

CHIPS & PUTTS

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Northeast Turf Conference

January 29, 2009

Jim Gurzler

Once again Dr. Andrew McNitt, Penn State University and the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council hosted a great meeting at The Woodlands Inn and Resort in Wilkes-Barre. The icy parking lot was the only negative I noticed on the day of the event.

Attendance was very good, although golf attendance was down slightly according to Dr. McNitt. The vendor attendance was at its usual level for the event, 32 by my count.

The morning topics gave the latest updates from Penn State and Rutgers with regard to all those issues dealt with each season on golf courses. The afternoon was a more varied selection that covered such topics as "What the fields go through at the Little League World Series" and "The Pros and Cons of Synthetic Fields."

As a vendor, I noticed more discussions on price and value than in years past as more budgets are facing scrutiny in these trying times.

Anyway, I thoroughly enjoyed the meetings and look forward to next year at the Woodlands.

Editors Note:

On an aside, I also attended the KAFMO meeting a few weeks later and heard a couple of good discussions down there. One was on topdressing both native soil and sand based fields. This would be a great talk for superintendents to hear. The other was on phosphorus usage on germination rates, which could be a budget helper. Keep an eye out next year for the announcement on where and when the KAFMO meeting is as our relatives who take care of sports turf aren't that distant.



President's Message.....

I want to thank everyone who attended the Elk Mountain S.N.O.W. day on January 30. The Annual Ski Meeting continues to be successful.

The 2009 meeting schedule is almost finalized and we will be starting with Silver Creek C.C. in April.

Darrin Larkin

Editor's Notes.....

Another March is right around the corner and Memorial Day is just a skip away from that. Where did the winter go?

My travels have seen budget cuts, layoffs, and firings. Hopefully, golf will be recession proof although it doesn't look good.

Early reports from the GIS say attendance was down 40%. That should be enough to wake up everyone. The tradeshow that I have attended this season seem to have good support from both sides of the desk, supers and salesman. This could be a time when the local shows are the best value for everyone to gain information and networking contacts that help you do your job.

The golf schedule is roughed in, speakers have been sought and the season isn't that far away. Hopefully, these meetings don't go by the wayside this year in the ever tightening budget crunch. If you use these as what they are, tools to gather information and to pick up a couple ideas that might make your course a little better or your job a little easier, they are well worth the time and money you invest.

Jim Gurzler



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From the news wire:

Hundreds Protest
Global Warming



Photos from the
Woodlands

Thanks to Scott
Schukraft and all the
staff for another
great event!





Killington 2009 - Reserve your space now for 2010.
Contact Matt Brown



John with new "Chips And Putts"
news staff photographer and blogger!
Thanks for the pictures, Terry!



Elk Mountain 2009

The Woodlands will be
January 28th so
the next Elk Meeting is
NETS +1= Fun

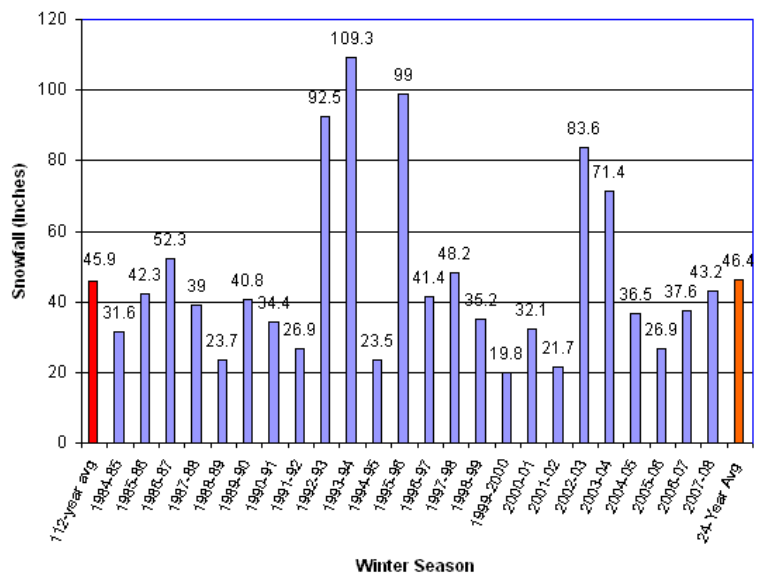
2009 S.N.O.W Meeting

January 30, 2009
Elk Mountain

Superintendents once again proved that they like other weather when they converged on Elk Mountain. Thirty or so attendees found great conditions for skiing...a nice, partly sunny day, good food and fine fellowship. Although our fearless leader was unable to attend, Steve Chirip was his normal self and ran registration until he heard the sound of a twist top break free.

After a great day of skiing, the crowd headed over to Chet's to while away the evening and support the local economy. There were many a happy skier après ski. The ski shots went down and there are pictures on the Pocono Turfgrass blog courtesy of Terry Salak. Treat her well. John, I like having pictures for the newsletter!

STCP1 Seasonal Snowfall





Penn State Now Accepting Applications
 Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program
 Press Release

UNIVERSITY PARK, PA -- Applications are now being accepted for Penn State's Two-Year Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program for the class beginning in September of 2009. There is an application fee of \$35 and the deadline for applications is April 1, 2009. Applications can be obtained by calling (814) 863-0129 or by visiting our web site at http://turfgrass.psu.edu/turfgrass_management/ or by writing to: Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program, The Pennsylvania State University, 441 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802.

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According to the USGA, the guideline for placement of bunker rakes is "out and down." The rake should be placed outside the bunker, lying flat on the ground, and pointed in the direction of play (parallel to the likely flight of the ball). By the way, the USGA also reminds us that the proper term is "bunker," and never "trap." Good luck!



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It is time to take a walk...

Don't Guess; Know What's Going on Under the Snow!

By Keith Happ, Senior Agronomist
January 30, 2009



Recent phone conversations with golf course superintendents have focused on early concerns about ice accumulation on greens in the northern tier of the Mid-Atlantic Region. Fluctuating temperatures, recently as high as 50° F in Pennsylvania, allowed snow to melt rapidly. Temperatures again have plummeted to single digits resulting in a layer of ice forming as moisture followed surface drainage patterns. Despite the surface melt, the soils remained frozen and there is a very good chance that winter hardiness of the turf was not compromised.

With that said, don't take anything for granted. Take a walk around the property and inspect any areas that have been problematic in the past. Brush off the snow and inspect the surface for ice accumulation. While we have not been covered with snow and ice for very long, it is a good idea to formulate a plan just in case the weather patterns persist and ice needs to be removed. A darkening agent, whether it is a natural organic fertilizer, black sand etc., can be used very effectively to accelerate the melt.

On another subject, many calls have been received regarding maintenance budgets and maintenance plans. Some superintendents have resubmitted the operating budgets several times, and, in every case, allocation of funds for the care and presentation of the golf course has decreased. It is a sign of the current economic climate. Still, golf will be played and golfers will want to play on a well conditioned golf course!

Separating needs from wants can be difficult. Now is the time to look at every element of the turf maintenance operation and the play of the course. Despite what many committees might think, the golf course is a revenue center! If course conditions suffer; the main play areas decline, golfers will stay away, and the downward spiral in overall course income will continue. Committees should clearly define course conditioning expectations in order for superintendents to design and develop maintenance programs for a good golf course. Golfers should not, however, assume that the course can be presented and conditioned in the same manner if budget dollars are reduced drastically.

It is time for solutions and suggestions, not complaints and confusion. For example, can things be done differently and still achieve the desired result? Do conditioning expectations need to be adjusted? Should the focus of turf care be shifted more to the center lines of the course? Is it realistic to have shot-gun starts four days a week when funding for labor has been reduced? Can gap maintenance be implemented so work can get done in a timely fashion? Answering these questions will be a start!

Now is the time to come to the table with ideas and alternatives for the upcoming season. These and many more issues can be addressed during a Turf Advisory Service visit. Stan Zontek, Darin Bevard and I are here to help. We look forward to talking with many of you during the conference season. Don't forget our Green Section Regional Conferences February 24th at The Country Club of Virginia and March 10th at Woodholme Country Club in Baltimore, Maryland.

Remember, the Mid-Atlantic Region agronomists are part of your agronomic support team. If you have a question or concern, give us a call or send an e-mail. Stan Zontek (szontek@usga.org) or Darin Bevard (dbevard@usga.org) at 610-558-9066 or Keith Happ (khapp@usga.org) at 412-341-5922.



Shaun Barry recognized for dedication to the industry

Shaun Barry, golf sales representative for Bayer Environmental Science, was recently recognized by the Rutgers University Turfgrass Alumni Association for his "outstanding dedication, service and contribution to the turfgrass industry." The award was presented at the annual alumni banquet held at Rutgers University.




During the ceremony, Barry presented the Bayer Turf Scholarship Award, continuing a 34-year tradition. Among the companies and associations attending the banquet, some \$85,000 worth of scholarship money was awarded to deserving turf students.

"Shaun is a true turf champion who works tirelessly for the advancement of the turfgrass industry in New Jersey," said Mike Ruizzo, Eastern Regional Sales Manager for Bayer. "We congratulate him on his achievement."

Barry has been an active member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey for 30 years. He is president of the GCSANJ Foundation, whose mission is to support research, scholarships and charities throughout the state. He also takes an active part in the New Jersey Turfgrass Association.


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From the GCSAA



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POCONO ROUNDUP

2009 Golf Schedule

April 13	Silver Creek
May 19	Berwick
June 24	Eagle Rock
July 21	Jack Frost National
Aug 17	Elmhurst Clambake
Sept 15	Huntsville Golf Club
Oct 15	Glen Maura National Championship



Speakers will be at each meeting
except the Clambake.

Don't forget that GCSAA points
are also available at each meeting.

PTGA MEETING SCHEDULE

New England Regional Turfgrass Show

March 2-5, 2009

See website www.Nertf.orf

USGA Green Section Regional Conference

Woodholme Country Club

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

300 Woodholme Avenue

Baltimore, Maryland 21208

For information on registration contact
Marti Zontek (mzontek@usga.org)

REMINDER!

**If you have not paid your dues for 2009,
please send them in ASAP.
They are now past due!
Thank you!**

An advertisement for Turf Equipment. At the top, it says "Moving Ahead To Serve You Better" in large, bold letters. To the right is the "TORO" logo with "A Toro Partner" underneath. Below the text is a photograph of a group of about ten men in polo shirts standing in front of a white pickup truck and a Toro riding mower. At the bottom, it says "YOUR FRIENDS AT... TURF EQUIPMENT THE TURF SUPPLY COMPANY" and provides the phone number "888-391-6676" and website "www.turf-equip.com".

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