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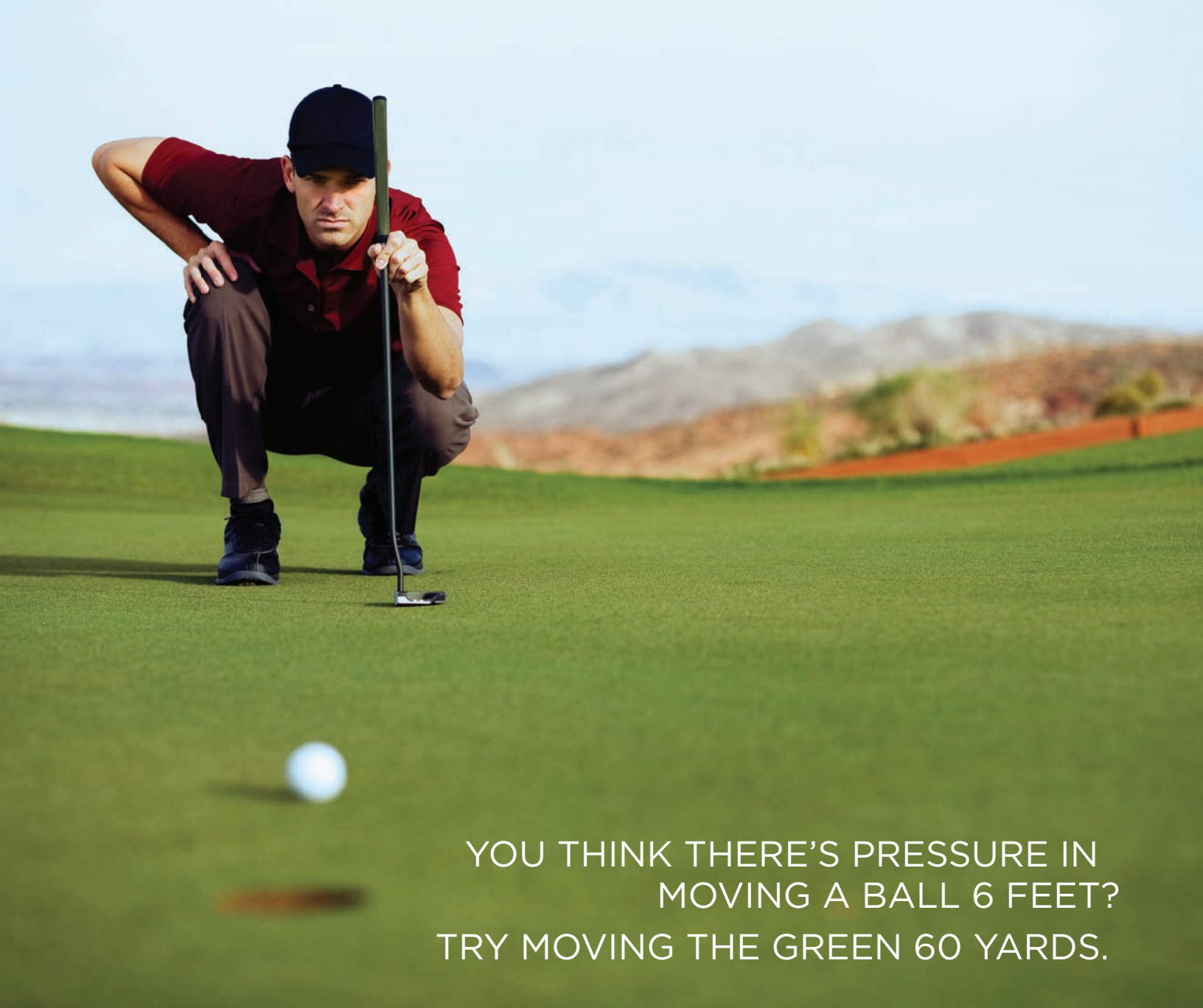
The Minnesota Connection

Mike Smith graduated from George-Little Rock high school in 1996 and continued his education at Southeast Technical College in Sioux Falls and graduated from their Turf Management program. While he was in school and for 4 years after that he worked as the 2nd assistant at Minnehaha Country Club in Sioux Falls.

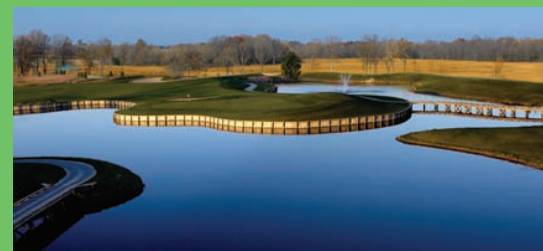
In 2001 he took a job as 1st assistant at Bluff Creek Golf Course in Chanhassen. When the Halla Greens golf course was being built in 2005, he was hired as the Supt. and helped develop the course to what it is today. Mike was diagnosed with a brain tumor Dec. 18th and had surgery on Jan. 4th at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. After being dismissed on Jan. 20th, he has been taking treatments in Sioux Falls.

The Wee One Foundation, combined with proceeds from the Wee One golf outing held at North Oaks Golf Club in 2012, recently sent a check for \$15,000 to Mike in an effort to help with his compounding medical expenses.

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Mike's mother Elvi Smith wrote on March 12th, "...sorry it has taken so long....Mike forgot to tell me at first and then he spent a week in the hospital with blood clots in his legs and both sides of his lungs. He has to have a shot everyday of blood thinner...BUT he is doing much better now...but it did set him back a little. He has had 4 weeks of radiation and will be done on March 26. Also is taking a chemo pill everyday and after the 26th he will be taking the pill 5 days a month. He is still having physical and occupational therapy 3 times a week. So he is a busy guy!!!!!! He has maintained a very good attitude so far...the most frustrating thing for him is his hearing. He can hear some things like the telephone ringing, the microwave but has trouble hearing people talking...he is pretty good at reading lips!!! Mike would like to thank the Minnesota Golf Course



A recent picture of Mike

Superintendents Association and the Wee One Foundation for their generous gift.”

On Monday October 1st the third annual Wee One Golf Outing will be held at North Oaks Golf Club, hosted by Brian Boll. Please make time to join the field for a day of golf. If you cannot attend please consider a contribution to The Wee One Foundation, a Foundation that is so supportive to our profession.

Or consider membership.

Members are members because they understand the Wee One Foundation is an extension of the goodness of the people in this industry. It simply fits into who we are and what we do. This foundation is so aptly named. In the tradition of Wayne Otto, CGCS all of the members are here to help those in need. Recognition is not important, what matters most is that those who need help receive it.

Visit weeone.org for more information.



Looking forward to happier days again, Mike!



Within the Leather

by David Kazmierczak CGCS

“Let’s get together and feel alright,” – Bob Marley

That famous chorus from a

popular song scribed by the late reggae icon means a lot of things to a lot of people. I’m sure when Bob wrote it he was not thinking about a particular group, and I am quite sure the “feel alright” portion may have involved a particular controlled substance, but the melody kept coming to me as I reflected upon my week at the GIS show in Las Vegas.

OK- Las Vegas isn’t Jamaica. Golf Course Industry types will never be confused with Rastafarians, who basically take life in stride and possess a “no worries” attitude. Golf Course Industry types- and superintendents specifically - we have worries. So what on earth would make that chorus, and that melody, remind me of an industry convention that is business oriented, structured, and as far from an exotic island as you can get?

Perhaps there is a certain comfort level with being surrounded by a group of people that you know are going through or have gone through the same challenges that you yourself have faced or are facing. Perhaps there is security in knowing that some of the questions in the back of your mind will be answered at this gathering.

Maybe the week long get-together is just plain therapeutic. Whatever the reason, I find these gatherings invaluable to my job and my attitude towards my profession.

There is so much to gain at the GIS. There are the obvious things like half-day or full day seminars devoted to a single topic, the trade show with every vendor known to a superintendent

displaying their goods, or the dynamic speakers at the welcoming reception and general sessions. But what I value the most is the networking. The little conversations I have with either guys I have just met, or guys I have known from my humble beginnings in this business, and anywhere in-between.

Normally the discussion will focus on how their previous year went, how their family is doing, how the weather is either with them or against them presently, or in the past, but sometimes it drifts into something specific. Sometimes it is about trying a different product a new method, or a complete reversal of a given program. Sometimes it is a change in hiring practices or an alternative perspective when dealing with superiors. Sometimes it is successes, and sometimes failures. The best thing about this networking is you are conversing with a real person- not a computer. There is real interaction with real people and the questions and answers and thoughts and theories are genuine. There are very few industries where people who technically are in competition with each other are so supportive of each other and that is to all of our credit.

This trip I had conversations with (and in no particular order):

- A guy from Maryland who is trying a one-shot season-long fertilizer with insecticide and herbicide control. In the transition zone. Results pending.
- A guy from California who is really into 80’s alt-rock, and some great new stuff out of the mainstream. Not agronomic related, but great for my I-Pod.
- A chance lunch with a vendor from Idaho who had an I-Pad and some knock-out pictures from a snow mold trial at a local course. Pictures do not lie.