went to Kevin Clunis, Tanner's Brook Golf Club, Justin Funk, Stillwater Country Club, Scot Milstroh, Mark Fitzenberge, Tanner's Brook, Mike Nelson, Dacotah Ridge Golf Club, and Mark Marvin, Heritage Links.

Thanks to our host superintendent Bob Porter for offering the use of Oak Marsh for our research scramble. Bob and his staff, along with the proshop made it a great day for the tournament.

The MGCSA would also like to thank the following for sponsoring golf holes, carts and dinner; Brackett's Crossing CC, Bayer Environmental Sciences, Edina CC, HydroLogic, Leitner Company, Simplot Partners, and Paul Eckholm, CGCS.



*Winners of the Harold Stodola Research Scramble were, from the left, Brad Deyak, Wapicada; Jeff Meyer, Koronis Hills; Jason Ruhoff, Koronis Hills, and Tom Ramler, Boulder Ridge.*



**BOB PORTER**  
*Host Superintendent at Oak Marsh*



*Runner-Ups at the Stodola Research Scramble were, from left, Mickey Saatzer, Albany; Tom Kasner, Albany; Scott Milstroh, Wapicada, and Mike Kasner, Wapicada.*





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# Bluebirds –

(Continued from Page 1)

**BBRP's Mission Statement is:** To encourage, inspire, educate and assist individuals and organizations to become actively involved in the restoration and preservation efforts to sustain a healthy and expanding population of bluebirds and other cavity nesters. Goal #1: To be protective of the earth's natural resources, plants and wildlife in the environment in which we carry out these efforts.

The BBRP would like to form a partnership with as many specific Golf Courses as possible, just like the partnership we have formed with MGCSA. In order for this partnership to be successful, we need the commitment of both parties to make it work. There are many things a Golf Course can do to help. One of the most important requirements for a successful bluebird trail is to have someone monitor the trail on a weekly basis. To monitor a box means that they open and check each box once per week for about 15 weeks. Normally, this chore is done by one of the Golf Course employees, preferably by one who is interested in birds. If a Golf Course cannot provide an employee to do this work, sometimes BBRP can arrange for a volunteer to monitor the trail. However, the best monitor is an interested employee because he/she is on site every week and therefore can observe most problems. With the help of a golf cart, a monitor can check a 10-box trail in about 15 minutes, so the financial commitment is minimal. A well monitored trail can be successful, even in the middle of the

Twin Cities. A good example of that is Francis Gross Golf Course, near downtown Minneapolis right near freeway I 35W. Last year they fledged 25 bluebirds in only 4 paired boxes. That's an outstanding fledge rate of 6.25 bluebirds fledged per available box.

The following is a wealth of information about how to start and maintain a bluebird trail.

## Why Do Bluebirds Need Our Help?

In the past, people who grew up in rural areas or on farms were often privileged to see bluebirds nesting in tree holes or rotten fenceposts. Poets and songwriters praised their beauty, their happy warbling, cleanliness, serenity and family devotion. Bluebirds were an asset to farmers and gardeners, as their diet consists mainly of insects and grubs in spring and summer, then wild berries in late fall as they prepared to migrate south for the winter.

The eastern bluebird range covers the entire eastern half of the United States and lower Canada, west across the Great Plains, to mountain and western bluebird habitats. They may overlap with other bluebird species in Montana and Arizona, and in western Canada.

From the 1920s, a gradual decline in the number of these beautiful blue thrushes began, becoming drastic by the 1950s. Bluebirds depended upon woodpeckers and other cavity makers for nesting holes. But dead trees slowly disappeared, considered by humankind either unsightly, or necessary for firewood. Mature trees taken for building were not replanted. Wooden fenceposts were replaced with metal ones.

(Continued on Page 13)

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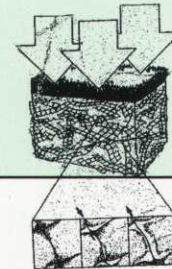
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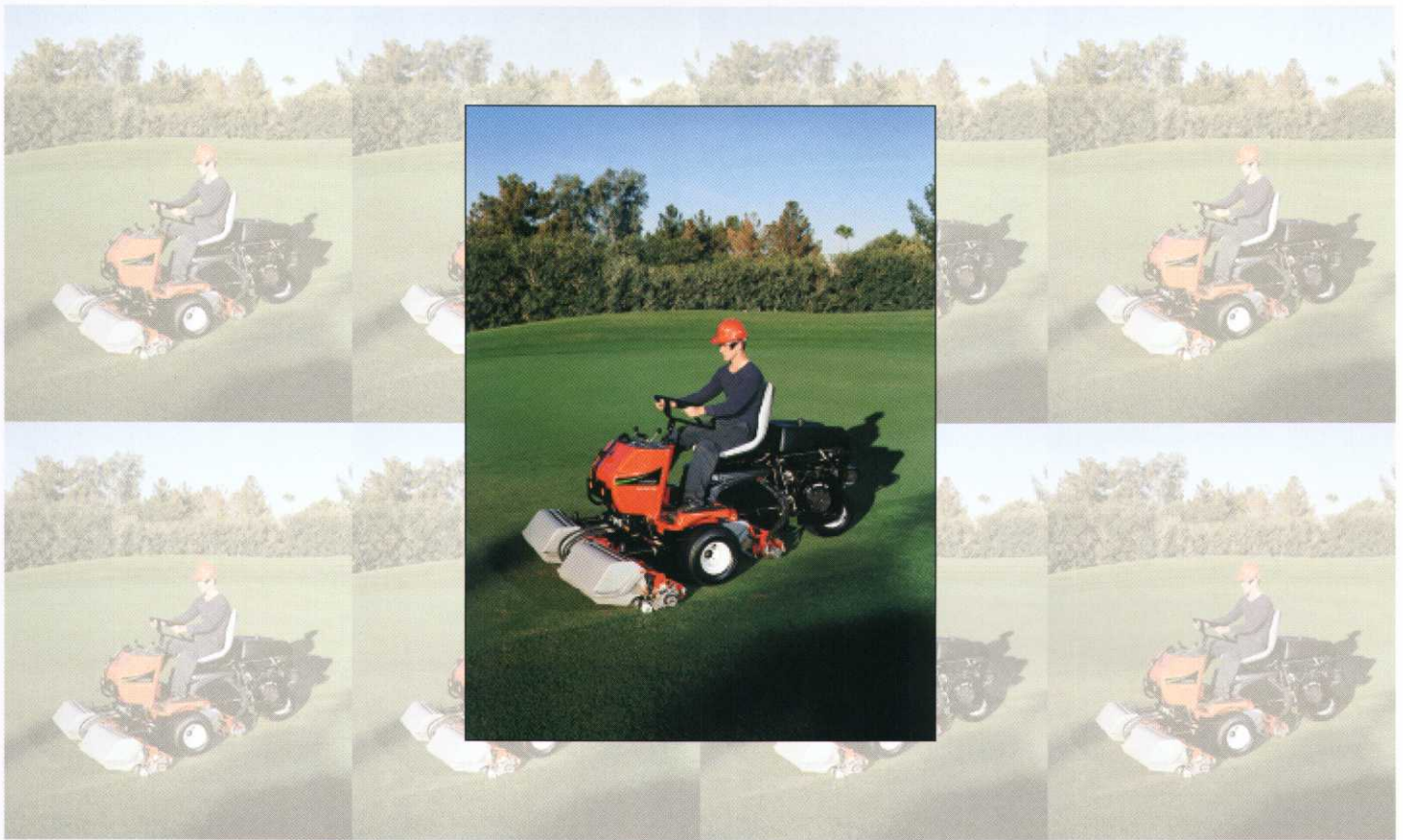
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# Girdling Roots

## *A Problem of Shade Trees*

By T. DAVIS SYDNOR  
*Ohio State University Extension*

Trees can slowly weaken and die over a period of years or decades because of root girdling. Roots begin to grow around the main stem of the tree and cut off or restrict the movement of water, plant nutrients and stored food reserves.

Over time, growth of the branches on the side of the plant affected by the girdling will be slowed. As injury progresses, leaves will become smaller and lighter green, fewer leaves will be produced, and eventually the branch will begin to die back. Death of the entire plant can occur in five to 20 years; watering, fertilizing and pruning will do little to correct the problem.

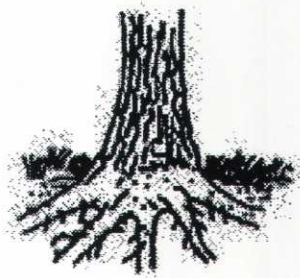
Certain trees are more prone to this problem than others. Lindens, magnolias, pines, and maples other than the silver maple are susceptible to root girdling. On the other hand, oaks, silver maple, ash, and elm are well known for their ability to form functional root grafts and are rarely adversely affected by girdling roots.

Normal trees have a gentle trunk flair or buttress at their base (Fig. 1). Trunks that grow straight up from the ground as though they were a telephone pole can be suspected of having girdling roots (Fig. 2). Trunks with a straight side or a concave depression on one side may also have a girdling root (Fig. 3).

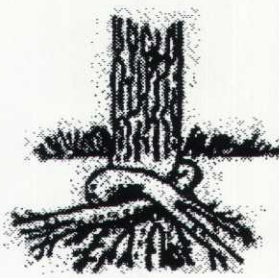
Development of girdling roots is not well understood but is normally thought to be the result of unfavorable conditions which prevent roots from growing out in a normal spreading manner. A good example is a container-grown plant, where the roots are often forced to grow in a circular fashion. If these trees are not pruned at the time of transplanting, this growth pattern can cause girdling roots.

Root pruning is an absolute must for any container-grown tree or shrub at the time of transplanting. Three to five slashes are made vertically down the rootball and about an inch into the rootball. One or two slashes into the bottom of the rootball are made at a depth of three to four inches. Some people go further by fraying out the pruned roots.

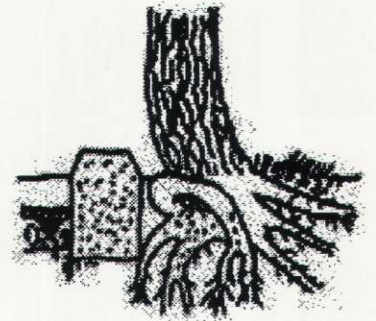
Restricted root space – such as tree pits in urban areas – also may result in girdling roots. There is some suggestion, too, that constant mulching—a desirable practice in many respects—may cause the formation of girdling roots.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**

For plants susceptible to root girdling, an inspection should be made when the tree is approximately six inches in diameter. A positive diagnosis can only be made by exposing the roots. Soil is carefully removed to a depth of at least 12 inches, with care taken to prevent serious mechanical injury to the roots. If girdling roots are found on a plant with known susceptibility, the girdling root must be removed, a process normally carried out with a chisel.

Removing a girdling root is a wound in its own right. Yet, while the correction of the problem can kill the desirable plant, the likelihood of the plant dying is greater if no action is taken. Conducting a preventative inspection when the tree is about six inches in diameter will assist in correcting the problem before it becomes serious.

If the inspection reveals girdling and a considerable amount of damage, the most prudent move may be to replace the tree. Spending money on a weakened tree which subsequently dies can be an extremely frustrating experience; because correction of this problem is so labor intensive, the costs and benefits should be weighed carefully prior to making any decisions.





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