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# Inside This Issue Of Hole Notes

- 4 **President's Message** - James Bade
- 5 **Capital Correspondence**  
- Norm Coleman and Jack MacKenzie, CGCS
- 6 **The Dreaded "V" Word** - Randy Witt, CGCS
- 9 **Peer-to-Peer** - MGCSA Members
- 12 **Superintendent Insight: Jeff Hanson**
- 14 **Nasal Obstruction** - Deborah Rosin, MD
- 18 **Spring Break** - Nate Uselding
- 19 **It's in the Hole**
- 20 **Minnesota In the Crosshairs:** - Paul Deignau, CGCS
- 23 **Membership Report** - Mike Knodel
- 24 **My First MGCSA Board Meeting** - Mike Knodel
- 25 **Musing the Minutes** - Matt McKinnon
- 26 **Symbol System Chemical Management**  
- Chris Hoff and Rick Fletcher
- 28 **2006: A Season of Extremes** - Robert Vavrek
- 29 **Grand Champ of Healthy Snacks** - Phil Campbell
- 30 **In Bounds: By the Numbers** - Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

## MGCSA Upcoming Schedule

**Monday, May 14**  
**MGCSA Spring Mixer**  
Deer Run Golf Club  
Victoria

*Host Superintendent: Barry Provo*

**Monday, June 18**  
**MGCSA Scholarship Scramble**  
Greystone Golf Club  
Sauk Centre

*Host Superintendent: Hugh Lynch*

**Tuesday, August 28**  
**MGCSA Championship**  
Hillcrest Golf Club of St. Paul  
*Host Superintendent: Thomas Schmidt*

**Thursday, September 13**  
**University of Minnesota Field Day**  
University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus  
*Hosts: Dr. Brian Horgan and Larry Vetter*

**Monday, September 17**  
**Harold Stodola Research Scramble**  
The Jewel Golf Club  
Lake City  
*Host Superintendent: Doug Mahal, CGCS*

## Advertisers

BASF .....	13
Bonestroo .....	9
Classified Ads .....	25
Country Club Turf .....	29
Fahey Sales .....	28
Glenn Rehbein .....	24
GreenImage.....	7
GreenImage.....	19
Hartman Companies .....	4
Hedberg Landscape Supplies .....	18
Herfort Norby .....	20
Hydrologic .....	8
JRK Seed .....	17
Leitner Company .....	22
MTI Distributing, Inc. ....	11
MTI Distributing, Inc. ....	14
MTI Distributing, Inc. ....	16
MTI Distributing, Inc. ....	17
Par Aide Products Co. ....	3
Plaisted Companies .....	31
Precision Turf & Chemical .....	IFC
Superior Turf Services, Inc. ....	10
Turf Supply Company .....	21
Turfwerks .....	BC
Twin City Seed Co. ....	23
Versatile Vehicles .....	6
Versatile Vehicles .....	15

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*MGCSA Affiliate Sponsors Provide a Great, Well-Attended Hospitality Night in Anaheim*

*By James Bade*

Greetings from Anaheim! With today's technology I can literally write from my hotel room and send off the column. I actually missed the deadline but they were nice enough to hold the press. And I am glad because that allows me to say wow and thanks for the wonderful Hospitality Night in Anaheim. Jeff Hartman and Dan Brown found us a great spot, the food was wonderful, the music was a nice touch and the turnout was fabulous. Thank you sponsors for your big part, the camaraderie was great to see and hear.

**I am sure Johnny Miller's talk will get mixed reviews at best.** But there were a couple of things that I did appreciate. Those of us working with Mother Nature have a high calling in life: to be stewards of the land. But a higher calling yet is to be there for your family. "All the success of your business life can't cover up the failures at home." And finally one of the keys to life is being honest. There is something about working with nature that keeps you honest and humble. The common bond of getting our hands dirty is what makes the people in our association fun to be around.

**If your speed isn't quite right, you will miss your target.** If your aim is off, obviously you miss the target as well. Now if I threw in the word "grain" you might think I was Johnny Miller commentating on NBC. However, I am actually thinking of curling. There are a lot of parallels between curling and putting. The ice can have different speeds. Some sheets curl more than others; just like putting you have to have the right speed and direction to hit your target. All this is to say what a wonderful cover on *Hole Notes* last month.

**When I first saw the photo** I thought Norma was curling at Woodhill or Interlachen. Then I realized it was her golf course. Thanks for the humor and courage in the light of the adverse winters we are having. It should be an interesting spring. Once again we will see just how tough our turfgrass is and or how resourceful we might have to be.

**I was wondering what some of you were up to in the 20-below zero weather.** At Somerset we re-inventoried our trees (all 2,170 of them), fine-tuned the irrigation computer, and I had the privilege of interviewing Somerset's retired golf pro who is 94 years young. Gordy Haberkorn first stepped onto Somerset in 1922 when he was nine years old and worked there for 55 years. He remembers the roaring '20s, the great depression and went through World War II. What a treasure it has been being around the "old timers" in our line of work. They sure have enhanced our lives.

**I hope everyone noticed the back page of last months *Hole Notes*.** It had a schedule of this year's upcoming events. Hopefully, you will tear it off and hang it up somewhere because we would love to see you at a few of them. Enjoy the rest of your winter.

- James

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# HOLE NOTES

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# Take Action Today, Legislative Correspondence Is as Easy as One, Two, Three

Dear Senator Coleman:

On behalf of my own business, and the many thousands of small businesses and family farms and golf courses across America, I am writing to urge your full support for passage of the Agricultural Job Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act, or AgJOBS.

This historic legislation represents the fruit of years of effort by growers, farmers and ranchers, farm worker representatives, and our respective Congressional champions, to solve the unacceptable and worsening labor crisis in agriculture.

America needs immigration reforms that are compassionate, realistic and economically sensible. This is a rare chance to set aside partisan politics, and do something good for the country. There is no better place to start than agriculture. There is no better time than now.

I respectfully urge that you support AgJOBS and please reject any efforts to change this historic and carefully balanced compromise.

Please support all efforts to enact AgJOBS into law now.

For years, leaders in American agriculture have worked to develop a bipartisan solution to the agricultural labor crisis. That solution is called AgJOBS, or S.340, which was recently reintroduced in the Senate with almost 20 original cosponsors.

Unfortunately, Sen. Chambliss has offered two amendments (0117 and 0118) on the minimum wage bill that take a much narrower approach to the issue. The Chambliss approach is untested, and would only help a few while hurting many.

We need real reform that is fair, balanced, and good for everyone. If the Chambliss amendments come up for a vote in the Senate, please oppose them. If AgJOBS is offered as an alternative, please vote to support enactment of AgJOBS.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Respectfully Yours,  
Jack MacKenzie, Superintendent  
North Oaks Golf Club, North Oaks, MN

\* \* \* \*

(Editor's Note: Some of you may be asking just how much free time I have to be sending letters to my representatives as well as managing my golf course, participating on various volunteer entities and enjoying my family. The answer may surprise you, about five minutes! The letters to your state reps relevant to local and national issues are already prewritten and available at the MNLA website.)

Dear Mr. MacKenzie:

Thank you for taking the time to contact me concerning the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits, and Security Act (AgJOBS) of 2007 (S. 237).

I believe that improving our border

employer verification, and a guest worker program that allows long-time residents, including agriculture workers, to earn a legalized status.

As you may know, the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits, and Security Act of 2007 was introduced on

*"I have supported comprehensive immigration reform, including strong border and interior enforcement, improved employer verification, and a guest worker program that allows long-time residents, including agriculture workers, to earn a legalized status."*

*— Norm Coleman, United States Senate*

enforcement capabilities must be central to any immigration reform legislation. Our unprotected borders are unacceptable and represent a crisis which must be dealt with decisively and without delay. The President's plan to send National Guard troops to support the border patrol should help establish some credibility that we are serious about controlling our borders and is already proving effective at deterring illegal entry. The President will send up to 6,000 National Guard members to assist the Border Patrol with the operation of surveillance systems, analysis of intelligence, and the installation of fences and vehicle barriers. This is a serious commitment to securing the border. To improve border security, I voted for the Secure Fence Act (H.R. 6061), which will result in 700 miles of additional fencing along our Southern border.

**I strongly oppose amnesty for illegal immigrants.** Any legalized status for people already here must not be a blank check that will encourage more people to enter this country illegally. In order to be here, immigrants must undergo background checks, demonstrate proof of employment, possess English proficiency and an understanding of civics, and pay a monetary penalty. Additionally, I do not believe illegal immigrants should receive Social Security benefits associated with work performed while the alien was working in illegal status.

After careful consideration of the legal and security issues involved, I have supported comprehensive immigration reform, including strong border and interior enforcement, improved

January 10, 2007 by Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA) and was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee where it awaits further action. This legislation, if implemented correctly, could be a practical solution to fill agricultural worker shortages. Last year alone, over one third of Florida's orange crop was left unpicked due to labor shortages, and growers in California, Washington, and New York all lost substantial portions of their crops due to an insufficient workforce. The reality is that most Americans are simply not interested in these positions.

**Specifically, the AgJOBS bill would require aliens** currently in the United States illegally who have a history of working in the U.S. agriculture sector to come forward and be officially documented. These workers would be required to pay a fine and to work in the agriculture sector for a specified period of time over three to five years. If these requirements are met over the required time period, as certified by the employer, a worker is entitled to seek an adjustment of status. I don't believe AgJOBS would increase the number of immigrants in the U.S. or displace American workers. This legislation would only cover persons in the United States with a documented work history and with employers required to prove that they cannot find U.S. citizens to do the job.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact me. I appreciate hearing from you and I value your advice.

*-Sincerely,  
Norm Coleman  
United States Senate*

# An Adventure in Life

## The Dreaded "V" Word

By RANDY WITT, CGCS  
Senior Superintendent, Hong Kong Golf Club

**Vandalism.** A word that sends shivers down the spine of superintendents.

Fortunately, throughout my career, I have never had to deal with any significant amount of vandalism. Missing tee markers, flags and pins, maybe a few divots out of a green thanks to a wayward sand wedge has been the extent of any vandalism that I have had to deal with. I guess I had to travel 7,700 miles to finally encounter what many in my profession have dealt with more than once: vandalism on a major scale.

On November 23 during my usual tour to check on the courses, I noticed numerous distinctive dark circles on many of the greens on the Old Course. Upon closer inspection, I determined that 12 of the 18 greens on the Old Course showed evidence of some sort of damage to the turf. It appeared as though someone had walked around making large semicircles and full circles with some damaging liquid. A petroleum product was initially ruled out due to the lack of an odor or sliminess to the touch. Upon close inspection, it was visible that the tips of the turf within the affected areas were beginning to turn from dark gray to brown in color. Within two days, these areas were totally brown and at death's door.

My initial diagnosis was that a product such as Round Up had been poured on the greens. Members of my staff confirmed that this type of product is readily available for purchase in Hong Kong and surrounding villages in the New Territories where we are located. As most superintendents are prone to do, we held out hope that the plants would only suffer superficial damage, which would not prove to be a problem in the long term. We had just come through a period of wet weather so we hoped that maybe the product had been washed off of the affected turf to the point where the turf would eventually recover. We always have hope, right? How many of us have looked for and seen real or imagined signs of life in winter-damaged turf? It is amazing how many young turf plants we can see or imagine in the late afternoon on a sunny



Repairing vandalism on 12 of 18 greens of the Old Course at Hong Kong Country Club.

day. But, after a few days, it was readily apparent as seen in the accompanying photos that little or no turf had survived in the affected areas. Now what?

When managing bent grass greens, one method would be to heavily aerify, seed and top-dress the damaged turf. Or in the case of older golf courses with greens of *Poa annua*, one could just wait for the *Poa annua* to grow back and fill in the dead spots. Unfortunately, that was not an option since the Bermuda grass varieties we have are not seeded but stolonized in

establishment. As I've mentioned before, the inability to overseed worn or damaged areas is a major negative in maintaining warm season turf grass. One has to actually reseed worn or damaged areas, or go to a program of aerifying, fertilizing and irrigation. Depending on the time of year, this type of recovery can be very slow.

Presently, our winter temperatures in Hong Kong are in the upper 40's to lower 50's Fahrenheit nighttime, and low 70's Fahrenheit during the day, great winter  
(Continued on Page 7)

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## Vandalism—

(Continued from Page 6)

temperatures for a Midwestern superintendent accustomed to single digit highs during the day and below zero temperatures at night. But for warm season turf grasses, our current winter temperatures are not favorable for pushing growth. The relative cold here causes the warm season grasses to go into a semi-dormant stage, depending on the particular species of grass. The ability of the Bermuda grass to spread and recover in the damaged areas at this time of the year is very marginal. To wait for the Bermuda grass greens to heal and recover on their own was not an option for several reasons. Winter is the heavy golf season in Asia. Temperatures are very comfortable, and rainfall is minimal. It is not uncommon to go two or three months in Hong Kong without any measurable rainfall during the winter period from November through February. Recovery would occur way too slowly for the Bermuda grass greens.

The plan settled on was to bring in a staff of Lebanese temporary laborers from

a local employment agency. We put together a patching team of eight temporary laborers and two of our regular staff members. The process entailed removing a circular plug about 1.5" in diameter from the damaged area. This plug was discarded and a new plug was put into the vacant plug cavity within the area of damage. We assembled patching teams of eight workers with three people removing dead plugs, three people cutting out good plugs from a nursery, and two people carefully plugging the healthy transplants into the damaged areas. Once an area was repaired, light topdressing was applied to level the surface and blend the areas into the surrounding healthy turf. Although this proved to be a very tedious, slow process, it was the only realistic method to re-establish healthy turf in the damaged areas.

The staff and workers were undaunted by the slow, tedious, cumbersome nature of this project. The Chinese philosophy seems to be to accept boring repetitive work as the norm in a job. Perhaps because jobs are hard to come by due to the massive population here, the thought of people quitting or not showing up to

perform apparently menial tasks or tedious work is not in the Chinese thinking.

From a management standpoint creating a job or employing people is foremost in the thought process. Efficiency as we in the West perceive it is not an issue or a goal. Trading the use of equipment for a massive number of labor hours is not only cheaper in most cases, due to the low wage rates, but accomplishes the goal of employing as many people as possible. Imagine the look on the face of your favorite equipment rep when you tell him or her that you won't be needing any of that green or red or orange equipment this year as you will just employ an extra 100 or 200 people, and save money doing it!

All 12 greens were repaired by hand in about two weeks time with the patching team working 8-hour days for two weeks. Eight people, eight hours a day, six days per week, two weeks; that's ONLY 768 man hours, give or take. With the turf repairs completed, the damaged greens are now foliar fertilized twice a week, frequently top-dressed, and irrigated as needed.

(Continued on Page 8)

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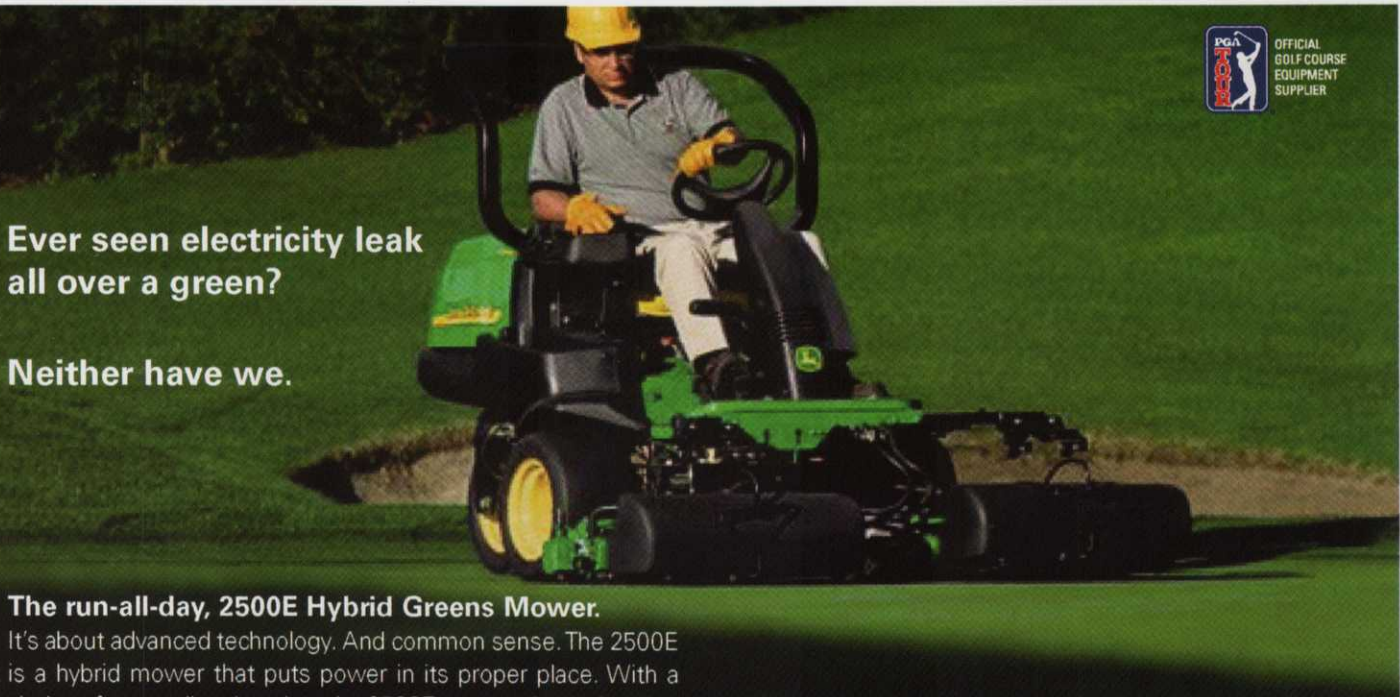
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## Vandalism—

(Continued from Page 7)

As of January 15 the greens showed improvement in the vandalized areas, but healing is slow due to the cool winter weather. New growth is visible moving into the damaged areas, but occurring very slowly. The putting surfaces are smooth and very playable, but the overall appearance is somewhat lacking. Had this damage occurred during the summer months when turf growth is at an optimum, a patching program would not have been necessary. The turf growth is so vigorous during the summer that the damaged areas would have recovered quite nicely within a month or less. Complete healing will probably not be complete until the weather begins to warm appreciably through March and April.

In our situation it is fortunate that we have three courses for the membership to play as our members can be as anxious and impatient as our workers are patient. We still receive heavy play on the old Course, but club events and tournaments can be moved to the other two courses in an attempt to minimize wear on the

stressed greens. All in all, just another challenge and experience in managing warm season turf in the Asian world

One final note: there is another story here where 'Witt the golf courses superintendent' became for a time 'Monk the crime scene investigator.' Despite the fact that we have a full-time staff of security people touring the course night and day, an 8-foot high security fence surrounding the entire course, this destruction, which had to take a number of hours to traverse 18 holes to damage 12 of them, was still able to take place!! After calling in all manner of police, analyzing the evidence, taking inventory, questioning all of the staff more than once and even making



Vandalism on the greens of Hong Kong Country Club

plaster casts of footprints, the perpetrators remain at large, and this mystery drops into the Cold Case file. Perhaps some day you will turn on the TV to find my story on your favorite crime shows, or at least featured on Unsolved Mysteries. Now that would give our association some recognition!

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# PEER-TO-PEER, BETTER TURF THROUGH NETWORKING

## Question for Superintendents: PGR use on greens and fairways: What are your rates and observations?

At **Coffee Mill Golf Club**, our older, heavy Poa front nine greens receive .125 O/M Primo approximately monthly included with a regular application of fertilizer/fungicide. Our newer Providence back nine greens receive 6 - 8 O/M Trimmit approximately monthly included with a regular application of fertilizer/fungicide. Our Trimmit applications seem to reduce small Poa patches during hot weather; we will experiment with increasing rates to further delay Poa encroachment. We have not treated other areas of the golf course, but are considering treating tees to reduce clippings.

- Jeff Normandt  
Coffee Mill Golf Club, Wabasha

At **Spoooner Golf Club** I apply two applications of Primo at .125 oz/1000 and Proxy at 5 oz/1000 in early spring on Poa greens. Timing is critical with these apps for successful Poa seedhead suppression. The first app is typically around April 20 with the second application three to four weeks later. I keep a Growing Degree Days chart in the spring and use it for predicting my first application (when GDD32 =300). Primo at .125oz/1000 is then applied every 10 days through the remainder of the growing season. This same program works well for me on Poa/Bluegrass fairways mowed at 1/2 inch, the only difference of using Primo at .25 oz/1000 and stretching out summer applications to control growth as needed.

- Eric Ritter  
Spoooner Golf Club, Spooner, WI

At **Midland Hills**, we are using a combination of Cutless/Primo on our greens (Bent/Poa) this season. In 2006, we did a season long test (plot) using rates of 0.05 oz/1000 of each product in our fungicide/fertility tank mixes every two weeks. We saw a nice reduction in clippings and noticed no difference in color compared to our other greens that received only primo; we also saw an increase in bentgrass on the test plot. As for our fairways we use Primo at a rate of 0.15 oz/1000 every two weeks and increase through the year topping out at 0.20 oz/1000, for the main purpose of clipping reduction. Our granular fertility program masks any off coloring

that may result from the primo applications on fairways.

- Ben Just  
Midland Hills Country Club, St. Paul

At **Edgewood** our greens only use Andersons Turf Enhancer 2SC on Poa/Bent Greens Rate of 10 oz. per acre tank mixed with .2 N/1,000 sq. ft. every 21 days.

Provides decreased growth with minor discoloration of Poa. Increased density and green speed. Allows us to skip a mowing and roll only once per week, usually only during hot weather conditions. Also allows us to skip clean up round 2-3 times per week.

Plan to use a TGR on tees this season, possibly Primo.

- Mark Lindberg  
Edgewood Golf Course/Fargo Parks

**North Oaks Golf Club's** Poa/Bent surfaces rely on growth regulators to limit clippings during the summer months. Our greens receive .09 O/M of Primo every week during the summer along with the fungicide/fertilizer tank. Fairways and tees receive .16 O/M every two weeks in season along with fungicides and fertilizers. I believe it is important to add a bit of N with any PGR to mask the off-color tinge sometimes noticeable after an application of PGR. We are conducting a Trimmit study with the University of Minnesota and have observed significant suppression

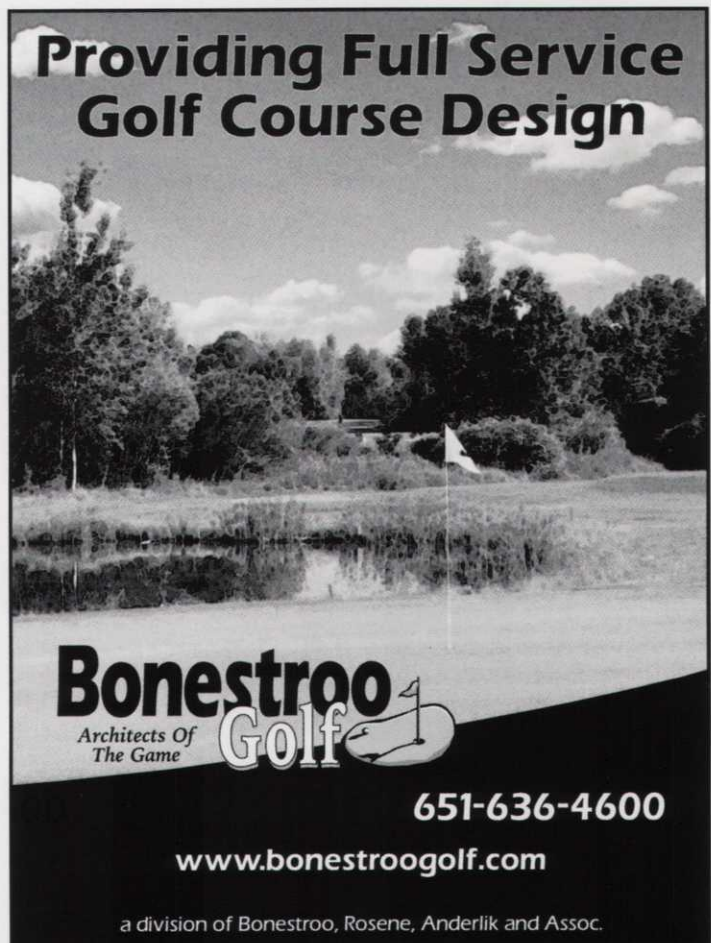
of the Poa in the treated plots. However, in the plots most suppressed, I don't believe the players would tolerate the funky look. But the Trimmit did work!

- Jack MacKenzie, CGCS  
North Oaks Golf Club, North Oaks

At **Deer Run** we use Primo on Greens, tees and fairways from mid May till late september. Greens are treated every two weeks at the rate of .15. Tees are treated every three weeks at .25, Fairways are also treated every three weeks at .25. We also use Proxy on our greens to control seedheads one 5 oz app. early May followed by another 5 oz app three weeks later.

- Barry Provo  
Deer Run Golf Club, Victoria

(Continued on Page 10)



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## Peer-to-Peer-

(Continued from Page 9)

At **Hong Kong Golf Club** Primo is used on all three courses from May thru November to control growth and produce a denser, faster putting greens surface. Fairways are a mix of Bermuda and Zoysia turfgrasses. Regulating growth is extremely important during the warm, wet summer months. With wet conditions, it may be impossible to mow on a daily basis, so the Primo is an important tool to control growth. Primo is applied at .1 O/M to .15 O/M on fairways every three weeks. Greens and tees receive an application of .06 O/M to .09 O/M every two weeks. All applications have iron added to the application to a mask any potential yellowing, but during periods of rapid growth the iron is not necessary.

- Randy Witt, CGCS  
Hong Kong Golf Club, China

At the **Monticello Country Club** we apply Primo on our Bent/Poa greens at the rate of .125 O/M every two weeks with our fertilizer and fungicides applications. Our primary reason for the application of growth regulators is that a majority of our play occurs later in the day and this

keeps the greens at an acceptable speed for those golfers. Keep in mind that an acceptable speed for the MCC is around 9.5 on the stimp meter. We also seldom lower our mower heights below .130", double cutting 3x per week to aid in that speed.

As for the tees, we spray our approaches and tees together, mowed at .437." For those, we use Primo to help reduce clippings at the rate of .20 O/M. We only spray once a month in the summer months, so it has a tendency to come out of regulation before the next application. I tried spraying at the rate of .25 O/M a couple of years ago, but the yellowing (albeit very little) bothered our golfers.

Our budget doesn't currently allow for growth regulators on the fairways. Heck, I wish I could afford more fertilizer!

- Rick Traver, CGCS  
Monticello Country Club, Monticello

**The Ponds of Battle Creek** uses PGRS on the greens. My greens are L93 and four years old. I use Primo at .075 oz/M every two weeks with some N in the same tank. I start the applications at the beginning of June and end in mid-September. I use it to reduce clippings and try to keep a consis-

tent surface throughout the day. I have good results and notice when I am at the end of the two weeks because clippings start to increase. I would like to use Primo on tees and fairways but do not have enough in the budget to support it. Hope this helps.

- Rob Adams  
The Ponds at Battle Creek, Maplewood

The Classic at Maddens Resort is predominately providence bent with about 10/ 15% poa. Start the end of April with 4 oz./A of Cutless and 6 oz./1000 Bensumec on greens (water in) and 8 oz./A of Cutless on fairways with 32 oz./A Dimension (water in). Greens are on a 2 week schedule and fairways on a 3 week schedule with the Cutless. We use a combination in early May on greens for seed heads (1 app.) of 3 oz. Primo 4 oz. Cutless per A and 3 oz/1000 of Proxy. We then continue with Cutless only until fall. The regulating appearance of Cutless on the providence is more subtle. Not as much yellowing as TGR and still get good lateral growth. Iron and liquids are applied with Cutless periodically. We did use 16 oz./A of TGR with our first application for snow mold on tees and fairways. After two years it seems to help

(Continued on Page 11)



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