



TURFGRASS MATTERS

August/September 1999

Volume 71, Number 3

MAAGCS Helps In the Fight Against Cancer

Earlier this year the Board of Directors of the Mid Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents decided to "adopt" the American Cancer Society as the MAAGCS charity of choice. The annual Superintendent/Club Official Tournament, held at Chevy Chase Country Club, was chosen as the vehicle with which to raise funds. Thanks to John Kotoski, CGCS, Golf Chairman, Jim Halley, Finance Chairman, Charlotte Norris, MAAGCS Executive Secretary, Sean Remington and all of the staff at Chevy Chase Country Club our first effort at fund raising was an overwhelming success. MAAGCS President, Walter Montross, CGCS presented Jan Fox, of WUSA TV Channel 9 News and Karen Brav of the American Cancer Society with a check for \$2,500 at the end of the event.



President Walter Montross, CGCS presents check to Jan Fox and Karen Brav.

Ms. Fox and Ms. Brav were honorary guests of the association along with Mr. Steve Mona, CEO of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Our three guests joined MAAGCS for lunch, golf, and dinner. All three enjoyed the day immensely with Jan Fox shooting a 39 on the back nine.

After dinner, Mr. Steve Mona, CEO discussed GCSAA efforts in promoting the profession of the Golf Course Superintendent. Mr. Mona also spoke about the relationships between superintendents and club officials and stressed that good communication is the key ingredient for a successful relationship. Ms. Fox and Ms. Brav explained how the MAAGCS donation would help in the fight against cancer and thanked the Association for their support. Ms. Fox mentioned the

tournament and donation several times during the following week in her segment of the news.

The \$2,500 donation from the Mid Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents was earmarked to support the American Cancer Society tournament at The Homestead on August 16, 1999. MAAGCS will be the sole sponsor for the Driving Range at this event and our logo and banner will be prominently displayed for all participants to see. The 1999 Superintendent/Club Official Tournament was a great success for both the Mid Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents and the American Cancer Society. The MAAGCS Board of Directors hopes that this will be the first step in a long and successful relationship between its members and the American Cancer Society.

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President's Message

Walter C. Montross, CGCS

By the time you read this we will be in the midst of maybe the most difficult summer in Mid-Atlantic history. The "perfect" weather through June as given way to our normal high temperatures, but even more devastating is the extreme drought we now face. For those of you who may have caught that afternoon summer storm, good luck with disease pressure. For those that have no water or are under water use restrictions, my thoughts and prayers are with you. However, in addition to prayers the association is actively pursuing relief with the State of Maryland to ease the extremely penal water restrictions. In my 30 years in the business the greatest comfort I could take during difficult times was to talk with others who may be experiencing similar circumstances. As human beings we can take comfort in knowing we are not alone with our travails. I bring this up because many of you go it alone and tend not to reach out for help, guidance or just a shoulder to cry on. What we tend to do is take the problems home to sympathetic spouses. I love my wife and children more than anything in this world, but she hasn't yet helped me figure out pump problems, GLS or all the things we must deal with during the year.

My thanks and compliments to the Chevy Chase Club and Sean Remington for hosting the June, Superintendent/Club Official Tournament. This was the largest turnout we have ever had for this event which is a tribute to the newly refurbished golf course and Sean's efforts. It's not

appropriate to thank one's self, but I am appreciative to my bosses at Westwood CC for allowing us to use the club in July. I hope the new EP/USGA/GCSAA bentgrass varietal study was of interest and I welcome everyone back in the future to evaluate this. Lastly, congratulations to Bill Neus and Hobbits Glen for their efforts in hosting the State Farm Senior Tournament. Bill the course looked great and played well. However, I know you would be more than happy for them to move the dates away from the 4th of July week.

Lastly, what a terrific annual picnic at Mayo Beach and South River GC! Kudos to John Newcomb, the many volunteers and our commercial supporters for providing an exceptional event. I think I heard that there were over 150 people in attendance! For the adults the crabs, corn, pit beef and beer hit the spot. For the kids how about the pony rides, moon bounce, clown, bubbles and candy. Everyone I talked with managed to forget the terrible weather and enjoy a great day.

In deference to David Letteman's top 10 list, here are 5 things you will never hear a Golf Course Superintendent say:

#5 In talking with your assistant, "why don't you take your weeks vacation during member guest week, it isn't that important an event".

continued on page 3



Published five times annually by the
Mid-Atlantic Association of
Golf Course Superintendents

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents

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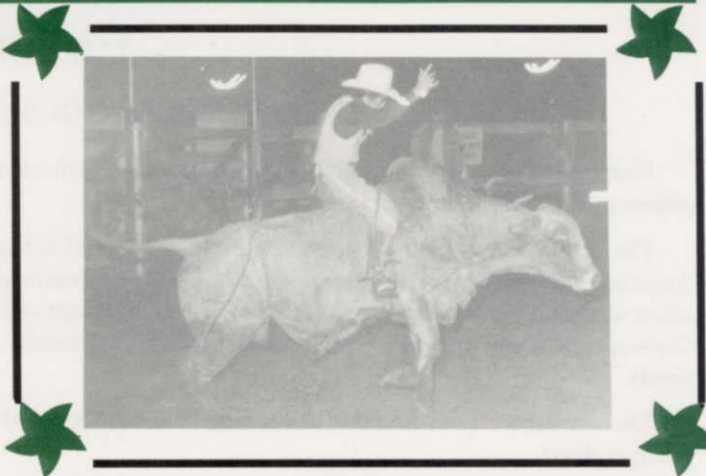
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Bullets from the Boardroom

MAAGCS Secretary - Mike Evans

 The MAAGCS will not be able to participate in next year's Washington and Baltimore Golf Shows. The Washington Show conflicts with the GCSAA Conference and Show and the Baltimore Golf Show is not being held in 2000. To all who volunteered their time to staff our booths this year, "thank you"!

 The Board of Directors approved monthly meeting attendance requirements for future participation in the Superintendent-Professional Tournament and the Annual Championship. Attendance at three monthly meetings the previous year will be required for eligibility, with several exceptions. The Annual Meeting in December will count as two meetings, and the Superintendent-Professional Tournament, Annual Championship and the Annual Family Picnic will NOT count toward the attendance requirement. Meeting attendance will be tracked from March 1999 to April 2000 for next year's Superintendent-Professional Tournament. Superintendents wishing to play in the 2000 Superintendent-Professional Tournament who have not met their three meeting minimum will be placed on a waiting list until the tournament entry deadline. If the field is not full, members will be added to the tournament in the order their entries were received.



Do you really know your Board Members??

answer on page 5

President

continued from page 2

- #4 In talking with the Greens Committee, "the disease that is taking out (pick your grass) will allow us to better transition to another variety".
- #3 In talking with the golf pro, "let's send groups off the back nine so we can get more play on the course, quicker".
- #2 In talking with the family, "I will be taking the month of August off so we can take that cross country family trip we always wanted to do".
- #1 Lastly, in talking with yourself, "the weather is perfect and it is probably going to be another lazy summer".

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Editor's Letter

Tim R. Norris, CGCS, Director of Communications

First, my apologies to our members and advertisers who have been waiting for this issue of Turfgrass Matters. I appreciate your patience during the hectic summer season.

The lead article explains the relationship that MAAGCS has established with the American Cancer Society and the donation our Association made at the Superintendent/Club Official Tournament in June. David Finney, CGCS has contributed an article on the effect our staffs could have on the outcome of daily matches or tournaments. In "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff at Work", Dr. Richard Carlson talks about how to prevent burnout (no pun intended). At the end of a particularly trying summer this article should be very timely.

"Do You Know Your Board of Directors?" has been brought back in this issue. Turn to page 5 to identify the board member in his younger days!

As we move into September and October I hope that there is rain and cooler temperatures on the horizon which will speed the recovery of our golf courses and outlook on life in general. Think how refreshing it will be to hear, "There was no frost at my house!"

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And the Answer Is...

What else would you expect from a "Native Texan"? This is none other than your Communications Chairman Tim Norris, CGCS back in 1973. Tim won 1st place in the Bull Riding Competition at this rodeo event by riding "Texas Tornado" the full eight seconds. Bull riding was one of his favorite pastimes in high school and college. However, upon graduation from Texas A & M University in 1976, being a golf course superintendent left him little time to pursue this hobby. While in Texas, Tim was always very involved in the local turf associations, serving on the boards of Lone Star GCSA, South Texas GCSA and the Texas Turfgrass Association.

Tim, and his wife of twenty-three years, Charlotte, were "college sweethearts". Both were born and raised in Tyler, Texas. They met while singing in the church choir. After dating for three years they were married on July 2nd of the bicentennial year of 1976.

The Norris Family moved to Northern Virginia in January of 1993 from Houston. Tim became the golf course superintendent at Army Navy Country Club in Fairfax. The Norris children, Erin (19), Kyle (16), and BJ (10) keep the family busy with their individual activities. However, in his "spare time", Tim enjoys golf, reading, camping, and hiking.

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Prevent Burnout

Work-related burnout is an enormous, disruptive, and often expensive problem for millions of people. To put it bluntly, people get sick of and fed up with their jobs and crave a better, different, or more satisfying life. Obviously, there's no way to guarantee the prevention of burnout, but there are things you can do to put the odds in your favor.

The keys seem to be balance and growth. If you talk to people who aren't burned out, you'll discover that most of them strive to have a balanced life and to be growth-oriented. This means that while they work hard, compete well, strive for excellence, and have very specific, often lofty goals, they nevertheless insist on having a life outside of work—they enjoy hobbies, they value their free time, and strive to make a contribution to their community apart from their work. In addition, people who avoid burnout are constantly attempting to better themselves and to grow, not just professionally, but spiritually and emotionally as well. They attend workshops or classes, they learn new things, and are open-minded. They strive to overcome their own blind spots. They have a fascination with learning and a zest for life. They are curious and enjoy listening to others.

Those who avoid burnout do so with their uplifting, positive attitude. They have outside interests and take advantage of their time away from work. Their interest in and ability to focus on aspects of life other than work keeps their spirits nourished and their lives relatively content. Doesn't it make sense that if a person was fulfilled and satisfied outside of work, he would carry that sense of freshness and wonder into his work life?

When all you do is work, even if it's satisfying, burnout will be the end result. You're too invested in one thing. You become stagnant, predictable, habitual, even boring. Think about it. What would happen if you only ate one food, over and over again, day after day, year after year? It wouldn't matter if it was your favorite food or not—you'd get sick of it. Or what

if you watched the same episode of your favorite television show again and again? Boring!

Andrew worked for the same mid-sized company for fifteen years before he caught a major case of burnout. Outside of work, he had no life to speak of—no exercise or outside activities, very few friends (and almost no time spent with them), no pets, and no real hobbies. Because his whole world was his job, he assumed that his job was the source of his burnout. He didn't know what to do. Eventually, he became so frustrated, he resigned.

He didn't have the financial luxury of not working for too long, so within a month or so, he was forced to start looking for a new job. During his month off, however, he tried some new things for the first time—and loved them. He read a few books, took some regular walks, and even enrolled in yoga classes. "I not only had fun but met some really nice and interesting people too," he told me. For the first time in his life, he was having fun. His enthusiasm returned, his burnout disappeared and his perspective was enhanced.

Because he felt so much better, he called his old boss and explained what had happened. Luckily for Andrew, his company hadn't found an adequate replacement and they offered him his old job back—which he accepted with gratitude. He realized that there was nothing wrong with his career, but that his life lacked balance. He made the commitment to keep doing the things he now knew he enjoyed and, in fact, to try even more things as time went on.

This is a strategy that some (really busy) people try to dismiss with the old excuse, "I don't have time to have a life." Unfortunately, this is a narrow, shallow, and extremely short-term way of looking at your life and your career. The truth is for most people, if you don't "get a life," you will end up with a major case of burnout. You're playing with fire—it's only a matter of time. So, you have to ask



yourself, "Is it smarter for me (i.e., better business) to continue my lopsided, out-of-balance lifestyle, or might it be better to reserve even a little time for some other things—regular reading, exercise, meditation, an evening with friends, time alone or with family, a course on how to have a positive attitude, or some hobby?"

Even if you're a full-fledged workaholic, or if you are by circumstances forced to work excessive hours, it's a great idea to at least think of balance as a desirable goal. But hard as it can be, you must back up your good intentions with action.

A good place to start is to evaluate your priorities apart from work. If you had to pick, what would be most important? Would it be to volunteer some time or learn to meditate? Is it your spiritual life that's most important? Would it be to schedule a regular date with your partner, child or friend? Or might it be to exercise on a regular basis—or something else entirely? Whatever it is, take a look at your calendar and begin to carve out the time. Anything is better than nothing.

I remember when I began running on a regular basis. The only realistic time for me to do it was early in the morning, well before sunrise. So that's when I did it. Some health clubs are open twenty-four hours a day. Where there is a will, there's a way. Perhaps you can volunteer some time on the weekends, as I used to do for the Big Brothers of America program, or set aside thirty minutes each evening to relax in the bathtub and read a great novel.

Most people take a lunch break. You can spend this time watching a soap opera in the lunchroom or learning to meditate. It's your choice. If you work five days a week, a year from now you will have had 260 lunch breaks. In that time alone, you could be well on your

Board Sets New Policy

In an attempt to increase member attendance and participation at monthly meetings the MAAGCS Board of Directors instituted a new policy for participation in two of our major tournaments, the Superintendent/Pro and the Annual Championship. The attendance policy will be in effect immediately for the 2000 tournaments.

- ✦ Attendance at three meetings is required during the prior year in order to participate in the Superintendent/Pro and Annual Championship.
- ✦ Attendance at the Annual Meeting in December will count as two meetings.
- ✦ The March Seminar and the Superintendent/Club Official Tournament will count towards the attendance requirement.
- ✦ The Annual Picnic, Superintendent/Pro Tournament and the Annual Championship DO NOT count.

All entrants not meeting the attendance requirement will be placed on a waiting list and will be allowed to participate in the events if there is not a full field.

The policy will run from March 1999 to April 2000 for the first year and then will be on a calendar year basis. Again, this policy was put into effect in order to increase participation at regular monthly meetings and to allow those members who actively support MAAGCS a chance to compete in the two major golf events of our association.

Questions or comments should be directed to any board member.

MAAGCS
New FAX Number
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1999 MAAGCS Calendar

September 14	Woodmont C C Speaker: Dr. Tom Turner, Nutrient Management Plans	Mike Larsen
October 12	Lowes Island GC Annual Championship	Byron Lash
November 9	Breton Bay Golf & CC Speaker: Jim Vance, Public Relations and the Media	Bernie Beaven, CGCS
December 14	The Suburban Club Annual Meeting & GCSAA Seminar	

All dates and locations are subject to change.



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A Glimpse of the Past...

by Lee C. Dieter, CGCS

William (Bill) Glover --- A Profile

"Golf Course Superintendents throughout the Nation lost one of their most prominent members when Bill Glover died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage on Thursday, July 30, 1953." He was eulogized in a dedicated edition of the "Turf News Letter"; the following are Quotes from that article:

Bill was one of the most popular men in the profession; he was a born leader and one of the soundest golf course superintendents in the country. His ability was recognized nationally and he held many important positions connected with turf and golf course work. Some of these were the president of the Mid-Atlantic Association of G.C.S., other important offices in this association, member of Board of Directors of the G.C.C.S.A.A., member of the Turf Advisory Council at Pennsylvania State College, member of the Green Section Committee of the U.S.G.A., and many other important offices.

We of the Mid-Atlantic Association of G.C.S. took Bill's passing more as a great personal loss as we often relied upon him for his wise council both turf wise and as a friend.

Bill graduated from Saracuse University with a B.S. in Forestry. Before coming to Fairfax, he was associated with several prominent golf courses, including the Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester N.Y., and Shawnee-on-Delaware in Pennsylvania.

In May of 1940 John Connolly purchased the site for the Fairfax Country Club, and shortly after John and Bill mapped out and began construction of the first nine holes. In a little over two years John and Bill developed a golf course that is recognized as one of the finest public courses in the country. The fine condition of this course is credited to Bill's ability and willingness to test and help develop many of the new turf grasses and maintenance practices we advocate today. Bill was one of the first to test the C-1 Arlington and the C-19 Congressional strains of bentgrass on a large-scale basis under practical conditions and thus helped expedite the use of these improved strains to large-scale usage.

Aside from his many duties in the world of turf, Bill was also an outstanding member of his community both in civic and religious affairs. With the passing of Bill Glover we all feel we have lost a good friend and the profession has lost one of its greatest men. But Bill will never be forgotten because of the principles and methods he advocated for the development and maintenance of Better Turf will resound from the tee to the green on every course in the country. Bill Glover gave his lifetime to the development of better turf.

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MAAGCS Golf Notes

Superintendent/Club Official Tournament Results

Net

1st (58) Dean Graves/Jack Hargett	Bethesda CC
2nd (60) Corey Haney/Lynn Roach	Westfields GC
3rd (61) Bill Neus/Bob Bellamey	Hobbits Glen
4th (61) Jeff Vance/Wayne Righter	Laytonsville GC
5th (62) John Kotoski/Allan Hirsh	Suburban Club

Gross

1st (67) Glenn Smickley/Tom Tracey	Robert Trent Jones
2nd (70) Mike Evans/Jeff Collett	CC of Woodmore
3rd (70) Jim Weaver/John Daniel	Washington G & CC

Closest to the Pin

#4 - Jim Weaver	#9 - Dan Thompson
#12 - Glenn Smickley	#15 - Ken Ingram

Straight Drive

#8 - Steve Caruthers

Burnout

continued from page 6

way to speaking a foreign language, being in better physical condition, becoming semiproficient in yoga, or many other worthwhile ventures. Whatever it is that you love to do, it will be worth it, and it will help you create a more balanced, growth-oriented life. It's inconceivable that you wouldn't feel better about life and about yourself by creating some balance. And as an added bonus, you'll prevent burnout. It is really that simple.

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Bill Grund Redgate Golf Course

Class F

Tom Black B & B Underwater Marine
Mark Petrus Turf Partners

Condolences

To the family and friends of Steve Cohoon upon the passing of his mother.

To the family and friends of Lee Dieter upon the passing of his mother.

To the family and friends of Dave Fairbank upon the passing of his mother.

To the family and friends of Fred Heinlin upon the passing of his mother-in-law.

To the family and friends of Bud O'Neil upon the passing of his father.

To the family and friends of Rich Schneider upon the passing of his father-in-law.

To the family and friends of John Shields upon the passing of his mother-in-law.

Congratulations

To Troy & Sui-Lin Carroll upon the arrival of Marlee Jordyn.

To Russ & Krista Davis upon the arrival of Lydia Lee

To Ray & Nancy Viera upon the arrival of Jake Martin

Get Well Wishes

To Sharon Verchick

Reroutings

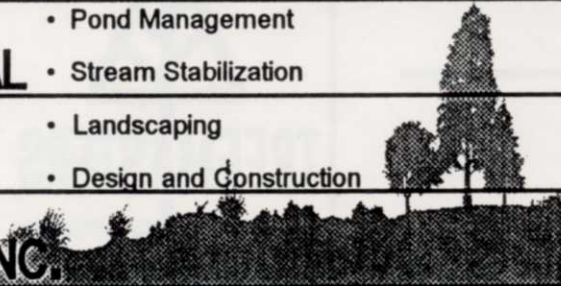
Daniel Evers is now at Springwood Golf Course

James Gosnell is now at the Links of Challedon

Bian McFerren is now at the U of MD Golf Course

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The Rules of Golf and Your Golf Course Maintenance Staff

by David Finney, CGCS

Are you ever concerned that the daily maintenance activities of your staff and crew might alter the outcome of a friendly match, or perhaps even effect the outcome of a tournament? What happens if one of your crew rakes a bunker that has a ball lying in it? What's the ruling if your fairway mower runs over and embeds a ball in play, or cuts up a ball in play? How do you respond to the golfer, and how do the golfers decide the outcome of a hole or the match, if one of your crew has inadvertently interfered? Armed with the correct information on the Rules of golf and how they are applied to everyday situations involving your maintenance crews and their equipment is something you need to know.

I've been a Golf Course Superintendent since 1986 and a student of the Rules of Golf since 1992 when I began studying the rules in preparation for the

GCSAA certification exam. Since that time I have attended several PGA/USGA four-day Rules and Tournament Administration Workshops, and have had the opportunity to work as a Rules Official at the championships of the West Virginia Golf Association. Although I'm not on a par with rules authorities such as Clyde Luther, or Tom Meeks of the USGA, I have gathered some pertinent information on the rules of golf and how they effect us as Golf Course Superintendents, our staffs, and our daily maintenance operations.

One very interesting piece of information I've come across in the Decisions on the Rules of Golf book is Decision 1-4/1. This decision basically says that distractions are a common occurrence which players must accept. My interpretation of this decision provides the Superintendent with sort of a carte blanche for our

maintenance operations. What it means to me is that the noise from a maintenance vehicle passing by a group of golfers, then engine noise from a mower, even the noises associated with construction are no excuse for a bad shot. Of course this decision doesn't give us the right to throw the courtesy normally shown to golfers out the window, but it does say that the noise we make while working on the golf course cannot be used as an excuse for poor play, missed shots, or lost matches.

For the most part, our maintenance crews and equipment are considered to be outside agencies. An outside agency is anything that is not part of the match, or in stroke play not part of the competitor's side. Whenever our crew members or equipment interfere with play of the ball, rule 18-1 (Ball at rest moved by outside

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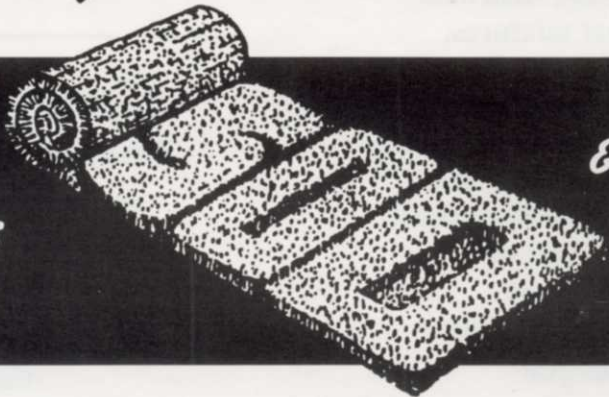


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Rules

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agency) and rule 19-1 (Ball in motion deflected or stopped by outside agency) will come into play.

Rule 18-1 simply says if a ball that is in play, and at rest is moved by a mower, a utility vehicle, or even a crew member (any outside agency), the ball is to be replaced before the player plays another stroke, and there is no penalty to the player. Rule 19-1 gets a little trickier for the golfer and actually introduces an element of luck into the game. Rule 19-1 says basically that there is no penalty if a ball in motion is accidentally deflected or stopped by any outside agency, and the ball shall be played as it lies. This is referred to as rub of the green. The term rub of the green can mean either good luck or bad luck for the player. For instance, if a ball in motion hits the mower while your operator is mowing fairways (in bounds) and is deflected out-of-bounds, then the ball is out-of-

bounds. The player must proceed under rule 27-1, take the stroke and distance penalty associated with the ball going out-of-bounds, and play the next shot from where the original ball was last played. In a similar scenario, while mowing fairways your operator pulls over, and is sitting out-of-bounds waiting for the players to go through. If a shot played from in bounds goes out-of-bounds, hits the mower and is deflected back in bounds, the ball is in bounds and playable.

There are two exceptions to rule 19-1, both dealing with a ball in motion landing in or on an outside agency. Rule 19-1a says that if a ball in motion after a stroke other than on the putting green comes to rest in or on a piece of maintenance equipment, then through-the-green the ball shall be dropped, or on the putting green the ball shall be placed as near as possible to the spot where the ball landed on the piece of equipment. Rule 19-1b goes on to say that if a ball in motion after a stroke on a putting green is deflected or stopped by, or comes to

rest in or on a piece of maintenance equipment, the stroke shall be cancelled, the ball replaced and the stroke replayed. In either case, if the ball lands in or on a piece of maintenance equipment and the equipment drives away with the ball, another ball may be substituted, with no penalty.

Turning now to the application of these rules, imagine that you're taking a mid-afternoon tour of your course, paying close attention to turf conditions, but not paying much attention to where you're driving, when you accidentally drive over a ball in play. Now what do you do? If the lie of a ball in play has been altered by a piece of maintenance equipment, the player is permitted to lift, clean and place the ball in the nearest most similar lie (within one club length), without penalty (rule 20-3b). Carrying this one step further, if the lie of a ball in play has been altered and the original spot is not determinable, the ball shall be dropped if its original lie was either through-the-green or in a hazard, or on a

continues on page 14

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Rules

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putting green the ball shall be placed (rule 20-3c) as near as possible to the place where it lay. And if a ball in play is deemed to have been damaged by a mower or any other piece of maintenance equipment, another ball may be substituted (rule 5-3).

Rule 25 is the rule dealing with abnormal ground conditions, casual water, ground under repair, and there are a number of interesting decisions based on this rule relating to golf course maintenance. Decision 25/14 defines a hole made by a greenkeeper as ground temporarily dug up in connection with course maintenance. Decision 25/15 states that an aeration hole is not a hole made by a greenkeeper, therefore relief is not granted. However, a local rule (33-8/32) is suggested which may be adopted by your club when you aerify, that does allow a player to take relief from aeration holes. Naturally, where there are aeration holes there

are aeration plugs. The ruling pertaining to aeration plugs can be found in decision 23/12. It states that although loose soil is not a loose impediment through-the-green, aeration plugs are considered to be compacted soil, so they are considered to be loose impediments, which may be moved away from the ball before making a shot. Just be careful not to move the ball when you move the plugs, or you'll be assessed a one-stroke penalty under rule 18-2c (Ball moved after touching loose impediment).

How should ruts made by tractors be treated under the rules? Decision 25/16 explains that a rut made by a tractor is not a hole made by a greenkeeper. Deep ruts should be declared as ground under repair by the Committee, however shallow indentations made by greenkeeping equipment is not ground under repair. A ball in a shallow indentation would have to be played as it lies.

Is there any relief from a tree stump under the rules? Decision 25/8 says that unless the stump is marked as ground under repair, or is in the process of being

removed there is no relief. A tree stump is nothing more than a short tree according to the USGA. What would be the status of a tree that had been blown over by a storm and was lying on the golf course? Decision 25/9 states that this tree is not necessarily ground under repair if the tree is still attached to the stump. Decision 23/7 goes further to specify that this same fallen tree (still attached to the stump) is not a loose impediment until a member of the greenkeeping staff cuts the tree away from the stump. The fallen tree then becomes a loose impediment, and only then may branches from the tree be broken off by the player, if they interfere with his swing (decision 23-1/4). In any case where a tree has fallen on the golf course, the Committee would be justified in declaring the area covered by the tree to be ground under repair (decision 25/9).

Decision 25/11 explains the many ramifications of grass clippings. Grass clippings are only ground under repair if they have been piled for removal. A

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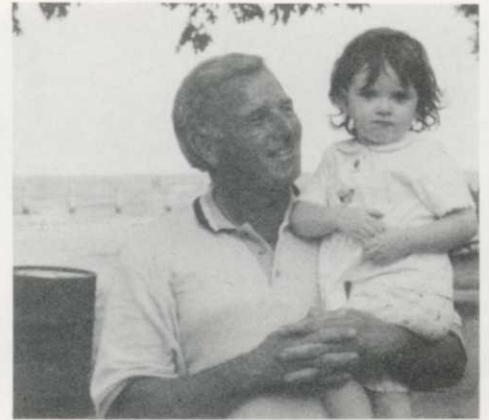
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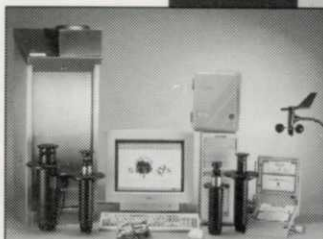


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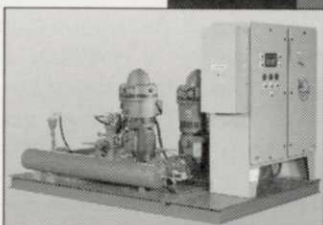


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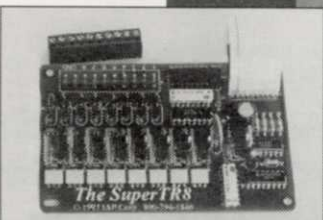
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Rules

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clippings piled for removal interfere with his stance or swing. Grass clippings are by definition loose impediments, whether or not they are piled for removal, and may be removed by the player. But again, don't move the ball when removing loose grass clippings, or you'll pick up a penalty stroke under rule 18-2c. It's also worth noting that grass clippings that adhere to the ball are not loose impediments, and removal of adhering grass clippings would constitute cleaning the ball (decision 21/2), costing you a one-stroke penalty.

Have the members at your club ever had to invoke the "leaf rule" in the fall? Actually there is no such thing, however the, Decisions book suggest that the Committee may adopt a local rule to deal with the seasonal problem of leaves. Decision 33-8/31 suggests adoption of a local rule declaring accumulations of

leaves through-the-green to be ground under repair, allowing rule 25-1 to be applied.

And finally, what is the ruling if a member of your staff rakes a bunker when the player's ball lies in it, and the raking improves the lie of the ball or the line of play? Decision 13-2/4 states that if the staff member raked the bunker on the instructions, or with the sanction of the player, the player would incur a two stroke or loss of hole penalty. Otherwise, there would be no penalty. If in raking a bunker your staff member accidentally rakes over the ball partially burying it, rule 20-3b applies and the original lie of the ball shall be recreated as nearly as possible.

The rules of golf and their application to our side of the business can be involved, even a bit complicated, but they are always interesting. If a question ever arises at your club regarding your operation and the rules of the game, the best and closest source of information on

the rules is you state golf association. In our area of the country, the Virginia State Golf Association, the West Virginia Golf Association, and the Mid-Atlantic Golf Association have knowledgeable, competent rules people on their staff. You can also refer your rules questions directly to the USGA, but keep in mind that the USGA will render a decision only to clubs that conduct their competitions in accordance with the Rules of Golf.

The author is employed as Golf Course Superintendent at Virginia National Golf Club in Bluemont, VA. He also serves on the Rules Committee of the West Virginia Golf Association, and has worked as a Rules Official at the Championships of the WVGA since 1995.

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