

Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

New Touches On An Old Gem

Also inside this issue.....

A Rising Tide Raises All Boats

Are You Ready For Gen-Connect?

Turf Management's Great Unknown Commodity

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President's message

Welcome to the first new issue of *Green is Beautiful*! As announced earlier this year, the board of directors decided to move forward with a revised release schedule for *Green is Beautiful* that will allow for improved content, increased size and will continue to provide our membership with a leading magazine on a seasonal basis. The editorial team is always looking for articles written by people, just like you, from within the industry. It does not have to be a big project, it can be a simple practice put in place at your facility that works for you, and we always welcome articles.

Plans are well underway for the 2009 Ontario Golf Course Management Conference and Trade Show to be held this January 21st through 23rd at the Westin Harbour Castle, in Toronto. By now, you will have received the registration brochure and I am confident the lineup of presentations put together by Jeff Alexander and his organizing committee will catch your attention, including Joe Vargas, Eric Lyons, and our keynote speaker, Brian Burke. Mark your calendars now and I look forward to seeing you at the Westin. Don't forget about the early bird registration deadline to take advantage of the lower rates.

Recently, your board of directors participated in a strategic planning session to discuss the many challenges facing our association and formulate an updated plan of action to ensure we are continuing to move in the right direction as an association. I believe following the meeting, all in attendance felt a renewed sense of learning and direction as they lead towards the future. The future continues to look bright as the OGSA moves forward with initiatives that look out for the long term health of our great association! A special thank you to Dorothy Hills and her team for their relentless efforts in handling our daily operations and specifically for all of their guidance and help they provide to the directors. It truly is a team effort and they are an important part of the OGSA team.

As we near the end of another golf season, allow me to wish you a successful finish to the year with the turf ready for a 'long winter's nap'! More importantly, please have a safe and happy holiday season with your families and loved ones. *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*



by Jeff Stauffer
Credit Valley Golf & CC



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Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association



COVER PICTURE

Öviinbyrd Golf Club

Photo by Rob Witherspoon

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Editorial message

by Dorothy Hills

With an overwhelming abundance of technology at our fingertips, we are able to get information at a click of a key. It seems that "Google it" has become the popular substitute for the trip to the library to rummage through reference books and manuals. With this profusion of information it has become increasingly more challenging to eke out what is pertinent, but more importantly what is tried and true. The *Green is Beautiful* Editorial Committee strives to meet your needs by providing you with accurate, up-to-date and informative articles about the industry you work in. But we would like your input on what you would like to read about in upcoming publications. Our next editorial meeting will be the first week in December, so feel free to send your ideas to me ogsa@gti.uoguelph.ca or call 1-877-824-6472. All suggestions will be given careful consideration.

In this, the first of four seasonal publications, we have packed in a lot of good reads. Paul Grotier's article, "A Rising Tide Raises All Boats" provides an overview on how the economy has and will continue to influence the maintenance budget through 2009. There is a summary on the events held this fall. Be sure to read the Member Profile on Bill Fach, Superintendent at Black Bear Ridge Golf Club, and recipient of this year's Superintendent of the Year Award. Noted futurist, Jim Carroll poses the question, "Are you ready for Gen-connect" and elaborates on the unique characteristics

of 21st century skills and why the next generation will be particularly challenging. On the other side of the coin, Sean Jordan talks about "Turfgrass Management's Greatest Unknown Commodity" and the benefits of internship, from both intern and supervisor perspectives.

Our feature for this issue is on Islington's irrigation initiative, "New Touches On An Old Gem". Justin Parsons visited Robin Stafford, Superintendent at Islington Golf Club to get the lowdown on the construction they are undertaking to remedy their water dilemma.

This issue also introduces a new regular piece called, "Second to one", provided by member assistant superintendents. Topics will range from the morning meeting, to staffing issues, coordinating routine jobs and dealing with the unexpected. We not only welcome but encourage input from all of our assistants.

From the staff at OGSA, we take this opportunity to extend our best wishes to you. May the quiet joys of the holiday season surround you and yours with the promise of peace. We look forward to seeing you at the conference in January. Make sure you stop by the OGSA booth to say hello and chat with our directors and staff.



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What's new

Mark Your Calendars



2009 OGSA TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Can/Am	April	Essex Goff & CC	Host Supt. Chris Andrejicka
Pro/Super	May 21st	Kawartha Golf & CC	Host Supt. Jennifer Pendrith
Presidents' Day	TBA	TBA	TBA
Assistants Tournament	September	TBA	TBA
Alex McClumpha	October 5th	Summit Golf & CC	Host Supt. Phil Brown

Dates and details of the above events will appear on our website under both "Events" and "Calendar of Events," as they are confirmed and further details are available. All events will be announced in our e-bulletin Clippings when registration is open.

For your convenience, on line registration will be available again this year.

Education

The University of Guelph Turf Managers' Short Course continues to attract participants from every Canadian province and from all turf industry segments including golf courses, lawn maintenance and landscaping, sports turf and sod production. The Turf Managers' Short Course has built a reputation as the most successful and highly valued turf managers' course in Canada.

For online courses and certificates in horticulture and turf: www.HorticultureCertificates.com

For the on-campus Associate Diploma in Turf:
www.oac.uoguelph.ca/prospective/diplomas/turfgrass-management.cfm

For online continuing education and degree-credit courses: www.open.uoguelph.ca

Membership News

OGSA Member Services tries its best to give our membership prompt service and current information on their fellow members and their profession. In order to do this we need your help. Please make sure that all of your contact information is current and up to date, including your email address. 'Clippings' is an email bulletin that goes out every Wednesday afternoon. We send this out as a bulk email to all members at once, and some servers assume that it is 'spam' and delete it. If you are not

receiving this email, please contact the office to verify that your email address is correct.

Membership dues invoices are now past due. If you have not already received your dues invoice would you please contact the office to ensure that your invoice was sent to your current address.

For Membership Services including database information and "Clippings" contact Pat Thomas at ogsa2@gti.uoguelph.ca

For Accounts Receivable/Payable (incl. member dues) contact Deb Badger at ogsa3@gti.uoguelph.ca

2009 Golf Course Management Conference and Trade Show

Member superintendents may have received two conference brochures; one with the August issue of *Green is Beautiful* and one with this issue. Please pass it along to someone who might be interested in attending, but did not receive the information, such as your general manager, assistant, technician or mechanic. If they are not members, they probably would not have received this. Did you also know that the member rate is considerably cheaper than the non-member rate? If you do the calculations you may find that you can sign a member of your staff up for membership and also send them to the conference for less money than sending them to the conference at the non-member rate.

Make sure you get your registration in to the office by December 1st and take advantage of the Early Bird rate.

Complimentary Conference Registration for Special Circumstances

Class A and Superintendent members of the Association, who are normally employed but not currently working, or have come upon unexpected difficult financial circumstances, have the opportunity to attend the OGSA

Conference. Communicate, in writing, to the OGSA office your circumstances and interest to attend the conference. Any member indicating interest to attend the conference will be kept confidential. This is available for members as a benefit of the association. Complimentary registration to the conference only (not including the pre-conference seminar) will be provided at the discretion of the OGSA board of directors. Take advantage of this opportunity and you will be keeping yourself connected to your profession.

Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association 2007-2008 End of Year Reports

The following is a list of the OGSA reports, required for the Annual General Meeting to be held January 22nd, 2009 at 5:30 p.m., at the Westin Harbour Castle. These reports will be available on our website December 1, 2008.

- Director Election Notice.
- End of Year Audited Financial Statements for period October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008.
- End of Year Director Portfolio Reports.
- Minutes from Annual General Meeting held January 17, 2008.

According to our bi-law these reports can be accessed, as soon as they are available, on our web site www.golfsupers.on.ca.

Log into the Members Only section and go to "Member News". They should be posted by December 1st. If you have a problem accessing them, please call the office. The package can also be viewed at our offices at: 328 Victoria Road South, RR 2 Guelph, Ontario N1H 6H8

If you require a hard copy of these reports please notify the office and a package will be mailed to you. Toll Free (877) 824-6472 or (519) 767-3341.



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Welcome!

OGSA Welcomes our newest members

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Sunningdale Golf & CC	
Andrew Chartrand	Class C
Sarnia Golf & CC	
Jamie Corbett	Class C
Marlwood Golf & CC	
Alan Dolick	Class F
Royal Ottawa Golf Club	
Jason Fairfield	Class C
Braeben Golf Course	
Warwick Fynn	Class F
Credit Valley Golf & CC	
Jeffrey Lauzon	Class C
Islington Golf Club	
Jeremy Marshall	Class C
Lindsay Golf & CC	
Luke Paddle	Class F
The Lake Joseph Club	
Gary Terris	Class A
Crimson Ridge Golf Club	
Rob Vogt	Class S
Elmira Golf Club	
Venessa White	Class C
Watson's Glen GC	
Victor Woodley	Class F
Castlemore Golf Club	
Nevin Yachuk	Class C
The Country Club	
Arbourturf Solutions	Class E
Darryl James	
Burtch Power Centre	Class E
Dan Haupt	
Shawn P Waters & Assoc.	
Shawn Waters	Class E
Uxbridge Nurseries	Class E
Harry Worsley	

From roots to shoots



by Pam Charbonneau
OMAF Turfgrass Specialist

At the recent Crop Science Society of America there were roughly 100 scientific papers delivered on the topic of turf. Below are some highlights from the conference that might be of interest to Ontario golf superintendents.

Influence of Irrigation Management on Anthracnose Severity of Annual Bluegrass. [Joseph A. Roberts](#) , John C. Inguagiat , Bruce B. Clarke , James

A. Murphy , Dept. of Plant Biology & Pathology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

This study was initiated in 2006 on a 5-yr old annual bluegrass turf. Irrigation treatments of 100, 80, 60 and 40% of reference evapotranspiration (ET_0) were applied daily to the plots. Individual plots were syringed (≤ 2.5 -mm water) when wilt stress was visible. Anthracnose severity was assessed every 7 to 10 days from mid-June through mid-August. Drought stress (40% ET_0) increased anthracnose in both 2006 and 2007; anthracnose was less severe under 60% ET_0 irrigation and irrigating at 80% ET_0 reduced severity compared to 60% ET_0 . Irrigating at 100% ET_0 initially reduced anthracnose severity compared to 40% ET_0 ; however, 100% ET_0 resulted in similar disease severity by the end of the 2006 season. While irrigating at 100% ET_0 did not increase disease severity in 2007, 100% ET_0 plots had poor turf quality in both years similar to 40% ET_0 irrigation. Both over-irrigating or under-irrigating increase anthracnose severity on annual bluegrass, which is contrary to the belief that only over-irrigating will stimulate this disease.

The above study might explain why the incidence of anthracnose basal rot was high in Ontario during the summer of 2008, which was one of the wettest summers on record.

Topdressing Incorporation and Sand Shape Effects on Anthracnose Severity of Annual Bluegrass. [John C. Inguagiat](#) , James A. Murphy , Bruce B. Clarke , Joseph A. Roberts , Dept. of Plant Biology & Pathology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

Sand topdressing is suspected to enhance anthracnose (*Colletotrichum cereale*). This study evaluated topdressing incorporation method (none, vibratory rolling, soft bristled brush and stiff bristled brush) and sand shape (none, round and sub-angular) for effects on anthracnose severity in 2006 and 2007. This experiment was conducted on a 5-yr-old annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) turf mowed at 3.2 mm. Topdressing was applied at 0.3 L m⁻² every 14-d from 27 June and 14 May to 13 and 27 September 2006 and 2007, respectively. Disease severity was measured as the percent area with symptomatic turf. The sand shape main effect was the only significant source of variation in both years. Both sand shapes initially increased disease severity 4 to 14% compared to non-topdressed turf in July 2006; whereas neither sand shape increased severity compared to non-

topdressed turf in July 2007. Sub-angular and round sands reduced anthracnose 8 to 29% and 7 to 29%, respectively, compared to non-topdressed turf during August and September of 2006 and 2007. Anthracnose was less severe in plots topdressed with sub-angular sand than round sand in July 2006 and July through September 2007. The method of incorporating topdressing sands did not affect anthracnose severity. Sand topdressing reduced disease severity particularly with sub-angular shaped sand.

Again, relating to the incidence of anthracnose basal rot in the summer of 2008, during rainy years it is vitally important to keep up with cultural practices such as sand topdressing to help suppress diseases such as anthracnose basal rot.

Direct Measurement of Foliar-Applied Nitrogen Uptake by a Cool-Season and Warm-Season Putting Green Turfgrass Species. [J. Chris Stiegler](#) , Michael Richardson , Douglas E. Karcher , Richard J. Norman , Trent L. Roberts , University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

The supplemental practice of foliar fertilization often comprises a significant portion of the total annual nitrogen (N) applied to putting greens. Despite its increasingly common use among golf course superintendents, there have been relatively few research studies investigating foliar uptake by turfgrasses and no studies which document foliar uptake of nutrients in a field setting. A ¹⁵N isotopic tracer field study was conducted to compare the seasonal uptake of foliar-applied nitrogen by a cool-season (*Agrostis stolonifera* var. *palustris* cv. 'Penn AI') and warm-season (*Cynodon dactylon* cv. 'Tifeagle') turfgrass species managed under golf course putting green conditions. ¹⁵N-labeled urea was applied monthly from May to September at rates of 1.25 g N/m² and 0.5 g N/m². Turf plugs were removed at different intervals after application (1 hr, 4 hr, 8 hr, and 24 hr) and immediately rinsed to remove unabsorbed fertilizer N. Separated, dried and ground leaf tissue was analyzed by mass spectrometry for N isotopes. In order to determine factors influencing foliar uptake, ¹⁵N plant recoveries were compared to leaf cuticle wax loads, gas chromatographic separation of cuticle wax constituents, as well as environmental and climatic data (wind speed, air temperature, leaf wetness, PAR, and relative humidity) known to affect the foliar absorption process. Data suggest that the putting green turfgrass canopy is highly receptive to foliar urea-N uptake, as a maximum of 77% of the N applied was absorbed at 1 hr after application at one sampling date. However, ¹⁵N fertilizer recoveries at selected time intervals were highly variable among monthly application dates for both species. Leaf cuticle characteristics and weather data parameters helped explain this seasonal uptake variability to differing degrees.

There seems to be a large variation on the uptake of foliar nitrogen depending on the time of year and weather that might be related back to leaf cuticle characteristic at these different times.

Health & safety



by Doug Johnson
SAFETAID - Health and
Safety Consulting

Violence in the Workplace

This may seem an odd piece for a golf course publication. We do not often think of our golf courses as violent workplaces. The reason for this subject is that the Ontario Ministry of Labour (the Ministry) is considering an update to the Occupational Health and Safety Act (the Act) that specifically targets violence in the workplace.

The Ministry is developing an operational policy that defines workplace violence as: "...the attempted or actual exercise, by a person, of any intentional physical force that causes or may cause injury to a worker, and includes any threats which give a worker reasonable cause to believe he or she is at risk of physical injury." This definition of workplace violence is focused on the outcome to the worker, irrespective of the assailant. It is consistent with the definition used by most Canadian jurisdictions. The Ministry is in the process of reviewing how this aspect of safety might be included in the Act.

The following is a modified excerpt from the discussion paper concerning Workplace Violence. In Ontario, there are currently no explicit requirements in the Act or its regulations concerning workplace violence. However, employers have a general duty under the OHSA to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect the health and safety of their workers, which may include workplace violence. Reasonable precautions may include identifying the risk to workers from workplace violence, and taking the measures to protect them. Employers must provide instruction, information and supervision to protect workers from workplace hazards, including workplace violence.

Workplace violence is the attempted or actual exercise of any intentional physical force that causes or may cause injury, and includes threats which give a worker cause to believe he or she is at risk of physical injury.

Ministry inspectors will handle complaints of workplace violence, irrespective of whether the assailant is a client, the public, or a co-worker. They also address workplace violence during proactive inspections. If an inspector finds that the nature of the workplace, type of work performed (i.e. exchange of money with the public) and/or the work conditions (i.e. physical location of the work or hours

of work) increases a worker's risk of being exposed to workplace violence, the inspector may order the employer to perform a risk assessment, implement a workplace violence prevention program and provide training to workers.

Violence or threats of violence in the workplace often fall within the scope of the Criminal Code, and these situations are dealt with by the police. In such situations, the Ministry may determine whether follow-up action under the Act is warranted".

There are a number of legal protections available for workers who are the target of objectionable workplace behaviours. The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits sexual harassment and harassment on a range of grounds. There are also certain behaviours that may be covered by the Criminal Code, such as stalking and intimidation. Workplace bullying, teasing, and other abusive or aggressive behaviour that gives a worker reasonable cause to believe there is a risk of physical violence may also fall within the scope of the Act.

Workers may also have other legal remedies available to address offending behaviours such as pursuing a civil action. Another possible recourse is the implementation of a work refusal.

Concerns about violent behaviour, or the threat of violent behaviour, do not usually meet the criteria for refusing work, as violence is not equipment, a machine, a device, a thing, or a physical condition of the workplace. However, even when workplace violence concerns do not qualify as work refusals, Ministry inspectors respond to these concerns on a priority basis.

All things considered it just might be appropriate for you to ensure that your club has a comprehensive and equitably enforced "Violence in the Workplace" policy to ensure that you are at least meeting the intent of this Ministry Proposal. Winter is a great time to review your policies and procedures. Why not include a "Violence in the Workplace" policy update in this review?

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A RISING TIDE RAISES ALL BOATS

by Paul Grotier, Assistant Superintendent
Donalda Club

First it was the price of oil. Then commodity prices catapulted into a different stratosphere. Who would have ever guessed that copper would become the “new gold”? Fast forward to 2008 and the price of fertilizer, gas, fungicides, and all other maintenance staples are making a mockery of our budgeting skills. And if that wasn't enough, the economy and the value of our dollar is deteriorating.

Oil

Ten years ago, a barrel of oil sold for 10 dollars US. On June 30th, 2008, the price of oil peaked at 143 dollars a barrel! While there is some debate as to the specific mix of factors responsible for this recent price surge, global oil consumption is undoubtedly a primary contributor. From 1997 to 2007, world oil consumption rose from 3433.3 million tones to 3952.8. Most of this increase has come from China. More specifically, as China's economy progresses, car sales, which are a symbol of aspiration, will exceed 10 million units this year alone. It is estimated that by 2035, China car ownership quantities could outstrip all other countries. The price of gas is now making some superintendents rethink mowing schedules or consider the use of plant growth regulators in areas otherwise not deemed necessary.

Fertilizers

Natural gas and petroleum provide the building blocks of nitrogen fertilizer. Rising oil prices have affected the price of natural gas, which in turn has affected the supply conditions for production of nitrogen based fertilizers. The Economic Research Service for the U.S Department of Agriculture, claims that “links between the oil and natural gas market have weakened due to growth in the demand for natural gas and deregulation throughout the natural gas supply system.” The end result will be unpredictable prices for natural gas and fertilizers. Additionally, high natural gas prices have forced some North American nitrogen fertilizer production facilities to shut down, further constricting supply.

According to Agrium Advanced Technologies, increased fertilizer pricing is more a reflection of supply and demand issues. Demand is at an all time high. Emerging markets such as China, Pakistan and India are using more fertilizer, farmland in North America is being converted to corn production for ethanol and overall there are more acres of land under production. As for the emerging markets, increased fertilizer usage can be attributed to the strength of their economies which has distributed wealth to a broader section of the population. 1.3 billion Chinese people want to eat better and another 800 million in India are in line behind them anxious for work, a better life and diet. The result is increased pressure on agricultural land to deliver higher crop yields.

Closer to home, more ethanol is being produced to

help curb energy dependence on the Middle East. The net result is more land being converted to grow corn, thus necessitating more fertilizer. Urea production is also closely tied to a myriad of other industries that produce lifestyle products sold all over the globe and will continue to be in demand at home and in the aforementioned emerging markets. Textiles, adhesives, foams and resins are all urea based and the brewing, pharmaceutical and cattle industries all rely heavily on urea supply. Also, 95% of the world melamine production is urea based. As you can see, urea demand goes well beyond fertilizer.

But that's just half of the equation. There are the supply issues as well. This year China implemented a 175% tariff on its fertilizer exports. Overnight, the cost to access these resources radically increased. At home, access to low cost macronutrients and natural gas have become scarce, costs of inputs have increased and there are more political and environmental barriers to enter the supply market. In the short term, the news is not good. Until new production facilities are built and production in mining facilities is ramped up, demand for fertilizers will continue to outpace supply. Consider the following: demand for urea and potash outpace supply until 2010 and 2013 respectively. As we wait for the dust to settle, we are left with this staggering fact: From January to August 2008 the increases in the North American market of urea, phosphorus and potash was 88.24%, 75.12% and 110.23% respectively!

Pest control products

The cost of manufacturing pest control products has also been affected by the rising cost of fuel and raw materials. Many pest control products available in Canada are manufactured in the U.S. These products are typically shipped to Canada, stored in a warehouse, and then delivered to local distributors. With the increase in energy costs it can be expected that the price for some of these pest control products will be adjusted in the near future. In addition to the rising cost of energy to produce and transport pest control products, an increase in agricultural and pest control in emerging countries around the world is now starting to have a greater effect on manufacturers. As the global demand for active ingredients used to manufacture pest control products increases the availability of these active ingredients become more limited. This recent increase in demand and costs for chemicals has been seen across many different industries.

Advances in manufacturing and packaging will result in new chemistries that are concentrated and require less material and packaging. New formulations, such as wettable granules and emulsifiable concentrates will require less fuel to transport and energy to store compared to older formulations because of their smaller package size and reduced weight.

Sod

According to Chris Hope at Manderley Turfgrass, the price of sod is impacted by oil prices and most significantly, fertilizer. On the supply side, transport costs in the form of a fuel surcharge, have had to be passed on to the end user. **"It's a heavy product to transport and a fuel surcharge is implemented as a cost recovery only"** says Chris. **"The price of fuel is volatile; there could be some relief in the near future."** On the production side, increased fertilizer costs have not yet run their course on sod pricing. Sod has a two year production cycle explained Chris, meaning that the price of sod is principally dictated by the cost of the inputs during the time of its production. Therefore, the significant increase in fertilizer costs we are witnessing in 2008 will largely be reflected in the price of sod in 2009 and beyond.

Impacts

Despite the increase in cost of maintenance inputs, when it comes to putting green quality there is no disagreement among superintendents. **"I won't sacrifice the quality of my greens"** stated James White, Superintendent at Quarry Golf Club. That being said, he always shops around for the best price. **"I have always been aware of the bottom line and try to mitigate price increases by taking advantage of booking programs."** As for fuel prices, it has not yet affected any of his cultural management programs but it is impacting the pro shops golf cart revenue. **"We are discussing possible solutions to help defray the rising cost of having the fleet out. Do we pass the cost of fuel to the players?"**

For Peter Stos, Superintendent at Huron Pines, price increases are forcing him into some unfamiliar territory. **"For years I have resisted pressure from my board to buy cheaper snow mould fungicides, to me it was just not worth the risk"** says Peter. **"I have had good results with my winter program for 20 years. This year, not only could I not justify the price increase to my board, but our member/green fee revenue would just not cover it."** In addition, he is growing-in some fescue in out of play roughs to off-set gas costs and is considering the merits of plant growth regulators to which he claims to have never contemplated before.

For both Greg McFarlane, Superintendent at Thornhill Golf and Country Club and Blair Rennie, Superintendent at Whitevale Golf Club, fertilizer prices has led them to make some minor adjustments. **"Soil reports indicated that we could cut back on phosphorus on our tees, so we skipped an application"** says Greg. At Whitevale, fertilizer applications have been cut back in some rough areas. To this, Rennie says **"As a superintendent, it can turn your stomach to see weak areas on your course. Fortunately, the members haven't noticed a difference."**

Heading into the winter months, there is an air of uncertainty as we look to next season. It appears as though more superintendents will be scrutinizing existing budgets and crunching more numbers than previous years. **"I will be looking into cost analysis for various products this winter"** says Greg. To date, input prices have increased, however, most fear that the full brunt of it will not be felt until next year. As Jay Weiss, Superintendent at Maple Downs Golf and Country Club says, **"Superintendents will be expected to maintain course conditions in 2009 with less than they had in 2008."** Misery likes company; at least we are all in the same boat.

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Member profile

Interview with Bill Fach, CGCS, MS Score Superintendent of the Year Recipient Black Bear Ridge Golf Club

by Dorothy Hills
Executive Manager, OGSA



Born in Galt (Cambridge) Ontario in October 1950 Bill began his career as a caddy at the age of 13 and started working in the back shop washing clubs at 14. Bill's childhood ambition was to be as good a golfer as Jack Nicklaus. At age 17 he moved to the grounds department as a labourer for Superintendent Pelino Scenna. Ironically, Pelino was the Superintendent of the Year Award recipient in 2002. Bill worked at Galt for many summers while he attended University of Waterloo, where he received a Bachelor of Mathematics degree. It was at that time he decided to make a change in his career choice. **"I was in my 3rd year at Waterloo University and I said to myself that being stuck in an office all day was not for me. The golf industry was the answer because I liked playing golf, so I enrolled in the horticulture program at University of Guelph."**

While attending UofG Bill worked as an assistant under Bill Hynd at St. George's G&CC. Bill Hynd was also a Superintendent of the Year award recipient in 1984.

Bill credits his parents, Wilbur and Irene as being the biggest influence in his personal life, instilling in him the necessary work ethics, at a very young age, to become successful, whereas Pelino Scenna and Bill Hynd greatly influenced his career as a golf course superintendent. **"One specific thing that stands out in my mind that helped me get where I am today was trying to do the best I could all the time and learn as much as I could from my peers, books and seminars".**

After graduating Bill was hired as head superintendent at the Essex G&CC in Windsor, and worked there for ten years. It was during his tenure at Essex he had the opportunity to be involved in a PGA event, the Tournament Player Series, where Jim Nelford was the winner.

Bill spent the next ten years at Rosedale, where he was involved in completely renovating the entire course, under Bob Cupp's architectural plan. The following 5 years were spent at York Downs G&CC, during which time he built a 20-acre practice facility and hosted the Ontario Amateur.

In 2003 he was offered an opportunity he couldn't turn down; building a new course just north of Belleville. Construction of Black Bear Ridge Golf Course for owner and architect Brian Magee began and with the help of John Porter, retired pro from Rosedale, they worked with Magee's plan to develop a gem of a course. The course opened in June 2005 with great reviews from the golfing public and in 2006 it received many awards for the design, with both Score and Golf Digest rating it in the top 3 best new courses in Canada.

Bill has been an OGSA member for 31 years and is an advocate of belonging to a professional association and reaping all the benefits they offer.

A well kept secret is that Bill is also an accomplished soap stone carver and has created some works for special awards. The OGSA Pro/Super Challenge trophy was created by Bill. In addition to being a golf course superintendent, leader, volunteer and mentor to many, Bill is a dedicated family man and has been married to wife Linda for 32 years, and states, **"My proudest moment was when my son was born"**. His son, Greg is also working in the golf industry as one of the assistant superintendents at Devil's Pulpit.

When asked about his greatest accomplishment Bill responded, **"When you look back at your 30+ years, as a superintendent there are a number of events that you thought were important for the development as a superintendent. But I think my most rewarding accomplishment would be that I always tried my best to provide the best playing conditions that were possible under my control. And I feel that I can say I achieved this. As a manager I try to treat my staff as I would want to be treated. Always be the best you can be"**.

"In the Hot Seat"

- Favourite major:
- Best piece of turf equipment ever:
- Favourite golf designer:
- Ultimate foursome:
- Biggest Moment:
- Lowest round ever and where:
- Favourite movie:
- Favourite meal:
- Favourite course outside Canada:
- Rate your lawn on a scale of 1-10:
- Perfect Day:
- What would you be if not a golf course superintendent:

Masters

5 gang rotary mowers

Donald Ross

Ken Wright my partner with Paul Scenna and Rob Ackermann

Ken Wright and I beat Scenna and Ackermann in golf

67 (5 under) at Eagle's Nest in Arizona

Rudy (an account of the life of Daniel "Rudy" Ruettiger)

16 oz. T bone steak

Royal Dornoch in Scotland

7 if my rough at the course is rated as a 10

Light rain on the golf course

Retired, playing golf, fishing or doing nothing



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GTI/OTRF 2008 RESEARCH FIELD DAY

by Rob Witherspoon, Director

Guelph Turfgrass Institute & Environmental Research Centre
University of Guelph

519-824-4120 ext. 56886 • robwith@uoguelph.ca

Participants attending the 2008 GTI/OTRF Research Field Day on August 21st were treated to a beautiful sunny summer day. After welcoming remarks from the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs, Kevin Falls, President, Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation and Dr. Rob Gordon, Dean, Ontario Agricultural College, approximately 100 participants headed out for a ten stop tour covering a wide range of research from aquatic toxicology to the very latest pesticide alternatives.

Popular tour stops included the NTEP Kentucky bluegrass trials that include some of the new Texas bluegrass hybrids that have the potential to introduce a new level of drought tolerance into bluegrass plantings. OMAFRA Turf Specialist Pam Charbonneau showed some of the work she has been doing with alternative weed control compounds including Sarritor, the new biocontrol for dandelions. A new mowing trial shows the performance of a number of the newer dwarf bluegrass varieties cut at fairway height and above. Dr. Tom Hsiang provided an excellent overview of his disease research and discussed some of the newer products that are making their way to

the marketplace. There was a chance to score a goal on the GTI soccer field to win a GTI 20th anniversary hat.

Results from current research projects will appear in future GTI Annual Research Reports. Our thanks go to all the faculty and staff who helped with the field day as well as the industry professionals who took time from their busy schedules to join us for the morning.

The research community has been disappointed in the level of participation in the field day from the golf course segment of the industry over the past few years. We are unsure if it is the timing or structure of the day that makes it less appealing to golf course superintendents and their staff. We would welcome your comments as to how we can make the summer research field day more appealing to the golf segment of the industry. Conference seminars can convey much of the basic results of research but viewing the actual plots and discussing the work with the individual researchers can greatly enhance your understanding of the application of the research results within your operation. If you have any suggestions or comments, please direct them to OMAFRA Turf Specialist Pam Charbonneau, any of the researchers or myself.



Photos by Pat Thomas

OGSA SHOOT OUT AND BAR-B-Q SOCIAL

by Dorothy Hills

The Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association was delighted to host an informal "Closest to the Pin" Contest and Bar-B-Q, to help celebrate the CGSA's 42nd Annual Fall Field Day, on Saturday, September 13th. Despite the gray, overcast skies approximately 65 people came out to compete in a "Closest to the Hole" contest, returning to Bert McFadden's maintenance shop at The Georgian Bay Club, for a social time and a sumptuous steak dinner.

Everyone had a great time and many wanted to linger on, even as the busses were pulling out of the parking lot to head back to the Blue Mountain Resort. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend some time with friends

and colleagues from various courses across Canada.

Our thanks go to The Georgian Bay Club for the use of their course. Despite the mist and fog settling in at dusk, it was obvious how truly beautiful the course is. A special thanks to Bert McFadden and his crew, who provided the maintenance facility and made all the arrangements to have it fully equipped for the social and dinner, including arranging for Chef Mark Capka to tend the grill. OGSA Director Scott Heron, initiated the plan, provided the food and saw it through to fruition. Scott and Bert were truly the masterminds behind this successful event.



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SUPERINTENDENT RECOGNITION PROGRAM 2008

This program has been very well received by both competitors and the Golf Association of Ontario, and is crucial to promoting the profession of the golf course superintendent and their professionalism within the golf industry.

If any member has any input they would like to contribute toward the continued success of this program please speak to any OGSA director.



Blair Rennie and Jennifer Pendrith



Gregory McFarlane and Jeff Stauffer



Jason Boyce and Christopher Anderson



Dave Cours and Chris Andrejicka



Allan MacKay and Leroy Bedour



Chris Andrejicka and Paul Brown



Jason Boyce and Jim Burlington

Tournament

Ontario Men's Mid-Amateur Championship

Ontario Women's Amateur Championship

Ontario Junior Girls' Championship

Ontario Amateur Championship

Ontario Junior Boys' Championship

Ontario Senior Women's Amateur Championship

Ontario Senior Men's Amateur Championship

Ontario Women's Mid-Amateur Championship

Host Supt.

Gregory McFarlane

Christopher Anderson

Leroy Bedour

Robin Stafford

Blair Rennie

Jim Burlington

Paul Brown

Dave Cours

Golf Course

Thornhill Golf & CC

Bay of Quinte CC

Goderich Sunset GC

Islington Golf Club

Whitevale Golf Club

Loyalist Country Club

Sarnia Golf & CC

Ambassador Golf Club

Presenter

Jeff Stauffer

Jason Boyce

Allan MacKay

(Robin not available)

Jennifer Pendrith

Jason Boyce

Chris Andrejicka

Chris Andrejicka

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT GOLF TOURNAMENT

by Colin Young, Assistant Superintendent
Beacon Hall Golf Club

Photos by Dorothy Hills

On Tuesday September 23rd, Forest City National Golf Club, located in London Ontario, was host to the 7th Annual Assistant Superintendent Golf Tournament. From start to finish the day was fantastic! Mother Nature was on our side with clear skies and temperatures reaching 23 degrees Celsius, making it a beautiful September day for golf and camaraderie. With the support of the industry the event was very successful and was enjoyed by everyone involved. Our industry is incredible and I am very proud to be associated with the great people who work within this industry.

We thank the Forest City National Golf Club for doing an excellent job hosting the event. The dining room staff did a superb job preparing a box lunch for everyone and the buffet dinner was outstanding. The pro shop staff did an exceptional job from beginning to end, and stayed open to ensure the winners could cash in their gift certificates at the end of the day. We all enjoyed tracking our progress on the golf cart's leader board, which was a new experience for many and added to the fun.

Irrefutably, the stars of the day were the greens department of Forest City National Golf Club led by Superintendent Tim Baxter and Assistant Superintendent Dwayne McRae. We give thanks to them for providing us with a great conditioned golf course, which was a treat to play.



L-R Tim Baxter and Dwayne McRae

For a second year in a row the format was the 4-person scramble using each player's tee shot at least 3 times. With our busy schedules

sometimes our golfing skills can be neglected and with a format like this it relieves us from some of the pressures involved in competition.

This year there was an impressive draw prize for all OGSA Class C Assistant Superintendents. Agrium Advanced Technologies, our platinum sponsor, donated an all expense trip to Farmlinks in Alabama. A visit to Farmlinks is by

invitation only, in which you are given an unmatched opportunity to gain first hand insight into the latest and greatest methods and materials available in the industry. When the time came to make this draw there was a definite air of excitement in the room and some fingers crossed, as were mine. John Bladen, from Agrium Advanced Technologies, presented the prize to the lucky winner, Craig Robinson from Ingersoll Golf & Country Club.

Again this year the prize table was exceptional thanks to our sponsors, suppliers and people in the industry who generously donated. Each of the 103 participants received a memento. Without sponsorship this event would never take place. We wish to recognize our sponsors and give them our sincerest gratitude. Agrium Advanced Technologies is our platinum sponsor. Turf Care Products and Engage Agro Corporation were our gold sponsors. Bayer Environmental Science, Cliff's Tree Care, G.C. Duke Equipment Ltd, Nutrite & OSC were our silver sponsors. Special thanks go to Vanden Bussche irrigation for donating bottled water for each participant. The support just keeps getting bigger and as a result the event is growing each year. We thank all participants for being a part of such a great day.

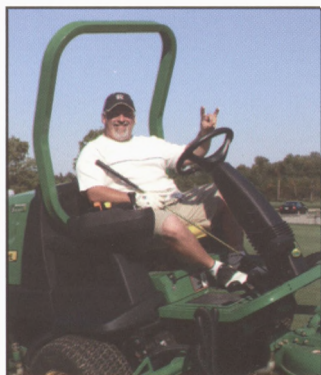
Agrium Advanced Technologies represented by John Bladen presented the winning team, who had an impressive score of 60 – 11 under, with the Champion's trophy.



L-R John Bladen, Darren Nichol, Charles Ihrig, Peter Sojak, and Jason D'Andrea

It is always a pleasure helping to organize this great event with Graeme Calder, the assistant

superintendent at the Cutten Club, who does a huge amount of work towards this event and of course Dorothy Hills from the OGSA who always does a great job. We are already looking forward to next year's Assistant Superintendents Tournament.



63rd ALEX MCCLUMPHA MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

by Dorothy Hills

The day started out on the chilly side but evolved into a glorious autumn day for the last OGSA tournament of the season, at the Oxford Golf & Country Club, also known as Craigowan. We would like to thank all of the staff at the course for their assistance and warm hospitality in making this a memorable occasion for all who attended.

The Oxford Golf and Country Club was founded in 1909 as a nine hole course in Woodstock, Ontario. In 1959 the Club expanded to eighteen holes and moved to its present location at the Dunlop Estate which was known as Craigowan, just north of Woodstock. The course was designed by Canadian Golf Hall of Fame member Robbie Robinson and the original layout has remained remarkably intact over the 45 years of its existence. While there has been expansion with irrigation system and pond, bunker renovation, added tees, and tree replacement, Craigowan may stand out as the one course that still maintains its original Robinson design. It was one of Mr. Robinson's favorites and one which he visited every year.

It seems that the facility has a busy year ahead of them. Craigowan, will be celebrating their 50th anniversary whereas Oxford Golf and Country Club will be celebrating their 100th anniversary, and will also be hosting an Ontario Amateur.

We were truly privileged to have Craigowan host our final golf tournament of the year. What a way to wrap up the season!

We were honoured to have Dennis Pellrene join us so that we could personally congratulate him and

officially present him with the 4th OGSA Distinguished Service Award. This award was announced at the 2008 conference, at which time a slide presentation was given, outlining Dennis' many achievements however, Dennis was unable to join us at that time. Fortunately, many of his friends were at the McClumpha to help him celebrate

George Darou Trophy Winner - Rod Trainor

Flight A

Low Gross	Jerry Richard (75)
Low Net	Robert Wright (65)
Longest Drive	Jerry Richard
Closest to the Pin	Erik Vaughan

Flight B

Low Gross	Jeff Cunningham (74)
Low Net	Mike Kehoe (63)
Longest Drive	Steve Connors
Closest to the Pin	Dick Kirkpatrick

Closest to the pin for any player was won by Brian Rosenberg

Syngenta Ultimate Long Driver winner – Gary Stadneck 304 yds. That's two years in a row for Gary.

Most honest golfer – Werner Rost
Skins winners were Jerry Richard and Jason Hanna



Dennis Pellrene accepts the Distinguished Service Award from OGSA Past President Sean DeSilva



Jerry Richard receives Host Superintendent Plaque from OGSA Director Jennifer Pendrith

Thanks!

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Rhod Trainor wins the George Darou Trophy, presented by Ian Chapman from Turf Care. Superintendent over 50 with low gross Rhod had an 83



L-R Mike Kehoe, Robert Wright, Jeff Cunningham and Jerry Richard

Golf course highlight

Craigowan (Oxford) Golf & Country Club

P.O. Box 22008

Woodstock ON N4S 8Y1

Website: www.craigowan.com

Phone: (519) 462-2910 • Fax: (519) 462-2772

Golf Course Superintendent:

Jerry Richard

Email: jerry@craigowan.com



Photo by Dorothy Hills

COURSE PROFILE

What region is your club located in?
Oxford

What is the classification of your club?
Private

Size of membership and number of rounds?
600 playing members (700 total) with
34,000 rounds per year

Typical opening and closing date?
April 10 - Nov 30

Name of Superintendent
Jerry Richard

How long have you been a superintendent?
20 years

List other accomplishments
OGSA Director 1994 - 1996
IPM Certified
Chair, Woodstock IPM Committee

How long have you been an OGSA member?
23 years

How many year round staff?
4 (Superintendent, 2 Assistants, 1
Mechanic)

How many seasonal staff?
12

How many mechanics and assistants?
Assistants: Jon Atkinson (1st),
Jay McMillan (2nd)
Mechanic: Mark Ryder

How many gardening staff?
1

COURSE STATISTICS

How many holes?
18

What is the yardage from back & forward tees?
6,723 yards from back (black) tees
5,454 yards from forward (silver) tees

What is the size of driving range and range tee?
300 yards at approx. 7 acres

How many bunkers?
50

How many ponds, and/or how many times
does water come into play?

2 ponds and 4 creek crossings

Who was the original architect?
Clint "Robbie" Robinson

What was the year of original construction?
1958

By whom and when was the course remodeled?
Ongoing by Ian Andrew

What major tournaments held?
2005 Canadian Junior
2009 Ontario Amateur

What type of irrigation system?
Rain Bird Nimbus

What is the size of your maintenance shop?
3,200 ft²

What is the size of the greens, tees & fairways?
Greens: 3.7 acres
Tees: 2.2 acres
Fairways: 22 acres

What is your predominant grass?
Dwarf Bluegrass fairways
Poa/Bent greens, Bent tees

How many USGA greens and loam greens?
18 push-up style greens

What is the predominant soil type?
Heavy Loam

What equipment do you have in inventory?
2 5410-D Toro fairway mowers
2 3150 Toro greens mowers
1 3500-D Toro Sidewinder Groundsmaster
2 Land Pride 3-deck rotary rough mowers
2 Kubota 50 hp tractors
2 Cushman trucksters
5 Yamaha and EZ-GO carts (utility)
2 3150 Toro greens mowers
(tees & collars)
1 Broyhill 225 gal. Cushman sprayer
1 Toro 1100 Multi-Pro 150 gal. sprayer
1 Turfco Widespin topdresser
1 Toro 223-D outfront rotary mower
1 Ryan GA 60 aerator
1 John Deere greens aerator

1 Toro 1000 walk-behind greens mowers
1 Thomas skid steer loader
1 Toro Sand Pro
+ other ancillary equipment

COURSE PROJECTS & PLANS

What projects have you recently completed?
July 2008, opened new renovated bunkers
#1.
May 2008, opened new driving range and
renovated 6th hole.
Ongoing tee, bunker and cartpath
renovations.
Opened new clubhouse in May 2005.

What long range plans for renovation do you have
in the next five years?
Continuing with bunker and tee
restoration.
Construction of new maintenance facility
in 2010.

Are there any particular challenges you face with
your property?
Mature 200 acre property with too many
trees.
Lush soil produces extremely heavy
growth at times.
Poor drainage after heavy rains and in the
early spring.
Good habitat for grubs, worms, rodents
and feeding animals.

Do you have any success stories?
Completing ongoing in-house *capital*
work with very limited *operating*
dollars.
Producing affordable golf in a private
club atmosphere.

What type of innovative cultural practices have you
performed?

Overseeding fairways with dwarf
bluegrass to reduce dependency on
fungicide use.

New Touches On An Old Gem ...

by Justin Parsons, Assistant Superintendent
Trafalgar Golf & Country Club

It's a damp, blustery day in late October at the Islington Golf Club and the only thing more prominent than the large silver maples swaying back and forth in the wind are the leaves that dart across fairways and greens, ultimately collecting in bunkers. This frenzied weather is perhaps not only a sign of the changing season, but of the many changes that await the 85 year old golf club.

In Superintendent Robin Stafford's office however, things are remarkably calm. In fact, were it not for the blue prints detailing the construction of a new reservoir sprawled out on his desk, one would have no indication whatsoever of the 4.5 million dollars in capital expenses that are just now getting underway at the golf course.

Indeed, behind the desk, sits a man who is relaxed and poised for what lies ahead. After spending some time with Stafford, one begins to understand why he is so composed, despite the major renovations that await the club. Simply put, he's been through this before. The major capital projects really haven't stopped since Stafford first became Islington's superintendent back in 2004. **"I was thrust into strategic planning right from the start".**

In 2005, the club started a major bunker renovation along with some tee construction on holes two through five. The following year, they completed the bunker work on the rest of the course. In the spring of 2007, the club erected a large netting structure along the third hole. In the fall of last year, they began installing existing greens drainage on six of the course greens.



Existing greens drainage in progress.

Photo by Robin Stafford



Picture on left - Existing greens drainage in progress.

Picture on right - Soil profile showing existing medium and installed sand medium.
Photo by Robin Stafford



Now, in the wake of two of the most extreme growing seasons we have seen in recent years, the club is just starting the first of three major construction projects slated between now and the spring of 2010. The first is the construction of a brand new, 5.8 million gallon reservoir which will complement a complete overhaul of the clubs irrigation system. Finally, the club plans to continue the existing greens drainage work on the remaining 12 course greens.

This is certainly a daunting task, but Stafford seems to take it all in stride saying, **"In many ways, it's all in a day's work and oversight is provided by our general manager, Dave Fox".**

As you stand at the clubs maintenance building and look out across the 13th fairway, you will now notice two acres worth of land that has been clear-cut and partially excavated in preparation for their new reservoir. Currently, the construction crew is sorting through the organic material on site and Stafford hopes they can begin actual construction of the reservoir on the first of November.



Sorting through the organic matter in the proposed reservoir area between holes 12 and 13

Plans for this reservoir were in the works when Stafford arrived at the club over four years ago. However, since Islington is an equity golf club, any major capital projects need to be approved by the membership. Convincing them of the necessity of this project was somewhat difficult at first.

For Stafford however, the construction of this reservoir is a must. With much stricter water-taking practices expected in 2010 due to Regulation 387-04 of the Ontario Water Resources Act, certain provisions must be taken. Having a back-up water supply will be extremely beneficial during times of low water levels in the Mimico Creek, the club's irrigation source.

Also, as the club prepares to install a municipal water hook-up to their irrigation system, the reservoir will allow the club to store a more viable source of water for irrigation.

According to Stafford, this will help address one of the major agronomic needs of the golf course. **"Right now, the biggest issues we face are poor water quality and the distribution of that water."** By blending both municipal water and creek water in the reservoir, the overall quality of that water should be greatly improved.

Poor water quality has been a major concern for a number of golf clubs in the GTA who draw water from neighbouring creeks. Stafford says the Mimico Creek, which runs through Islington's property, is particularly bad due to the many city storm drains that flow into it. **"It's one of the most degraded creeks in the area."**

The end result for Stafford is that he is forced to irrigate his turf with water that is potentially toxic to the plant. High bicarbonate, chloride, and sodium levels in the creek water, can potentially raise soil pH and soil salinity to harmful levels, degrade soil permeability and cause nutrient binding. In short, poor water quality compromises plant health.

To combat high levels of sodium chloride, Stafford

and his staff apply frequent, light applications of gypsum. To remedy the high bicarbonate levels, the club uses an acid injection system along with heavy night waters, as needed, to help flush the soils. This, of course, can help, but improving water quality before it enters the soil is a major step in the right direction.

The nearly 6 million gallon reservoir will no doubt help the club address their water quality issues. Especially since it should allow Stafford to refrain from using creek water during the spring when salt levels are particularly high due to run-off that contains high levels of road salt. But the other major issue facing Stafford's department that he mentions, is the ability to distribute the water.

Currently, Islington uses a hydraulically controlled irrigation system that is only capable of delivering 500 gallons of water per minute. During hot and dry periods when the evapotranspiration rates are high, it takes Stafford 2 and a half nights to water his course sufficiently. **"When you are losing 3 to 5 mils (millimeters) a day like we were last summer (2007), we fall behind in a hurry".**

That is why the club is about to undergo a complete irrigation system upgrade. This project represents a large portion of the nearly 5 million dollars in capital spending between now and the fall of 2009.

The system improvements include new pumps, satellites, and central, as well as an increase in piping and doubling the current amount of sprinkler heads. Stafford calls it a **"full coverage system"** which will allow for perimeter irrigation, a luxury the club currently lacks. This will help Stafford maintain the large investment of capital the club poured into bunkers over the past couple seasons.



8th hole

continued on page 22...

continued from page 21...



8th hole

Construction of the new irrigation system is slated to begin late next summer and should finish by the spring of 2010. This, coupled with the completion of the reservoir next spring, should go along way toward alleviating some of the agronomic stresses placed upon Stafford and his department.

However, when one drives the property of this classic parkland style, Stanley Thompson layout, it becomes apparent that other environmental factors must afflict this golf course. Especially when trying to maintain it with the pressures of modern expectations. The course, which opened in 1923, offers push-up soil greens, with several large, menacing trees, draped over many of the green sites.

To say that shade issues and drainage have been a concern for Stafford, would be an understatement. This, to be sure, is only aggravated by the outdated irrigation system and poor water quality that exist on site.

Everything seemed to come to a head last summer, when Southern Ontario experienced prolonged droughts for virtually the entire growing season. Despite Stafford and his crew's best efforts, some turf was lost on greens. **"It was very challenging to keep it alive last year."**

This is especially true with no subsurface drainage because the potentially lethal salts tend to wick back up into the rootzone despite attempts to flush them out. Stafford simply says, **"I just couldn't win last year."**

But the severe weather conditions of 2007 may just have proved to be a blessing in disguise as it helped to provide the impetus to initiate some much needed

upgrades. As Stafford says, **"The members here take a lot of pride in this property and I think that our conditions last year helped convince them"**.

He also believes that infrastructure changes at neighbouring golf clubs influences the membership as well. **"I think members are very conscious of what other clubs are doing"**.

As a result, the reservoir plan was met with an 85 per cent approval rate, which is unprecedented support in the clubs history. The extreme weather last summer also played a major role in the club initiating the greens drainage work on six of the club's putting surfaces last fall. Essentially, existing greens drainage allows for the installation of subsurface drainage with minimal disruption to the playing surface.

Stafford is pleased with how those greens have performed so far, in spite of the unusually wet summer.

"They've held up well despite the 20 plus inches of rain we've had this year".

Due to the success of the project, six more greens are slated for existing greens drainage this fall and six more in 2009.

In order to further alleviate environmental conditions that have compromised turf health, the club had two sunlight assessments performed on green sites. The first was done on their sixth green, which, as one member says, has never performed well in the 40 years he has been with the club. Stafford recalls seeing the green in full shade in February despite a complete lack of foliage on the surrounding trees.



Bunker upgrades on display 6th green



6th green before tree removal (trees on left) and bunker upgrades

He admits it took some doing to convince the membership of what was necessary. This is largely because trees have become a very political issue. Once they were on side, **“it took a great deal of effort and resources from the club to convince the city”**, Stafford says.

In the end, 7 trees were removed around the sixth green and three trees were taken out around the third green last winter. Despite not being able to implement the full recommendations of the sunlight assessments, Stafford has noticed a dramatic improvement.



6th green after tree removal with bunker upgrades

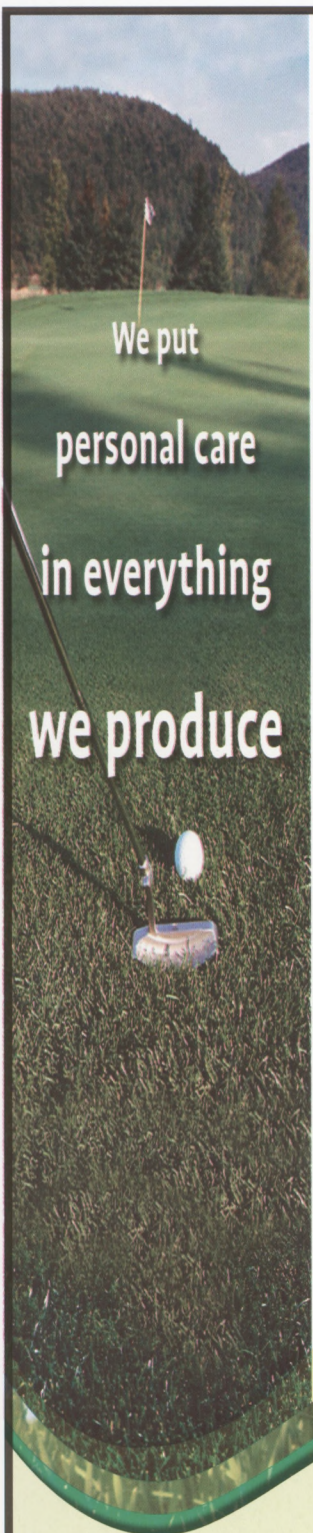
Improving seems to be the name of the game in the intense Toronto market. Stafford, who was the superintendent at Camelot Golf Club near downtown Ottawa for 14 years, says that there is a real difference between the two regions, in terms of standards, values and expectations. **“I’ve had to learn the culture, not just of the city, but of the club”**.

On the surface, the club has simple demands. **“They like a green golf course”**, Stafford says.

But with the millions of dollars being spent, the countless hours of labour, the hoards of equipment, and the multitude of permits, plans and meetings, it’s never really all that simple.

Photos taken by Justin Parsons except where otherwise noted





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ARE YOU READY FOR GEN-CONNECT?

by Jim Carroll

One of the more challenging issues that organizations will have to deal in the next few years is how to successfully integrate "Gen-Connect" into the workforce.

Born between the years 1977 to 1999, Gen-Connect makes up almost one-quarter of the entire population. And while there has been a lot of news coverage about them, most of it has focused on marketing and consumer issues, with no shortage in the availability of statistics on how much they spend, and how they influence the spending of their parents.

Yet there hasn't been a lot of thought given as to how to successfully integrate this new and diverse age demographic into the workforce, an issue that is becoming more important with every passing day. The fact is, these kids are unique in more ways than one, and hence, forward thinking executives should take the time to learn how to take advantage of their uniqueness, and how to best manage and motivate them.

They are certainly technologically adept – they are the first generation to grow up with microcomputers, the Internet and other online systems. They are of a mindset that if you don't have knowledge about something, you simply enter a few keystrokes to get it. In that sense, they are uniquely prepared for a world of work that is becoming more and more complex, given the rapid rate of change that now swirls around every organization. You should be prepared to harness their ability to generate just-in-time knowledge, and use that to take on some of the more challenging and pressing issues that you face.

But with their technological prowess comes a potential challenge. They've been weaned on Internet chat services such as ICQ and MSN, have mastered Nintendo and Xbox from an early age, live and die by their cell phones, and have never known a world that has less than a few hundred TV channels. This brings to them a certain scatter-shot approach to things and an attention span that can be easily challenged. It's not unusual to see them surfing a few Web sites while flipping back and forth between various TV channels, all while they carry out an Internet chat and talk on the phone at the same time!

From this perspective, they are certainly capable of multi-tasking. And that brings a unique challenge that the corporate sector hasn't really had to deal with before – a generation of workers who can become extremely bored, extremely quickly! Because they are used to a world in which they can be doing multiple things at once, and which their minds are always very active, they'll come to expect the same degree of heightened stimulation in the workplace.

This means they'll have to be provided with a regular stream of new projects and varied assignments and responsibilities. Not only that, but they will have to be provided a career path that allows for multiple different jobs and careers throughout their lifetime. Certainly that

fits in with contemporary thinking about where we are headed in terms of the future of careers: a recent article in *The Daily Telegraph* noted that "workers of the future will change jobs 19 times during their lives."

Policies that provide for multiple jobs and career paths will be critical if an organization wants to have any hope of retaining these folks for a longer term. And even that might not mean that they will stay for very long – during a seminar on change for a scientific crowd last week, I pulled out a statistic that indicated that newly graduated consulting engineers thought of a period of time ranging from 2 to 5 years when asked about a long term job!

The unique experience that Gen-connect has with the world of chat also means that this is a generation that is fiercely collaborative and extremely team oriented, with the result that they'll be able to take on the most complex of projects, and work in a manner which draws together the talents of many, many people. I believe that we will see a real change in the manner by which organizations can take on new and complex issues, because of the unique collaborative culture which will be embedded in the workplace.

Their background also suggests that they will reject most of the current norms of what we believe to be a "workplace." They have never known a world that doesn't have e-mail or cell phones. They've long been accustomed to the idea that you can do anything from anywhere at any time. And despite being so team-oriented, they are also fiercely independent at the same time, perhaps because 75% of them are the children of dual-working parents.

This means that they work well on their own, regardless of where they might happen to be located. How can we possibly expect them to subscribe to a corporate work philosophy that says you have to come to a certain location every day to do things? I think they will find the concept to be completely laughable, with the result that those organizations which have yet to adopt a workplace culture that supports teleworking, timeshifting, work-at-home and other methods of location-insensitive working arrangements will be forced into dealing with the issue pretty soon.

Another important fact is that we will likely see the issue of "change-resistance" take on far less importance in the future. Boomers today are best characterized as the generation that has been most resistant to change, perhaps because they are the only generation that has witnessed first-hand the gut-wrenching twists and turns that has come with the introduction of technology in the workplace. The result has been a world in which gazillions of dollars are spent on workshops, seminars and courses on how to "deal with change."

I expect that type of thinking will soon come to an end. Gen-Connect has grown up in a world which is far more complex than that of previous generations, and one

in which change has been constant and relentless. The result that they've developed a mindset that is creative, curious, and quite used to dealing with the complexity of change. This means that we will likely witness with the Gen-Connect crowd a mindset that thrives on innovation, and one that embraces change in all of its various forms.

Related to the issue of change is that they will find (and do find) many of our current business processes to be truly laughable. I remember being stunned when my 9 year old son asked me what a cheque was a few years ago. Think about that – he's already growing up in a paradigm of electronic business transactions. That's the mentality coming into the workforce, with the result that companies will find a constant pressure to bring more efficiency to the workplace through the absolute elimination of the many paper-based business processes which surround us still.

And last but not least, they definitely have strong perceptions on the issue of work/life balance. According to a survey by Manchester, MA based Silver Stork Research of woman aged 17 to 28, most think the most important thing they could give to their children compared to what their parents gave them is "time." That's why 90% of them said they would even take a pay cut to spend more time with their children. The survey went on to examine how the workforce should change to support their ideals.

78% per cent said flexible work schedules were a must, and 59% said that the establishment of "parenting hours" (i.e. a workday that goes from 9am to 3pm) would also be a requirement. That's but one aspect of their work/life philosophy. They will come to expect a career in which work is but a means to an end – rather than a life in which the career defines who they are, they will live with an understanding that their career or job is but one component of an overall, rich, complex and busy life.

Put it all together, and they are unique in more ways than one.

You'll need to give a great deal of thought as to how your members can prepare for the challenges and opportunity this generation brings into the workplace.

Start taking the time now to study who they are, how they think, how they interact – and what it might mean to you in the future. Because the future is now.

Jim Carroll, FCA, is a noted futurist, trends and innovation expert who provides highly customized keynotes and workshops on a wide variety of topic areas. His two sons, aged 13 and 15, regularly beat him at any game he tries to play on an XBox, but he found his revenge once the family got Guitar Hero on a Wii. His web site is at www.jimcarroll.com, and he welcomes your comments at jcarroll@jimcarroll.com



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Second to one

by Justin Parsons, Assistant Superintendent
Trafalgar Golf & Country Club

The Morning Meeting

For many assistants, and by many, I mean me, the worst part of the day is the morning meeting. We're all familiar with this necessary, yet painful ritual. Every morning, some time around 6 am, the staff begin to drag their rear ends into the lunch room for their daily marching orders. Of course, the word 'drag' really doesn't fully explain just how tortured and laboured they appear as they make their way onto the premises, knuckles scraping on the ground all the while. It's like a scene from *Night of the Living Dead*, except it's morning and there's no 'stop' button.

Nevertheless, as the staff file into the lunch room, the assistant (or superintendent or some combination of the two) arduously pours over the morning tasks that must be completed. Now, anyone who has attempted to fill out the morning schedule sheet knows just how difficult this process is. To the casual observer (i.e. every staff member, that awaits a task in the morning) however, this duty is as easy as picking out a pair of socks in the morning. But they simply don't realize that the main objective of this process is maximizing productivity, not catering to the needs of each and every employee.

It's a thankless job really, much like being a referee. When you do it well, nobody says anything, when you do it poorly they're all over you.

Regardless, the task of filling out the sheet begins. You need to take into consideration the weather, the day of the week, the playing schedule, the mowing schedule, who is trained on what job, who works well with who, who needs to be punished for not wearing their bump cap, who needs to be rewarded for staying late the previous day, and so on and so forth. Really, it just ends up becoming like an internal Shakespearean monologue:

"I promised Tony he could walkmow greens, but he isn't exactly fleet of foot and we have a Shotgun at 8 am. Alright, he can change holes. But he's changed holes for 8 straight days and he's starting to get sloppier than Paris Hilton exiting a limo. Okay, Okay, he can join the bunker crew. No, that's no good. He doesn't work well with Othello. Fine, by process of elimination he can do markers. Crap! Cindy has to do markers because she was just trained on them yesterday".

This can go on for several minutes. Ultimately, you end up rewriting it about four times anyway, because Tony was sick, Othello hurt his back, and Cindy needs to be home by 10 am to pick courses online for next semester.

Eventually, you are able to sort it all out and you enter the lunch room. Half of them look bewildered. The other half are asleep. Or, at least, you hope they are asleep. The alternative would not be good.

Some times the superintendent will address them first. I

like these mornings. It's much easier to speak to them after they've been broken in a little. It's hard to go in there cold. Let's face it, you want to see a morose human being, wake an already disgruntled teen up at 5 am, sit them in a room that smells like hot garbage and watch as they await to be told that they will be picking up blocks and placing them mere inches from where they currently lie for the next three hours.

The morning meetings seem to get increasingly difficult as the season wears on too. This is probably because they have figured out just what exactly every job entails by about mid May. You see, at first everything is sort of new and exciting. They hear the word 'fly mow' and they think it may be a cool job. It's not, and it takes them about 3 nano seconds to realize it.

I try to come up with clever ways to distract them from the repetition of the work. Try telling the bunker crew that they only have to rake the ones with sand in them. Or, bet your hole changer 100\$ that you can find a low plug somewhere on the property. He will no doubt take the bet since he has complete control over the situation. As he diligently fixes plugs while moving the pins, wait until he is almost done, slip over to a green on the front nine with another auger and lower a plug.

Some may call this unethical, but they would be wrong. Come midsummer, you tend to get a little desperate when trying to motivate the staff.

It's funny how you have the exact opposite problem with the retired members on the crew. They not only like repetition, they need it. If anything at all takes them out of their routine, all hell breaks loose. Try telling a rough cutter that he will need to help out the bunker crew while the mechanic fixes a blade on his mower. My guess is he will start convulsing.

Perhaps the hardest part of the morning meeting though, is trying to end it. It's like when you're in the car at the end of a bad date and you know full well you have no intentions of seeing the girl again. What do you say? "So, umm, alright well good stuff..." It's the same with the greens staff. They are all looking up at you with the enthusiasm of a cashier at Wal-Mart, just praying that it isn't time to go out there.

It's for times such as this that I think the hands-in football type chant was invented. It really provides a rather natural conclusion to any type of occasion. I mean there is really nothing left to say after a bunch of individuals stand painfully close together and loudly chant the same word in unison, all the while touching hands

You should try it next year, when the morning meetings start to become unbearable.

"Alright everybody, gather round, hands in, Othello on 3!"

TURF MANAGEMENT'S GREAT UNKNOWN COMMODITY

by Sean Jordan, University of Guelph

An often overlooked and undervalued aspect of turfgrass management is the student intern. For any of you who have not had the opportunity to employ an intern, it is essentially hiring a student in turfgrass management for the purpose of teaching them the tricks of the trade while getting a hard-working student, eager to learn in return. This makes internships a win-win situation with both parties benefiting from the experience. The student is able to fill in the gaps in education and experience as the supervisor gains a keen, interested employee.

What do you think of when you hear "intern"? If you answered skilled, slave labour for which you get a few bucks back an hour because they're students, then you really need to read the rest of this article. If you said an advanced student or graduate usually in a professional field gaining supervised practical experience, then pat yourself on the back, you're right, and you spend too much time reading dictionaries. Even though you may have a good grasp of what the internship position is about, hopefully there will be some good information in this article for you as well. I am writing this piece with the goal of imparting some of my experience, both as an intern and as a supervisor, so that you can make the most of an internship, whether you are the student or the employer.

Making the right choice:

In talking with the students that I have had over the years one bit of advice that I stress is to find internships at different places than they have already worked. The few exceptions to this would be a renovation/construction project or a new supervisor at the old job. Interns should seriously sit down and evaluate where they have been and in what areas they have little or no experience. Those "thin spots" combined with a realistic look at what the intern wants to do in this field should create a list of limitations to be addressed during an internship. Prior to going to university for turfgrass management, I had spent three years on a high-end private golf course that underwent a huge renovation project and then I worked on the construction of a new course. This left me with no public golf course experience and little knowledge of how to set-up and handle tournaments. Through pure luck I was able to find a very popular public course holding a large televised tournament looking for a few interns and was able to fill in a few more of my own gaps.

A problem with this scenario of self evaluation would be that the interns don't know what they don't know! If a student comes to you as a supervisor and asks you what they should learn, sit back and think of all the now routine tasks that once had you struggling for answers. Examples of this would be fertilizer and chemical selection, calibration, budgets, and the big one of managing your crew.

The average student hasn't experienced much more than a mower, rake and the occasional shovel, so they wouldn't think of what all makes the turf operation tick, or clunk.

Having a student on staff for the better part of the season benefits the supervisor in many ways. This person is another set of wide open eyes on the course that has not had a chance to develop "tunnel vision" and it very well may be that they save you time and money by bringing problems to your attention. Taking the time to really teach someone your way of doing tasks can also help you to evaluate how you do them and possibly find ways to make them more efficient. If the internship is being spent on a different property, then both gain mutually from each other's experiences.

An intern doesn't have to be the 'tween semesters student trying to gain experience and earn a grade. Graduates unsure of exactly where they want to go or feeling like their resumes could use a boost can also spend a season honing their skills with an eager supervisor.

What is expected from both of you?

Now that we've discussed how to choose an internship, it is important to know the role of the intern. The student should come into the job with a clear, reasonable list of objectives and discuss a timeline for fulfilling them with the supervisor. Keeping up with this list will help both parties remember that this is a learning opportunity, not just another job. A couple of tools that will make the experience lasting are a journal and a camera. That not only helps when it comes time to write the internship paper, but will also solidify the experience for future reference. The supervisor on the other hand needs to set aside time to meet with the intern to keep track of the learning objectives and really involve that person in discussions of planning and problem solving. After all, that intern is shortly going to be a colleague in the same business.

There is no doubt that internships take commitment from all involved, in order to work, so they should not be entered into lightly. With supervisors getting a keen, somewhat experienced individual right from the start and students gaining the knowledge that will help them succeed in this field, they are definitely worth the time and effort.



Sean Jordan raking the Road Hole Bunker at St. Andrews

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On the REEL side of things

by Warren Wybenga, Equipment Manager
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Autumn's Sweet Release

I have found that autumn usually provides a little breathing room for those of us in the turf industry. With the onset of shorter days, cooler nights, rejuvenating rains and the end of club tournament season, you can almost hear a collective sigh of relief emanating from turf care facilities across the province. While the focus shifts towards preparing our courses for a long winter's nap, it doesn't mean that the equipment gets a rest...at least not yet. Though the turf's growth has slowed, it still requires periodic mowing, perhaps there are course renovation projects underway and there's still the issue of all those leaves that need to be blown and disposed of.

From an equipment maintenance standpoint, this is an excellent opportunity to inventory your fleet in preparation for winter servicing. Throughout the season you should have been keeping notes on each piece of equipment of things that need to be addressed so that your machines will be ready to go when you are next spring. Refer to those notes while looking over each piece to verify your previous observations but don't forget to look for new issues or defects.

This is a time of preparation. You should already have it recorded but if you don't, make note of hour meter readings, model and serial numbers, as you'll need to refer to these numbers when ordering parts. Manufacturers often make minor changes to a model line mid-production so quoting serial numbers will ensure that you get the right parts for your machine. Don't overlook any attachments or implements as many machines have several different items that can be run off the same traction unit. Take your typical triplex greens mower for example. It's not just the greens heads that you have to be concerned about. Many courses have spare sets of greens heads, possibly separate sets of heads for mowing tees, approaches or even fairways. There's verti-cut heads, rollers and even heads for brushing in topdressing material and each of these have their own model and serial numbers and will require your attention as well.

Most manufacturers are now offering incentive laden parts booking programs that offer reduced pricing, volume discounts, deferred billing, discounted or even free shipping and free swag to get you to buy. I have been taking advantage of these programs for several years now and I have found that it is a great opportunity to purchase

just about everything I'll need to complete my winter's servicing and repairs. Instead of scribbling out my order on a cocktail napkin, I have made up a simple Excel spread sheet on which to complete my order. Now I'm no computer wiz, I'll never win any typing competitions and it initially took me three full days to get it all sorted out but, now that I have it saved on my computer, all I have to do is copy the template and add or remove any machines that are new to or have been traded from the fleet. From this point, it is simply a matter of verifying quantities, updating part numbers and pricing, then emailing it to my friendly customer service representative, all in a matter of a couple of hours. Once my order is received and processed, before I know it a courier is at the shop, loaded down with as I said, just about everything I need to get me through my winter servicing and in some cases, most of the following season too! It's one order, and with the exception of the odd back ordered item, one shipment. Having all this on hand allows me the freedom to alter my scheduling to suit my needs, while saving my club (and my budget) a bundle. And let me tell you that the CSR's really appreciate receiving such a large order electronically. It saves them time and allows them to process your order quickly.

Another benefit to charting all of this on a spread sheet is that it has allowed me to break down the cost of maintenance and some repair parts on a per-unit basis which has proven useful in determining when a particular unit is becoming too costly to retain and is also beneficial when it comes time to justify such a large parts order. Which brings me to my final point...be sure to get permission from your supervisor or even the company's controller or accountant before placing a large order like this. While you may have adequate funds remaining in your repair budget, most bean counters will forecast expenditures based on previous years spending trends and will not likely have sufficient funding available to cover such a large order all at once. As always, communication is the key and by explaining the fiscal advantages of participating in these booking programs, you'll come off looking really good for finding another way to save the company money.

So take advantage of the cooler weather and do some prep work so you're ready to go when winter finally puts your course to bed for another season.

Above the hole

by Tyler Webb, Student and Intern

As I write this, there are approximately 4 and a half months left in the school career of Turf 09A (Turf) here at Guelph. That could sound very ominous, but it doesn't feel like it. It feels more like every other fall going back to school after the summer break. It's a relaxing time, a fun time, but now more than ever a time to make the most of. Coming to Guelph for first year there is no metre to align your expectations; no idea of what Turf at Guelph is or could be to set the bar and keep it there. As students, we are all united by our common and very select career choice, yet come together as complete strangers. This unavoidable set of circumstances creates a certain apathy towards the weaker links of the program. As we grow together it is almost a point of good fortune that we can use these instances to bond, sharing the same opinion over a certain class's inefficient scheduling or overlapping curriculum; something we can all relate to as default conversation starters. What is missing is the expectation of something better; the realization that this program is only set in stone if you let it cure. By bonding over the weaknesses of the program we become accustomed to them, regarding them as some necessary evil - a benefit as peers but not as students. That is first year.

We are in our second, and last year now; we know the ropes, understand the system and have a somewhat new found responsibility of being stewards of the program. It is this change that I have become most aware of. There is some invisible baton that has been passed from one year to the next relaying some subtle power to mould the experience of Turf at Guelph and better it, including everything from the efficiency of class structure and the exposure to Turf Club, to enhancing the personal connections we make while at school. It seems now that we have the power to do something about it all! We can work together as a collective voice for efficient scheduling, an integrated curriculum and enhanced professional involvement and exposure. It is a chance to effect real change and it makes me very excited! But why is it only now that we have realized this power? What distinction is there really between first

and second year? These are the questions that intrigue me the most. Other than the indifference we develop towards the inefficiencies of our program, what stops us as students from forming a collective voice from the get go? Why does ownership of the program have to be passed on from year to year instead of cultivated in every new class? One might believe these are questions that must be answered in the context of each class, that the individuals who make up each new year in Turf will decide for themselves the level of apathy or involvement they have as students and peers. I have a hard time believing this. Involvement must come from the top down. The energy, passion and dedication needed to take ownership of our program must be an example set, rather than a lesson learned.

Our program in its current state is very young; we will be its 5th graduating class. At 5 years, Turf at Guelph has gone through many changes. From the efforts of students, professors and the industry itself, it has improved exponentially. But to regard it as a finished product would be a mistake. Likewise, to think of our program as a two year stop along the way to becoming a superintendent would be another mistake, a mistake I feel too many of us make. By passing on that invisible baton we renounce all ownership of our program, cutting our ties of responsibility and passion for Turf at Guelph. If we instead aim to cultivate that same ownership in every new year we can create a family of turf students, peers and professionals who remain responsible and dedicated to our program, now and well into the future.

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Buck and doe at Whitevale G&CC. Photo by Blair Rennie, Superintendent



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Off the fairway ...



by Daisy Moore

Season Re-Cap 2008

You have to be careful what you wish for. I looked over my notes from this time last year and was met with, woe is us! It is so dry the world will end and how are we going to manage? It hasn't stopped snowing, raining or hailing since and woe is us we are drowning. The past two years have been extremes at either end and I refuse to speculate or even listen to dire or hopeful predictions for the future climate. The weather network can't get today's conditions right let alone next spring. We will just take it as it comes and dress accordingly.

I haven't minded the wet summer. I thought it was rather tropical in fact, not that I have ever been to the tropics, but I have heard that it always rains at night but clears up in the morning. Believe me I know because we camped a lot in it and thankfully had plenty of tarps. I am not a fan of the heat and I am particularly not fond of crazzled up turf and dried out plants as was the case in the summer of 2007. I'd take weeding and trimming over water restrictions and hauling buckets to save special plants any day. Having said that, I have had my fill of weeds this year and will be glad to see the blighters become frozen stiff in their tracks.

2008 will be marked as a year in the garden where you could virtually do no wrong. Roses were practically weeds. Plants overflowed with growth, achieving 30% more biomass (my estimate) than they usually do. This extra growth became overwhelming in some cases and to the point of hysteria in others. What do you do with a variegated Japanese Willow that has lost its mind? Dennis the Menace and Calvin share the same hairstyle and you can't help but want to get out the sheers. They looked so dainty and, well, small, in the pictures. What also do you do about the deciduous shrubs that have grown well beyond the space that was allotted to them? The need to be ruthless and make some tough culling choices has been necessary in the management of gardens this year. The question remains whether we will be mourning for this excess next year.

No matter what the size of the garden, proper plant spacing in the first place will eliminate the need to scale plants back and will result in a garden that looks well on its own. If planned well the garden can accommodate the 30% extra growth or cope with 30% less. We need to pay attention to the "size at maturity" part of the plant label and start believing it. Give shrubs room to grow. If you want a 12 or 15 foot screen or specimen, then it will need



almost as much for its breadth. The same applies for a 3 or 5 foot shrub. In the meantime surround the shrub with herbaceous plants that can be moved when they get crowded. Bulbs and annuals or short lived perennials such as Lupin or Verbascum are great for this temporary or movable flower garden.

Mother Nature watered and encouraged an additional generation or two of weeds this summer, during a time that is usually bone dry and not ideal for seed germination, other than crabgrass. Mulching to prevent seed germination was a good idea! Weed seeds germinated more than usual and beyond their regular season so with any luck this should reduce the populations next year. Surely it can! There is a patch of goutweed I know that I hope is growing itself out of steam too. Another plus is that extreme conditions, such as we had in 2008, give native species an advantage over alien plants. The seeds and parent plants of indigenous species have adapted to accommodate the extremes of the region so they stand a better chance of out-competing undesirable weeds. This bodes well for the colour and beauty of the plants on our roadsides.

As is the case with people who work in the horticultural industry I was able to spend only a little time fussing with my own garden. Despite that, it showed better than ever and as long as you kept people at a distance it appeared to be worthy of a garden tour. I'll chalk it up to good planning. It is now time to stop again for a bit, to re-group, re-focus and re-energize because who knows what will be in store for us next season.

Daisy is a professional horticulturist. She operates a garden design and consulting business from her home in Elora. She is the host of the radio program "Ask the Gardener" Saturdays 1-2:00 on am570 www.daisymoore.com. has samples of her work.



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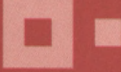
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Looking back

20 Years Ago Today

by Barry Endicott

The Board of Directors in 1988 were **Thom Charters** (president) Weston, **Neil Acton** (vice) Brooklea, **Robert Kennedy** (past) City of St. Catharines, **Gord Nimmo** (tres.) Sarnia, **Ron Heesen**, Beachgrove, **Rhod Trainor** (editor) St. Thomas, **Greg O'Heron**, Peterborough, **John Taylor**, Twenty Valley, **Scott Dodson**, Summit, **Ed Farnsworth**, Deerhurst, **Mark Hagen**, Wyldewood and **David Gourlay**, Beacon Hall. **Cindi Charters** was the office secretary.

On the move: **Barry Endicott** left Millcroft GC and went to Nobleton Lakes GC and **Walt Dudnick** left Dalewood G&CC and went to Millcroft GC. **Scott Dodson** started his new job at the Summit G&CC and **Barry Briton** left Glendale G&CC to start a new golf course called Lionhead G&CC in Brampton. **Greg O'Heron** started his new position at the Peterborough G&CC this spring and taking over for him at Markland Wood GC is **Vince Dermott**. **Ray Richards** goes from Base Borden GC to Midland GC while **Bruce Clark** leaves Midland to assume the superintendent's responsibilities at the Newmarket GC. **Steve Verral** is setting up shop at the Royal Ottawa GC after some good years at Cataraqui G&CC in Kingston. **Rick Serrao** leaves the Thunderbird Club to become superintendent at Ingersol G&CC. **Bill Bowen** is beginning a new job at Dalewood G&CC and **Ron Heesen** leaves Beachgrove G&CC to become the superintendent at the new Monterra GC in Collingwood. Filling his shoes at Beachgrove is **Mark Schneider**, previously the assistant at Westmount G&CC. Another assistant, **Wayne Rath** from Credit Valley G&CC is the new superintendent at Islington GC. **Simon George**, of Indian Wells GC, takes over Oakville G&CC while **George Garner** moves over to Glendale G&CC. **Paul Romahn** goes from Dundee CC to Elmira G&CC and from the Indian Creek GC goes **Jim Burlington** to assume his new responsibilities at Erie Shores Golf &CC. **Mike Post** moves from Strathroy to Huron Oakes GC in Sarnia. **Doug Colley** went from G.C. Duke Equipment Ltd. and joined **Jim Tanner** and **Dave Park** at Marmac Hydraulics to sell the new 5-plex LESCO fairway mower. **Butch Middleton**, former superintendent at Ottawa Hunt GC has joined G.C. Duke Equipment Ltd. **Mike Smith**, from Glen Abbey GC, joined G.C. Duke Equipment Ltd. in the Toronto area and **Rick Appel** is covering the western part of the province.

New Members: **Randy Higgins**, Toronto Hunt C (F), **Joey St. Pierre**, Essex G&CC (F), **Hugh Shields**, Talbot Park GC, (F), **Blair Rennie**, Unionville GC (B), **Leo Daigle**, Carrying Place G&CC (F), **Hughie Smith**, Thornhill GC (F), **Mark**

Young, Muskoka Lakes G&CC (F), **Dan Mayzik**, Essex GC (F), **John Kinch**, Muskoka Lakes G&CC (F), **Richard Ziegel**, Burlington Springs GC (B), **T.H. Roest**, Lely Ltd. (E), **Phillip Dickie**, Fast Forest Inc. (E), **Josh Brown**, Glendale G C (F), **Robert Cresswell**, Pleasant Valley G&CC (B), **Mark McClure**, Burford Golf Links (B), **James Monkman**, Uplands GC (F), **Art Van Veld**, Simoro Golf Links (D), **Gil Edwards**, Sault Ste. Marie GC (B), **Art Maw**, Evergreen GC (B), **Brian Haus**, Glenway CC (F), **Michael Creed**, Oshawa GC (F), **John Cockerill**, Summit G&CC (F), **Andrew Gaydon**, Shemin Nurseries (E).

The **CGSA** Conference and Trade Show was held in Toronto from March 6th-10th at the Westin Harbour Castle. Attendance records were shattered with almost 1,600 delegates attending. The **OGSA** sponsored a Past Presidents luncheon. Those in attendance were **Hugh Kirkpatrick** (1985), **Pelino Scenna** (1978), **Barry Endicott** (1986), **Bill Hynde** (1972), **Al Beeney** (1977), **Dave Gourlay Sr.** (1968), **John Arends** (1971), **Bob Moote** (1967), **Jim Wyllie** (1973), **Paul Dermott** (1975, 1976), **Dr. Lee Burpee**, University of Guelph, **Barry Briton**, CGSA President, **John Sequi**, GCSAA President, and **Randy Scott**, Canadian Superintendent of the year. **John Steel** was recently inducted into the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame.

Barry Endicott chaired the 2-day **OGSA Symposium** held at the University of Guelph. The speakers included **Dean McEwen**, **Annette Anderson**, **Dr. Lee Burpee**, **Dr. Jack Eggen**, **Norm McCollum**, **Jim Molenhuis**, Glenway G&CC, **Dave Gourlay Jr.**, Beacon Hall GC, and **John Arends**, Centennial Park GC. **Dr. Jim Watson** was the closing speaker.

The **GCSAA** Conference and Trade Show was held in Houston with **Dan Uzelac** who just recently retired, **Dennis Pellrene**, Scarboro G&CC, and **Barry Endicott**, Nobleton Lakes G&CC, giving talks. **Mac Frost** was the Chairman of the **RCCA** Green Section and it was announced that an **RCCA** Green Consultant programme was being offered for a fee of \$400.00 per visit. **Thomas Unsworth** passed away in the summer.

The final meeting of the **GBGA** was held at Muskoka Lakes G&CC on September 13th. **Dave Smith** was host for the day and **Marlon Giesler**, assistant at Brooklea G&CC, had the low round with a 75 including a hole in one. Previous golf days were held at Brooklea G&CC, **Neil Acton**, Bonair GC, **Randy Fielder**, Blue Mountain G&CC, **Kim Hanley** and Barrie CC, **Ed Doda**. **Ray Richards** was the president.

Turf or consequences

by Doug Breen, Superintendent
Golf North Properties

Unnatural Turf

I'm helping to coach my son's football team. I'm sure that many of you too, have stumbled down the perilous road of coaching your own kid in hockey, football, or even some of the quasi-sports like chess or soccer. I'm not here to discuss coaching, although any advice on how to get my wife to stop booing me from the bleachers would be greatly appreciated. I want to discuss artificial turf. The condition of playing fields around the province is deplorable. Some are as hard as concrete, others as boggy as a fetid swamp. Some have both conditions on the same field. Now, several things have conspired to make this happen. Most fields are poorly constructed, there is intense political pressure to use less (or no) pesticides, fertilizer, or irrigation, and lastly, they have about twice as many people using them as what they can reasonably be expected to handle. Meanwhile, maintenance budgets get tighter every year. Does this sound familiar at all? Sounds like a few putting greens I know of.

The solution that's been thrown around the football world lately is artificial playing surfaces. As anyone who has run on one of the more recent generations of field turf will tell you, it's come a long way from the green carpet stretched over asphalt that used to be artificial turf. I'm told that over a 25-year life cycle, an artificial field is actually cheaper to build and maintain. This has got me worried. What if someone actually finds a way to produce an artificial putting surface that's better than living, stressed out bentgrass? Think it will never happen? That's what football, baseball, and soccer thought!

Ladies and gentlemen, we could be replaced by carpet layers. Fear not though my brethren, I have a four-point-plan to undermine this impending travesty.

First of all, the word game. Stop calling it *artificial* turf. From now on we'll only refer to it as *unnatural* turf. Folks are so terrified of anything 'unnatural', that they'll draw the conclusion that cutting grass under a tenth of an inch is 'natural'. We can also spread a rumour that the fibres of *unnatural* turf are actually genetically modified organisms. People are so petrified of GMO's that you can tell them that they're genetically modified from anything, but I'd pick something cute or nearly extinct. Baby kitten ears or white rhino horns are excellent examples.

Another possibility, is to tell the general public that the *unnatural* greens contain traces of *arachis hypogaea*, sodium bicarbonate, di-hydrogen oxide, or anything else technical sounding. Nothing scares people more than traces of something. Especially if they don't know what it is.

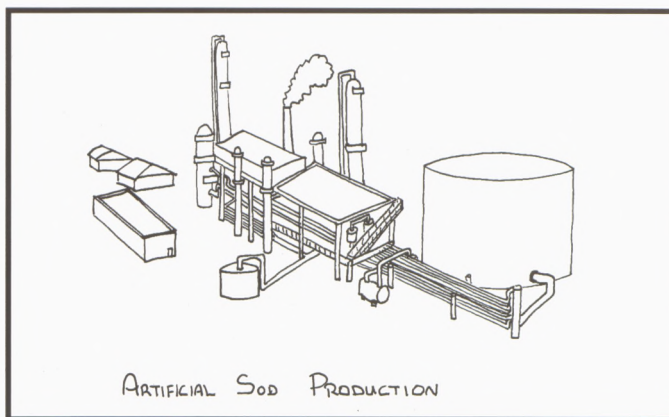
We could also play the statistics game. Like these, for example; 100% of artificial football fields have had a serious



injury on them. In 2007, you were 10,000% more likely to tear your ACL if you were engaged in a sport played on artificial turf, than if you were engaged in a sport played on a natural putting green. People love statistics, and never, ever think about them. They'll be too worried about buying a knee brace to notice that those numbers are completely pointless. No one has ever gotten a concussion while putting on bentgrass.

If we can't scare the public into blocking the construction of unnatural greens, to protect our livelihood we'll need to invent some artificial turf diseases that attack artificial turf. We'll have IPM programs, disease ID booklets, and over priced artificial turf pesticides. They can just be soap and water too, because the diseases don't really exist, so they don't have to be effective. Sure, the Green Party crowd will still swear that these products are poisoning the planet and try to have them banned – but who cares – they won't be doing anything anyway! The diseases will need some impressive sounding Latin names though, like *astrophobious patch*, or *plasticus grassicus mould*. What will they do when the unnatural greens are infested with *poly-vinyl-chloride weevil* or *agrostis syntheticus bill bug*? The course owners will sure be glad that they retained the services of a qualified superintendent that day, I can tell you!

I'm not sure that we'll ever see the use of synthetic playing surfaces on golf courses, but no one ever dreamed that we'd be using them in as many sports as we are. There are already courses using artificial tees in places where they can't keep grass alive. My prediction is that somebody's going to try it for either cost or environmental reasons. After a generation of resistance, improvements to the product, and widespread adoption, could they eventually be the norm? Will there come a day when the living green will be a display in the golf museum next to hickory shafts? Not if we start telling everyone that artificial turf is a suspected carcinogen.



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