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MGCSA EVENTS

APRIL / MAY
Vendor Appreciation Day
TBA

MAY 24
MGCSA Spring Assistants Mixer
New Prague GC
Host Superintendent: Jeff Pint

JUNE 13
MGCSA Scholarship Scramble
Victory Links GC
Host Superintendent: Curtiss Conkright

**COMPLETE MGCSA CALENDAR
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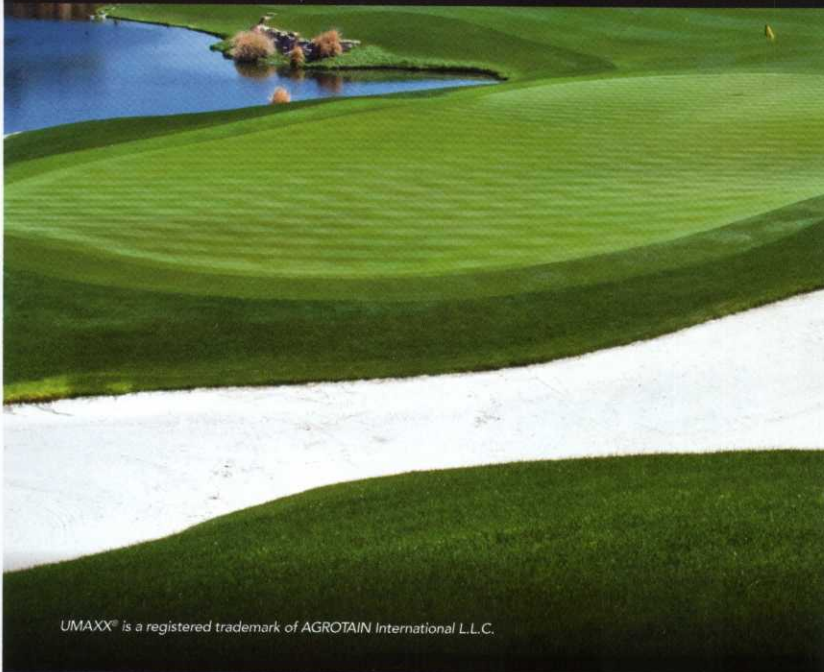
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ABOUT THE COVER

Ryan Moy's takes a flight on a helicopter for an aerial view of Hazeltine National Golf Club. (See Ryan's re-cap of the event on Page 21) Also, Hazeltine's Jim Nicol CGCS was honored by GCSAA for 25 years of certification. (See article on Page 11)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Changes" Redux

By Paul Diegnau CGCS

As I write this, "change" is occurring all around us. Be it in technology, medicine, communications or a wealth of other fields, change is occurring rapidly, with or without us. If you read the "Out of Bounds" editorial by Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, in last month's Hole Notes, you probably have an idea where I am going with this column.

Hole Notes is going electronic! It became official at the February 2011 MGCSA Board meeting. After months of research and discussion, we voted to jump into the 21st century. We will transition during the September, October and November/December issues of this year when both the hard copy and the e-format will be available. The electronic version will be fully implemented with the January/February issue of 2012.

I can hear the groans emanating from some members of our association. The survey we conducted last year showed a strong majority favored retaining the hard copy of our chapter magazine. The one variable we failed to track in this survey was the age of the respondent. From what I have seen and experienced regarding this topic, I maintain that age defines where one stands on this matter. There is a strong correlation between age and preference. On a personal note, I have to admit, at the age of 51, I prefer a hard copy to a computer screen version. We "senior" members prefer paper. It is a generational thing. It is that simple. But in the end, society demands that we conform or be left behind.

The reasons for going electronic are many fold as previously outlined in Editor MacKenzie's piece. The bottom line is that MGCSA must cut expenses to maintain financial viability during these trying and uncertain economic times. As membership participation revenues continue to decline, converting to electronic format should save our association at least \$10,000 annually.

I am also aware of some concern among Affiliate members regarding the upcoming conversion and this is understandable. From my conversations with other regional chapters that have made the switch, it appears that most vendors do embrace the change within the first year. There will be a learning curve as advertisers figure out how to best utilize this medium to maximize their return on the advertisement dollar. In addition to having the ability to link to websites, webcasts and video from within the advertisement, circulation should increase because of the electronic sharing capability. Another plus is electronic ad copy never dies. It lives forever on the World Wide Web and search engines make old content retrievable along with associated advertisements. Even more important, advertisers will be able to track a variety of web traffic data for the publication and related advertisements. Overall, change can be unsettling, but at the same time, it can present new and different opportunities. All I ask is that you give it a chance.

* * * *

The MEGA Seminar on March 9-10 was a fantastic program! Thanks to Eric Counselman and Jeff Ische for putting this educational opportunity together.

- Until next month,
Paul Diegnau, CGCS

HOLE NOTES

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of the MGCSA

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Cultivating NEW IDEAS

By FRANK S. ROSSI, Ph.D.
Cornell University

There are few maintenance activities that frustrate golfers more than our cultivation programs. Yet, we have learned over the years there are important benefits to conducting these operations.

For many the late season is when most of the cultivation practices are now relegated to as a result of continued golfer pressure to minimize disruption of play. Still, with the variety of implements now available, different grasses and of course different management leading to greater organic matter accumulation, it seems time to rethink our cultivation programs.

Pulling a Coring

Much of the early cultivation research was conducted on native soil growing medium. It was also conducted when we were topdressing infrequently with sand and peat and soil mixes. Several studies found in later years showed that hollow tine cultivation could lead to increases in organic matter levels over time.

A careful review of the historical literature would leave the average person wondering why anyone uses hollow tine cultivation. Having questioned that practice openly in these pages over the years I can say I received my share of repudiation as a malcontent, locked in a ivory tower, and simply unaware of practical golf turf management.

I realized that in spite of the research and the colossal frustration of golfers, golf course superintendents observed a benefit. Furthermore, they would often try and not hollow tine cultivate (or cultivate of any kind) and would say, "my putting surfaces were never as bad as when I stopped cultivating."

As the fervor died down many began to wonder about the need for hollow tine cultivation. In addition, when looking back in the studies, solid tine cultivation (again on native soils) often provided little benefit. But now that times have changed and we have sand and more ways to make a hole, and bentgrass growing in the south

and high density grasses and practices designed to promote rooting, it is time to consider simply making a hole.

Poking a Hole

Studies conducted in Arkansas and Nebraska are investigating cultivation

provide the most efficient and overall least disruptive treatment. Organic matter levels were significantly reduced compared to most treatments and plots fully recovered within 10 days. The two questions that lingered for me were infiltration levels (not reported to date) and what would solid tine cultivation have done?

The Nebraska study conducted by Chaz Schmid under the direction of Professor Roch Gaussoin compared hollow tine and solid tine cultivation with various types of less invasive cultivation methods (LIC) i.e., Hydroject, PlanetAir, quad needle tine, bayonet tine, or no LIC treatment. All treatments were light and frequently topdressed as well as topdressed at the time of aerification.

Data from the first year showed there is no difference in organic matter levels between hollow tine and solid tine aerification, but both treatments accumulated less OM than no aerification. No differences in OM accumulation were observed among LIC methods but the hydroject and needle tine treatments had higher infiltration rates compared to other LIC treatments regardless of the aerification treatments.

This study shows clearly that there appears to be little benefit from pulling a core in sand-based systems, rather there appears to a premium placed on making a hole. The benefits of overall organic matter reduction can be realized with solid-tines and sand topdressing and infiltration maintained during the season with less invasive cultivation.

Our ability to produce high quality turf is constantly improving. A result is that organic matter accumulation and reduced infiltration in sand based systems, trump older concerns of compaction in soil-based systems. Simultaneously, it is vital to keep the golfer's needs in mind especially during difficult economic times by minimizing the frustration of hollow tine cultivation. Finding a cultivation strategy that meets all these criteria is in fact a concept that "needs holes."

"This study shows clearly that there appears to be little benefit from pulling a core in sand-based systems, rather there appears to a premium placed on making a hole."

- Frank S. Rossi, Ph.D.

programs. First we must consider some differences from the classical research. Most importantly the latest research is conducted on sand based putting surfaces and designed to investigate organic matter management not compaction. Also, the studies now all include light frequent topdressing as well as heavy topdressing at the time of cultivation. Therefore, these studies are conducted under what would be considered standard practices.

The Arkansas study conducted by John Kaufman under the direction of Professor Doug Karcher compared the effect of scarification with the Graden fitted with 3 different knives to hollow tine coring with tines of various widths, depths and spacings on organic matter levels, efficiency of removal and recovery.

There were stark differences among the treatments and a clear benefit of aggressive scarification, i.e., the 3mm knives provided the greatest reduction in organic matter. However these treatments also were least efficient in removing material as a high percentage of material removed was likely sand and not organic matter. In addition, the scarification treatment took more than two months to reach full recovery.

The tightly spaced 0.25-inch hollow tines set to a 1.5-inch depth seemed to

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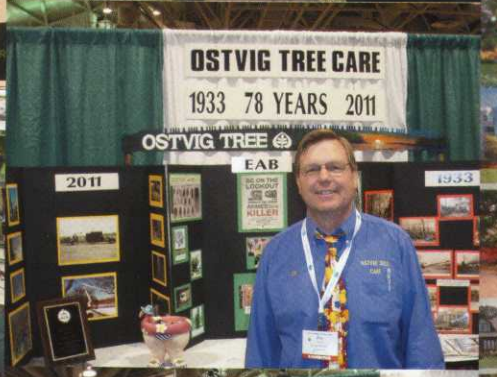
THE BOOTH CHALLENGE



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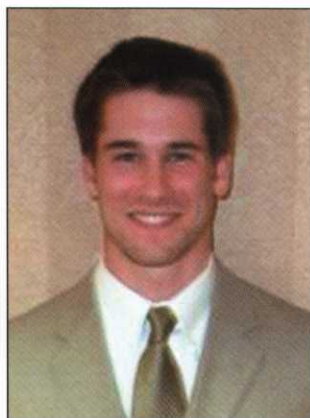


Working Smarter, Not Harder

By RYAN BROWNING

Assistant Superintendent, Town & Country Club

In the turf management industry we are people who wear many hats. From day to day we may be a manager, agronomist, electrician, carpenter, and the list goes on and on. However, there is one



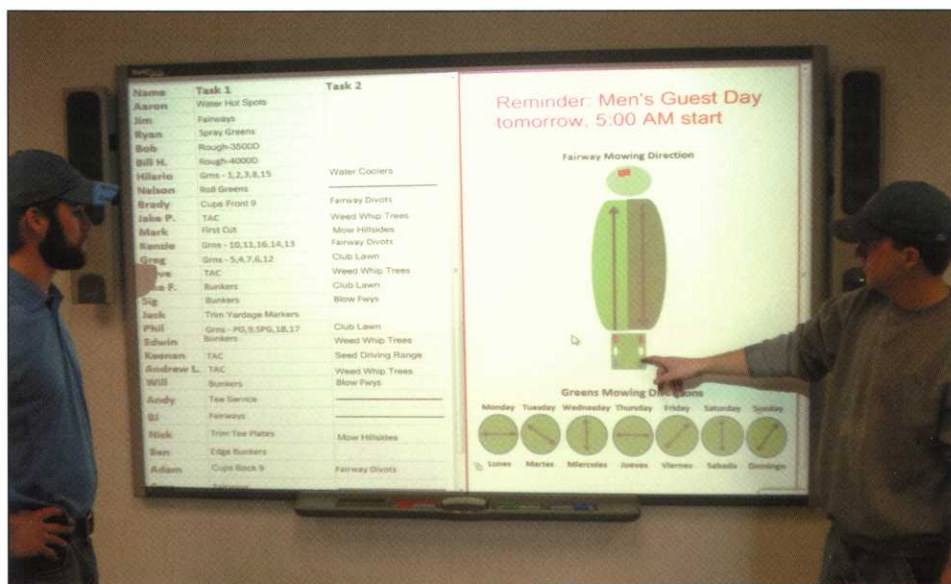
RYAN BROWNING
Assistant Superintendent,
Town & Country Club

thing that we do each and every day and that is taking on the role of teacher. Think about the endless list of tasks that must be completed on a golf course throughout the season from something as

seemingly mundane as string trimming, to something more technical like an irrigation repair. The fact is that we are not only managing what our employees are doing on the golf course, but also teaching how they are doing things so that the desired result is achieved.

Nobody can refute the fact that the age of technology in which we live has had an enormous impact on just about every facet of our lives including the way that we teach our employees. Such is the case at Town & Country Club in Saint Paul where we have been fortunate enough to employ a magnificent piece of technology called a Smart Board to help teach our employees.

The Smart Board is an interactive white board used in conjunction with a projector and a computer equipped with the necessary software to allow the interactive board and the computer to communicate. The projector displays your computer screen as you would see it normally on your desktop monitor. The interactive board and software then allow you to use your computer with the touch of your finger the same way you would with a mouse. As well as being able to control your computer, the system also acts just like a normal white board. The board comes with electronic pens which can be used exactly like a dry erase marker on a



conventional white board. It also comes with an electronic eraser pad for erasing your pen markings.

This technology is now being used worldwide in many different capacities.

You may recall seeing something similar throughout the 2008 Presidential Elections as several major news venues used them to illustrate various polls and voting results. School districts throughout the country and the world are also finding tremendous value in this tool. Teachers are using them every day in their classrooms to administer their lesson plans with an interactive approach. This approach can help students become more engaged in the lesson material and potentially understand it better. This is how Town & Country Club superintendent Bill Larson, CGCS, came across the idea for using the Smart Board in our everyday operations. While dropping his kids off at elementary school in Mahtomedi, MN, he noticed that the boards were being employed in every classroom there. After speaking with teachers and his kids about how they were used in the classroom, he thought there may be potential for its use in the direction of our employees.

Our consideration of using a Smart Board came about at the same time a new maintenance facility was being constructed at Town & Country Club. It had been established during the designing and planning stages of the facility that the employee break room would also be used

as a potential meeting space for members and club events. We thought about how a Smart Board could add to the operation of the golf course as well as how it could add value to the break room for member use. In our search for the proper system we found that there are many options available. Board sizes can range from 48" to 94", projectors can be mounted on a ceiling in front of the board or there are models which have the projector mounted directly on the board to eliminate shadows. There are also overlays designed to fit over the screen of an LCD or plasma TV to create an interactive display essentially the same as a stand alone, wall-mounted Smart Board would.

The overall effect of using the Smart Board has been outstanding. Most importantly it allows us to interact with Generation X/Y employees (who are very technology savvy) in a way which they are more likely to pay attention to. The system allows us to create a very clear and organized job board to present to employees every day. Also, the electronic nature of the system permits easy cataloging of these daily job boards for future reference (rotation of tasks, workers' compensation claims, etc.). The system is also useful for displaying training videos for new employees through the computer, or a DVD player connected to the board. Member use of the break room for meet

(Continued on Page 9)

Working Smarter -

(Continued from Page 8)

or presentation purposes was also a significant selling point for the Smart Board. Accordingly, a couple other features were added to enhance the room as a functional meeting space. The tables and chairs can be set up in a conference style and a conference call system was also added. Furthermore, members are capable of using their personal computer in conjunction with the Smart Board system via plug-ins installed in the floor.

The ability of turf managers to teach their employees effectively, so that they know and comprehend what is expected of them, is invaluable. The fast-paced, technology driven society in which we live dictates that we stay abreast with the times. Just the same as one would stay current with new pesticide formulations or advancements in irrigation technology, one must also think about how to stay current with employee interaction. Here at Town & Country Club, we feel that the addition of the Smart Board has allowed us to reach a generation of employee that is more techno-savvy.

In turn, we have been able to teach and communicate with our people more efficiently so that the best possible results can be achieved in our operation.

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HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

By FRED TAYLOR, CGCS, *Mankato Golf Club*

In the history of the world, there has been more information shared by word of mouth than any other method. There has also been a good deal of misinformation shared the same way. Go back about 30 years or so to the era of Andy Griffith and Aunt Bea - an era of sewing bees and barbershop gossip. The town of Mayberry was an open book for anyone who as much as walked down the street. Everyone knew all the business of everyone else. Whether it be the brand of hair creme Goober used to slick his hair, or Floyd's personal financial picture, all information was common knowledge. So it was in small town America. So, too can it be in a small circle of professionals.

When we were kids, there was a game that we played called telephone. The rules were simple. A child at one end of the line would whisper a short statement to the next person in line. That person would in turn whisper the same message to the next person and soon, at the end of the line, the last person would announce out loud what the message he or she heard. For example, Tommy begins the game, "The big red fox is dumb to go into Uncle Bob's cornfield." This typically childish statement slowly makes its way down the line, whispered with a giggle and a gasp, finally making its way to a proud Billy who excitedly renders the words he's just heard. "The red fox took a big dump in Uncle Bob's cornflakes!" he exclaims.

It's easy to see in this small example that stories get turned around and meanings get changed as information goes through the grapevine. In the past six months I have heard at least three

tid-bits of "news" that turned out to be categorically false. Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing where the news started, or where it got turned around. There are probably many examples of information that you heard through the grapevine that turned out to be less than factual and true. Most of the time this mis-information is harmless; however, there are

a few cases where a person's or organization's reputation is at stake. These are the cases where, as professionals, we must be careful to screen what we hear and not to repeat untruths.

I must admit that I like to be on top of the news. I read the daily paper, watch the national and local television news, listen to radio news, (KQ92 is preferable, I'm not old enough to enjoy 'CCO yet) and yes, wait with ears perked for grapevine rumblings about happenings in our industry. The grapevine is the place where you typically hear who got the job, what courses lost some turf, where the new course is being built and which suppliers are changing corporate philosophies. In other words the grapevine is the conduit for news - and gossip - therein lies the challenge for news hungry Superintendents...separate fact from rumor, news from gossip and never repeat things you don't know for sure.

In an effort to reduce the amount of misinformation that goes around the industry, I invite you to join me in following a few guidelines with regard to grapevine news:

1) **Never pass information about a person that could be considered detrimental** or slanderous to him or her or their career. For example, if you hear Jim-Bob has been drinking like a sailor on shore leave lately, and his job is in jeopardy, don't repeat it. What if it isn't true? Even asking a leading question like "Have you heard anything about Jim-Bob being a slobbering lush?" is enough to give him the reputation even if he has been sober for months. Rumors that are untrue travel just as fast as those that are true.

2) **If you hear something that is unbelievable, it probably is.** In other words, check out rumors that common sense tells you are false. In these cases, either forget you ever heard it, or go to the source and ask him or her. A case in point was the "Jacobsen bought Ransomes" rumor. Although true to a degree, it was a case where the facts should be heard from authorities before repeating them with their permission.

3) **Forget some information as soon as you hear it.** Sometimes what people hear is more than what they wanted to know. It's like hearing your parents talk about sexual fantasies: You just wish the conversation would have never started.

4) **Always be suspicious of the statement: "This is just a rumor, but..."** If that's all the substantiation that a news source has, then it's best to tune out. Similarly, it's just as bad to inform someone else of information that needs such a disclaimer. If it's just a rumor, then bury it.

5) **Remember that if you're talking about someone else, then there is probably someone talking about you.** If you spread negative information about someone else, those negative vibes will return to you.

Having an ear to the ground and a sense of what is going on around us is good business sense. After all, it is said that knowledge is power. But, at the risk of endangering careers and reputation let's all think twice before we attempt to share information that may be of suspicious origins or negative in nature. We know that the grapevine will continue to be a source of information, but hopefully one that is truthful and kind.

(Editor's Note: This article was re-printed from the May 1998 issue of Hole Notes.)

"Remember that if you're talking about someone else, then there is probably someone talking about you."

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