

# Green is Beautiful

Fall 2012

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association



## The Balancing Act of Tournament Play

**Turf Management vs. Player Expectations**

**ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

**NAGA Ontario Update**

**A Celebration of Colt's Masterpiece**

**Fall Fertilization: Are We Doing It Right?**

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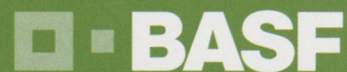
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



by Doug Breen,  
GolfNorth Properties

As this will be my last message as president of the OGSA, I wanted to take a moment to thank some people who I really should have thanked a long time ago. My time on the board, and particularly this past year as president, have been some of the most rewarding experiences of my career. The members that I have served with, the members that I've gotten to know over the past decade, and the staff of the OGSA are some of the finest people a person could ever know. You've all challenged me, assisted me and inspired me in ways that you'll never truly understand. I can honestly say that I'm a better person, both personally and professionally, for the time I've spent with each of you. I want to thank the DeCorso family of the various Victoria

Parks in Guelph, and in particular Dave DeCorso, who showed a university summer student that "tending the greens" was a truly special way to make a living in this world. I'd like to thank Gary Grosicki and the staff at the Guelph Country Club, and Doug Black and the boys at the Waterloo Golf Academy, as both of those places helped me to grow, learn, and mature. I can't say enough about the countless people who have been with me at GolfNorth – superintendents, general managers, golf pros, and head

office staff – you've given me opportunities that I can't possibly thank you enough for. I have a list of mentors as long as my arm, that I never actually worked with, who often who worked at competing golf courses, or were sales people, or mechanics, or just people willing to let me bend their ear – thanks, you know who you are. But most of all, I want to thank my family. My wife has lived like a single mother for six months of every year – literally half of our marriage – and has never complained about it once. Same goes for the kids, except that I often force them to come to work with me as unpaid labour.

So thanks everyone, I couldn't have done any of this without you. ■



Deer at Weston Golf and Country Club. Submitted by Matt Legg

## Green is Beautiful

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## Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

### ON THE COVER

**Angus Glen Golf Club**  
Photo courtesy:  
Angus Glen Golf Club

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OGSA is committed to serving its members, advancing their profession, and enriching the quality of golf and its environment.

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## EDITORIAL MESSAGE



by Justin Parsons,  
Engage Agro Corp.

As we all know, every golf course hosts tournaments. Whether they are club events, outside functions or even a part of some professional tour, thousands of events are held each year at Ontario golf courses. I would imagine they are usually met with mixed emotions by turf managers. On the one hand, they usually generate revenue and promote the golf course. On the flip side, they often lead to extra maintenance and scheduling, as well as additional wear and tear on the turf.

Many superintendents use tournaments as a way to motivate staff. It's something they can rally the troops around. It is amazing how one event can raise the level of performance in everyone. I guess when you know your work is on display, you want to do your very best. Although, for a golf course maintenance team, your work is on display every day, so I am not really sure how that works.

If nothing else, they tend to break up the day to day routine which can become somewhat monotonous over the course of a six month growing season, where certain tasks are done every single day. Indeed, shotgun starts often accompany tournament play and with them comes added interest and attention. Somehow moving blocks can become a lot more exciting when

there are specific requirements for each hole. Similarly, there is somewhat of a novelty to performing basic maintenance tasks in the middle of the day, rather than at the crack of dawn. It feels somewhat odd to change holes when you are not surrounded by the freshness that comes with the break of day.

However at some clubs, like Angus Glen for example, which hosts over 300 events a year between the two courses, tournaments are the norm. Their routine consists of having no routine. They constantly have to spot in additional maintenance practices wherever the tee sheet allows. I would imagine this can be quite frustrating at times when you know what your golf course needs, but you are physically unable to get out there and do it. It is kind of like the cart before the horse scenario.

Nevertheless, the club relies on the revenue from these events so you must find a way. There is a balancing act that is performed and when performed well, leads to a great deal of satisfaction. Here's hoping all of you hosted successful events this year and best of luck planning for 2013.

Finally, I would like to take a quick moment to thank Scott Horsburgh from Plant Products for his many years of service on the *Green is Beautiful* editorial committee. Scott, your time and effort is greatly appreciated. If anyone is interested in joining our editorial team, please let the OGSA office or myself know. Have a great holiday season everyone. ■

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## WHAT'S NEW

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager

### SUPERINTENDENT RECOGNITION

As part of this program, a plaque was presented to Choya Frazer, Superintendent at Midland Golf Club who recently hosted the Investors Group Senior Men's Amateur Championship.

### OGSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The OGSA Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 7:30 am, January 29th, 2013 at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel.

Documentation will be available on our website at [www.ogsa.ca](http://www.ogsa.ca) under **Association Reports**.

### GCSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

If anyone wishes to have input or express their opinion regarding the 2013 GCSAA Board of Directors election in San Diego they must notify the OGSA Board prior to December 31st. Director Scott White attended the Chapter Delegates session held recently at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas.



Jeff Alexander from Parry Sound G&CC (Left) presents to Choya Fraser

### OGSA MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues can now be paid online, invoices have been sent out via email to those members who have not made their payments online. If you have not yet paid your membership dues, please do so as soon as possible to ensure no service interruption. Also, be aware that the new website includes an automatic cut-off date. ■

## OGSA: Welcome to Our New Members

<b>Chris Cameron</b> Devil's Paintbrush GC	Class C
<b>Aaron Hill</b> The Ridge at Manitou	Class C
<b>Dave Jacobsen</b> Weston Golf & CC	Class C
<b>Murray MacDonald</b> Midland Golf Club	Class F
<b>Daniel Matheson</b> Remington Parkview Golf Club	Class F
<b>Tyler Merton</b> Toronto Hunt Club	Class C
<b>Jeff Mottershead</b> Piper's Heath Golf Club	Class C
<b>Steve Percy</b> Grey Silo Golf Course	Class C
<b>Stephen Pitkin</b> National GC of Canada	Class F
<b>Border Control Bird Dogs</b> Heather Williams	Class E
<b>Graves Oak Tree Care Inc</b> Mark Graves	Class E
<b>JMT Sand Mixes</b> Jeff Maki, Ron Brent	Class E

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# NAGA Ontario Update

The National Allied Golf Associations (NAGA) has invited its provincial counterparts to continue operating using the umbrella brand of NAGA. In our case, we will now be known as NAGA Ontario or NAGA ON.

For the past 12 years, the Ontario Allied Golf Associations (OAGA) operated loosely without a formal structure. Under the NAGA ON brand, we now have a set of regulations that, as a Council, defines who we are. Moreover, it allows us to operate with the express purpose of enhancing communication and the exchange of information among various golf associations and, when appropriate, publicly represents one voice for golf in Ontario.

NAGA ON will have members from each stakeholder group involved in golf. Each of the named associations shall have a clear mandate to represent their sector.

The current representative members and their constituents are as follows:

- **GAO – for Golfers**
- **PGA of Ontario – Golf Professionals**
- **OGSA – Superintendents**
- **CSCM Ontario Branch – Club Managers**
- **NGCOA Canada Ontario Chapters – Owners & Operators**

Each representative for each sector is accorded one vote.

Agreeing that the last thing golf in Ontario needs is another association requiring funding to fulfill its mandate, NAGA ON has been duly structured without a bank account. Projects requiring financing must be approved by majority vote of Council members and be fully funded by the member associations prior to proceeding.

## Officers of NAGA ON:

**President:** Vince Kishimoto, NGCOA Canada

**Vice-President:** Dave Mills, Golf Association of Ontario

**Secretary:** Kim Iwamoto, CSCM Ontario (Weston G&CC)

## Balance of council members:

Kevin Purcell, PGA of Ontario

Mark Prieur, OGSA (Trafalgar G&CC)

Scott White, OGSA (Donalda Club)

## September 20, 2012: NAGA Ontario Meets with MPPs at Queen's Park

At the request of NAGA Ontario, some 25 constituency offices accepted an invitation to a short breakfast meeting at the legislature to hear an update on golf in Ontario. While not all respondents were able to attend, NAGA ON was very pleased that a substantial turnout of interested politicians came, eager to learn about our industry.

Our update touched on the substantial economic impact of the golf industry with its benefits to employment, taxes, tourism, health care and the environment.

While politicians listened to concerns that ranged from pending Source Water Protection plans, red tape issues, environmental stewardship and property taxes, our main "ask" focused on IPM. Specifically, our three years of experience with the legislative requirements in order to maintain our exception to use pesticides under the IPM Accreditation program.

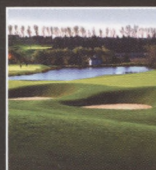
Some had already heard from their constituents and were



*Pictured above, from left to right: Scott White, Dave Mills, Vince Kishimoto, Kevin Purcell, Kim Iwamoto and Mark Prieur*

eager to understand the nuances of tweaking legislation that would see compliance become much more efficient for operators while maintaining the integrity and credibility of the continued judicious use of pesticides on golf courses.

An opening salvo to be sure, NAGA ON's next step is to invite MPPs to form an Ontario Golf Caucus committee. This would see representatives of all political parties participate in an open forum two-way dialogue. The purpose of which would be to inform, educate, suggest and resolve issues that currently, or in the future, may affect golf operations in Ontario. ■



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## Summer Scramble

The OGSA Summer Scramble was held at Springfield G&CC in Guelph on August 28, 2012. The event once again gave OGSA the opportunity to invite industry guests, thank regional association presidents and *Green is Beautiful* contributors. Kevin Doyle, the new chapter outreach representative from GCSAA, was also in attendance to network with OGSA members. Thanks once again to host Superintendent Ray Dlugockecki, General Manager Frank Lizzotti, COGA Pro Jonathon Forbes and all the Springfield staff.

The Flight A winning team was Jamie Spencer, Mark Trudell, Mark Durand and Scott Gardner, while Flight B winners were John McLinden, Mike Jennings, Scott Heron and Scott Knox.

Second place winners were Gary Tate, Graeme Calder, Jason Ireton and Jason Sewell for Flight A and Dan North, Douglas Erwin, Andy Sandilands and John Bladon for Flight B.

Longest drive winners were Graeme Calder (Flight A) and Scott White (Flight B).

Special thanks to Syngenta, Plant Products and Nutrite for donating prizes. ■



Ray D on the left, is presented with a plaque by John McLinden at the Summer Scramble.



Foursome of Chris Andrejicka, OGSA Past President, Kevin Doyle from GCSAA, Dennis Piccolo from St. Catherine's G&CC and Gary Morris from Turf Care.

## Hugh Kirkpatrick Memorial Tournament

The Hugh Kirkpatrick Memorial Tournament was held on September 18th, 2012 at Otter Creek Golf Club. Even though more than two inches of rain fell the previous night the course was firm and mostly puddle free and jovial camaraderie carried the day. The event, put on by Bill Searle from NGF GOLF, a division of Northgate Farms Ltd., contributed \$11,500 to the OGSA's Assistant Bursary Program, named in Hugh's honour. Many thanks go to Bill, to all those who sponsored and supported the event, and to Superintendent Randy Booker and staff at Otter Creek. ■

## Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament

October 1st was a great fall day, with a mix of sun and cloud and warm temperatures making things picture perfect at Scarboro G&CC. 137 registered golfers enjoyed a relaxing round and gave everyone the chance to absorb the beauty and appreciate the layout of this spectacular course.

Special thanks go to host Superintendent Bill Gilkes and his staff, as well as Denis Matte, club General Manager and Blair Surette, Assistant Pro, who managed to get everyone organized and out on time.

The big winner of the day was Thom Charters from Coppinwood, who won the George Darou Trophy. Ron Craig from Turf Care Products was on hand to present the trophy and a snowblower to Thom.

Low Gross Superintendent winner for Flight A was Vesselin Georguiev and Tim Trimper had the low gross for Flight B.

Low Net for flight A was won by Cam Fraser and the Low Net for Flight B went to Denis Kim.

Special thanks to our sponsors; Turfcare for their ongoing support of the George Darou Trophy, NGF Golf for sponsoring wine with dinner and Almack Environmental Services as well as Enviro-Sol for sponsoring the lunch.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank both BASF for providing a full conference registration which was won by Brad Bell and Vanden Bussche Irrigation who provided an iPad which went to Jeff Cardwell. ■



Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament host Superintended Bill Gilkes, his assistant Lesley Thomas and the rest of the crew of Scarboro G&CC.



Mark Prieur, OGSA Director presents plaque to host Superintendent Bill Gilkes at Scarboro G&CC.



Ron Craig from Turf Care Products, presenting the George Darou Trophy to Thom Charters (Coppinwood)



## Seniors Tournament

Our 6th Annual OGSA Seniors Tournament was held August 9th under mostly sunny skies at the Mono Hills Golf Club in Mono Hills. Our host superintendent, Nick Amsen, had the course in great shape. 30 golfers tackled the links with some great scores tallied. Doug Suter and Rae Murray got the luncheon BBQ organized with

Executive Head Chef Pelino Scenna manning the steaks for dinner.

Our sincere thanks to our major sponsors: Ron Craig of Turf Care Products, Rae Murray of Alliance Agri-Turf and Jim Torrence of Mono Hills Golf Club.

### The Following Were the Gross Scores:

1st **Colin Nisbet**, Westview – 72

2nd **Thom Charters**, Coppinwood – 78  
 3rd **Dave Stevens**, Beaverbrook – 80  
 4th **Bruce Dodson**, Heritage Hills – 82  
 5th **John Hughes**, Heritage Hills – 82  
 6th **Bill Fach**, Black Bear Ridge – 85  
 7th **Bill Glasson**, Retired – 85  
 8th **Ron Craig**, Turf Care Products – 85  
 9th **Blake McMaster**, Retired – 86  
 10th **Ken Wright**, Devils Pulpit – 86 ■



*Ron Craig, Clay Switzer, OJ Piccolo, Ray Richards, Rae Murray, John Bontje, Bruce Burger, R.T. Heron, Bill Fach, Kimmo Salonen, Paul Dermott, Roy French, Ken Wright, Bob Cowan, Jim Groin, Dave Stevens, Barry Endicott, Paul White, Bernie MacDonald, Mark Schneider, Tom Kinney, Bob Brewster, Pelino Scenna, Doug Suter, Tom Arens, Bruce Dodson, John Arends, John Hughes, Colin Nisbet, Jim Wyllie, Charlie Muiyaert ■*

## OTRF a Huge Success \$40,000 Raised

The annual OTRF golf tournament was held on Tuesday, August 14th at Magna Golf Club in Aurora, Ontario. Once again, the tournament was a huge success as over \$40,000 was raised for turfgrass research. The generosity and support of our host venue was a big reason for this terrific fundraising achievement. The level of service and hospitality was second to none as participants enjoyed a fantastic day of golf. Host Superintendent Wayne Rath and his staff deserve to be commended for their efforts. The golf course was in impeccable conditioning, despite the rains that preceded the event. As for the big winners of the day, the tournament's low gross champ was John Alpaugh from AllTurf. The low net winner was ClubLink's Greg Florence. As always, an event like this would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors. The OTRF would like to extend a special thank you to our platinum sponsors; Green Horizons Group of Farms, Turf Care Products and The Andersons. The OTRF is very proud to be associated with the many first class golf facilities that have hosted this event over the years. Magna Golf Club did a wonderful job continuing this tradition. Thanks to everyone for attending and supporting the OTRF. We hope to see you next year! ■

## Assistants Tournament

The annual Assistants Tournament was held on September 24, 2012 at Piper's Heath Golf Club in Hornby. Just under 100 golfers turned out on the windy, but sunny fall day.

Steve Waggot from the Maples of Ballantrae won the trip to FarmLinks in Alabama donated by Agrium Advanced Technologies, and Cam Shaw of Burlington G&CC won the snowblower donated by Turf Care.

Tournament winners were the foursome of Jason D'Andrea, Andre Aymar, Jason Crawford and Dave Patterson.

Special thanks to host Superintendent Tim Muys and host Assistant Danny Proulx.

This event could not have happened without our sponsors so we would like to extend a big thank you to the following: Agrium Advanced Technologies (Platinum), Turf Care (Gold) and GC Duke Equipment, Bayer Environmental Science, Nutrite and Ontario Seed, Enviro-Sol and AllTurf (Silver). ■

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# A Celebration of Colt's Masterpiece

by Bill Green, Assistant Superintendent,  
Toronto Golf Club

This year marks the centennial of The Toronto Golf Club (TGC) on its current site. In recognition of this significant event in the club's history, TGC celebrated the centennial of its Colt Course on August 25th this year. In preparation for the celebration, the Senior Management Group initiated a plan to incorporate a few details that would replicate the golf experience as it was in 1912. The Toronto Golf Club was established in 1876 and is the third oldest golf club in North America. In the early part of the 20th century, the City of Toronto was growing rapidly. As homes and industry began to encroach on the Fern-hill property, it became evident to members that in order for the club to survive, it would need to relocate. After an extensive three-year search all over the Toronto area, the perfect site was found along the banks of the Etobicoke Creek in Long Branch. Construction commenced in the spring of 1911, immediately after the new land purchase was finalized. The layout was designed by Englishman Harry S. Colt, who is recognized as one of the premier architects in golf. Led by H.S. Colt, a team of 45 Bulgarian and Romanian labourers constructed the course in seven months and by the fall of 1912, the new golf course opened for play. A significant amount of research went into replicating a 1912 golf experience. After consultation with golf historians like Dr. Michael Hurdzan, a number of ideas emerged to help celebrate this centennial milestone.

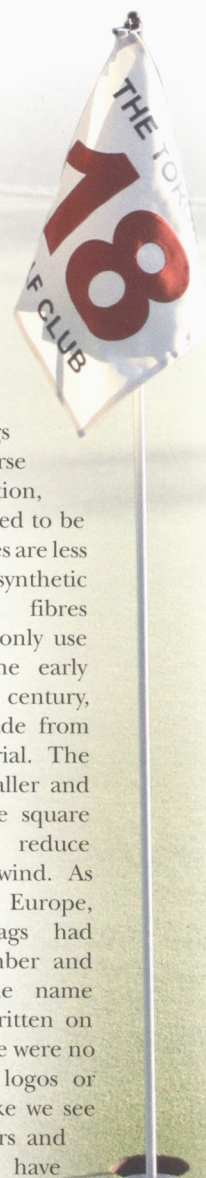


At the centennial celebration, participants received a replica rubber golf ball with the Colt Course centennial logo (above). Replica flags were created, pictured right, to create a 1912 golf experience for the event.

One of the most authentic ideas was to replicate flags circa 1912. It was very difficult to find information on what the flags looked like back then at TGC, or any golf course for that matter. After hours of investigation, there were a few important details that needed to be incorporated into the design. Man-made fibres are less than a century old; until 1910, there were no synthetic or chemical fibres like we commonly use today. In the early part of the century, flags were made from a canvas material. The flags were smaller and cut in a more square fashion to reduce damage from wind. As often seen in Europe, traditional flags had the hole number and sometimes the name of the club written on the flag. There were no silk screened logos or embroidery like we see today. Numbers and letters would have

been hand-cut and stitched like you might see on the back of a hockey jersey. The flags were fastened to the poles using string ties that are stitched on the edge of the flag. The flag pole itself was significantly shorter. Poles would often range from only five to six feet tall.

Another idea to recreate the 1912 golf experience was to use sand golf tees. The 'modern' golf tee was not common practice until the 1920's. Prior to this, golfers used sand to tee the ball up off the ground. The reference tee box came from a box that was beside all teeing areas. The box usually contained sand, water,



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and a towel. A golfer or caddy would mix the water and sand with their hands and mold the sand to create their tee and use the towel to wipe their hands clean. Often times the tee box would have the hole number, yardage and any other information on the hole. Shortly after learning that this was the common practice in 1912, it was discovered in an old picture that there were indeed tee boxes at TGC. Based on the blurred picture, an extensive effort ensued to replicate the tee box. During the celebration event, student intern Andrew Krek (Olds College) made sand tees for all participants to hit from while he explained the history of sand tee boxes and the golf tee.

In 1912 the most common golf ball used was the rubber core ball. The rubber ball was the first multi-layer golf ball and was a major breakthrough in golf ball technology. The replica ball is exclusively made for play with hickory shafted clubs. With a soft and energetic core, it is meant to feel like an early rubber band wound ball. Square dimples were the most popular style of the hickory era. The mold used to make the replicas was an antique golf ball mold purchased from a collector. The balls help protect the wooden shafts of the old clubs by not sending a shock wave up the shaft. At our centennial celebration, all participants received a replica rubber golf ball with the Colt Course centennial logo.

Sheep were commonly found on golf courses in the early part of the 20th century. A proper 1912 golf experience cannot be replicated without 30 paper sheep randomly grazing the course. Included in the herd were two black sheep that, if spotted, the members name was entered into a draw for a free lamb dinner.

Other features of the day included knickers worn by Pro shop

staff. During lunch prior to golfing, a re-enactment of a 1912 foursome playing the 18th hole was performed while bag pipes played in the background. To top the day off, the celebration ended with a fireworks show. Overall the event was an outstanding success. Members and guests received a small taste of what golf was like in 1912.

As we celebrate the year of the Colt Course, John Gravett, General Manager & COO of TGC wanted to recognize the men and women who have managed the golf course over the past 100 years. On October 12th, John Gravett and Superintendent Al Schwemler hosted a centennial golf tournament for all former employees of the club who are still in the turfgrass management business. There were 28 attendees which included superintendents, assistants, second assistants, sales representatives, and some current Toronto Golf Club staff members. The celebrations of the Colt Course have provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the past, explore old traditions and pay tribute to the people that have lead us to where golf is today. ■



*OGSA President Doug Breen presents to Al Schwemler, Superintendent, Toronto Golf Club in recognition of 100 years of leadership and support of golf course management in Ontario.*

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# Tyler Ruest

Superintendent at Dalewood Golf Club

by Alan Dolick, Dundas Valley  
Golf and Curling Club

In a time when many in our profession are beginning to realize the importance of a work/life balance, Tyler Ruest is well ahead of the curve. The Superintendent at Dalewood Golf Club, located just outside of Cobourg, Ontario, seems to have time for it all. Ruest claims that, "life as a superintendent, husband, and father of three, is anything but normal" and his secret seems to be taking everything in stride. "You never know if this day will be your last, so live life to the fullest each day and take things as they come".

Ruest started in the golf industry at Cedar Brae Golf and Country Club in 1993 and quickly fell in love with the profession. In 1994, he took up the opportunity to help with the grow-in process at Angus Glen Golf Club. This

is where he met the first of his mentors, Ernie Amsler. Amsler taught Ruest the importance of working hard every day, and, if that meant getting dirty, then so be it. He also taught Ruest two very important lessons that he continues to carry with him to this day. First, there are times when you need to swallow your pride and do something that you don't necessarily want to do to get the result your clientele is looking for. Second, and more importantly, he taught him to believe in oneself. To be a strong superintendent and leader you "have to believe in your abilities and trust your instincts," says Ruest.

With self-confidence comes strong leadership, two things that come naturally to Ruest. He has an innate ability to bring comfort and motivate those around him. Ruest is a warm and caring leader who always makes

his staff and others feel comfortable and needed. Despite having a golf course to care for, three kids at home and a hockey team to coach, he always makes time for others.

After spending nine years at Angus Glen Golf Club, which included four years as the assistant, hosting an LPGA event and a Canadian Open, Ruest moved to the Oshawa Golf and Curling Club where he worked under Steve Hallard. He considers Hallard to be "one of the best superintendents in the industry" and credits Hallard with shaping him into the turf manager he is today. The ability to effectively communicate with the membership is one of the most important lessons he learned from Hallard. It is this ability to communicate that Ruest feels is the most important trait of a golf course superintendent.

In the fall of 2007, Ruest was offered the head superintendent's position at Dalewood Golf Club and has not looked back. Life hasn't been easy or perfect since, but he has always made the most of it. Ruest credits his wife Wendy, and his three children, Jack, Sarah and Kate, with helping him keep a solid perspective on what is important in life. "I cannot allow my job to affect my home life" says Ruest, "if it does, then something needs to change". Having a good assistant (Justin "Whitesnake" Westerink) and a good mechanic (Brad Holdaway) goes a long way in maintaining a solid work/life balance he contends.

By and large Tyler Ruest is not only a great superintendent, he is a leader, great father and quality human being. He seems to always have time for those around him, is a wealth of knowledge and a joy to spend time with. ■

## IN THE HOT SEAT

Q – Favourite major

A – US Open

Q – Favourite piece of  
turf equipment

A – Pro Core 648

Q – Favourite golf course

A – The London Hunt Club

Q – Ultimate foursome

A – Myself, Dano MacAllister,  
Alan Dolick, Rob Madil

Q – Lowest round and where

A – 80 at Angus Glen South GC

Q – Favourite movie

A – *Miracle* with Kurt Russell – I  
have watched it so many times  
with my son we are now on  
our third copy of the DVD

Q – Favourite meal

A – Steak on the grill

Q – What's in your CD player right  
now?

A – CD? Really? Ok, it's Kid Rock,  
*Born Free*

Q – What would you do if not a  
golf course superintendent?

A – Can't imagine anything else!  
The kids say a chef.



# Angus Glen Golf Club



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Markham, Ontario L6C 1N9  
Tel: 905-887-0090  
info@angusglen.com  
www.angusglen.com

**Golf Course Superintendent:**  
Douglas Erwin

**Assistant Superintendent:**  
Dan North

**Equipment Manager:**  
Randy Noel

**Horticulturalist:**  
Jon Laflamme

*Hole # 10th hole on the South Course  
Photo courtesy: Angus Glen Golf Club*

## COURSE PROFILE

### About the Course

Angus Glen has hosted the 2001 BMO Canadian Women's Open, 2001 Telus Skins Game and both the 2002 and 2007 Canadian Opens. A new chemical storage facility is being built, complete with indoor fill station.

**Established:** 1995

**Original Architect:** Doug Carrick

**Type of Club:** Public

**Number of Holes:** 36

**Number of Rounds Annually:** 60,000

**Practice Facility:** Full range

## Biggest Maintenance Challenge

We are a tournament heavy golf course with over 300 tournament events per year (97 in June alone this year). As a result, scheduling maintenance practices can be difficult. Often times work is divided into groups of 9 holes to accommodate shotgun starts.

## A CLOSER LOOK

### What You Need to Know

**Predominant Grass Type:**  
Bentgrass with some poa encroachment

**Predominant Soil Type:**  
Heavy clay fairways, engineered greens and tees

**Type of Greens:** USGA

**Course Length:** North: 5,462-7,403 yards  
South: 5,661-7,407 yards

**Size of Property:** 500 acres

**Size of Greens:** 8 acres

**Size of Tees:** 9 acres

**Size of Fairways:** 74 acres



# The Balancing Act of Tournament Play

## Turf Maintenance vs. Player Expectations

Written by Kevin Kobzan, Granite Golf Club

The first ever recorded golf tournament was held in 1860. This significant date symbolizes the year the inaugural British Open event commenced, taking place in Scotland at Prestwick Golf Club. This club would go on to host The Open championship another 23 times, second to only the old course at St. Andrews Links. Willie Park won the first ever tournament by two strokes scoring 163 over the three 12-hole rounds.

Throughout the years, the game of golf has provided fans with many memorable moments in many historic tournaments. From Tiger Woods' dominating 18 under performance at the 1997 Masters, to Payne Stewart's triumph in the 1999 U.S. Open at Pinehurst, to accomplishments from pioneers like Ben Hogan and Sam Snead, golf tournaments have left an indelible mark on the game and its history.

Apart from PGA tour stops, countless amateur golf events are held annually at every golf club in the world, whether it is a club championship, member guest event or charity tournament, all provide excitement to participants looking for a great golf experience. These tournaments allow golfers of all skill levels an opportunity to tee it up like the professionals and enjoy the tournament experience.

What often gets overlooked during these events is the golf course maintenance involved in preparing the course for tournament play. Participants always expect a rewarding golf experience and it is the maintenance teams involved who are responsible for producing great playing conditions despite the disruption in the maintenance schedule. Indeed, this requires tremendous hard work, dedication, time and, more than anything, organization by those responsible for the day to day operations. Before the sun breaches the horizon, maintenance crews all over enter their quiet landscapes and prepare their respective properties on tournament days knowing full well that time is not a luxury they have.

For Doug Erwin, Superintendent of Angus Glen Golf Club, tournament play has become something of a normality as they host an inordinate amount of golf events each season. Erwin

shares a common goal with superintendents all over, as he tries to ensure that all guests leave the property happy with the course conditions upon each visit. This can become extremely challenging however, when trying to balance the golfers needs with the clubs tournament requirements and the turfs basic necessities.

Angus Glen Golf Club provides two challenging courses to the public. The South course opened in 1995, with the north course following suit five years later. Both golf venues accommodate approximately 30-35,000 rounds of golf per year. Impressively, the club entertains upwards of 300 golf events annually. With the majority of tournaments, a 144 player shotgun is the format. This makes Angus Glen Golf Club a top choice for those seeking quality golf and an establishment that can entertain large groups.

As technology continues to improve, so too do the expectations of course conditioning. Erwin believes in and strives for consistency, trying to deliver similar playing conditions to all golfers who play either of the championship courses. With such an emphasis on green speeds in today's golf game, maintaining a consistent putting surface is important. Most golf enthusiasts look for a true rolling green where putts can roll out free of bumps to it's intended target. "One of my parameters is to have our greens rolling between 9.5-10.5 as a seasonal average, which is no problem unless the poa is blooming," says Erwin. "When we get above ten and a half people begin

complaining that the greens surface is too difficult. We try to keep the conditions the same for everybody."

The club hosts 12-15 staple events a year. Some are two course rentals, where it is not uncommon for 600 golfers to enter the property on the same day. Even though certain events require some extra maintenance, the time and effort to perform some of these tasks on a regular basis isn't always beneficial. "We were painting cups for every tournament two years ago, but it didn't seem like something recognized as a special feature, but for our member evenings it would be something they would appreciate," says Erwin. "Maybe five times a year we will double cut and roll, mainly because some of our clientele play two rounds a year and

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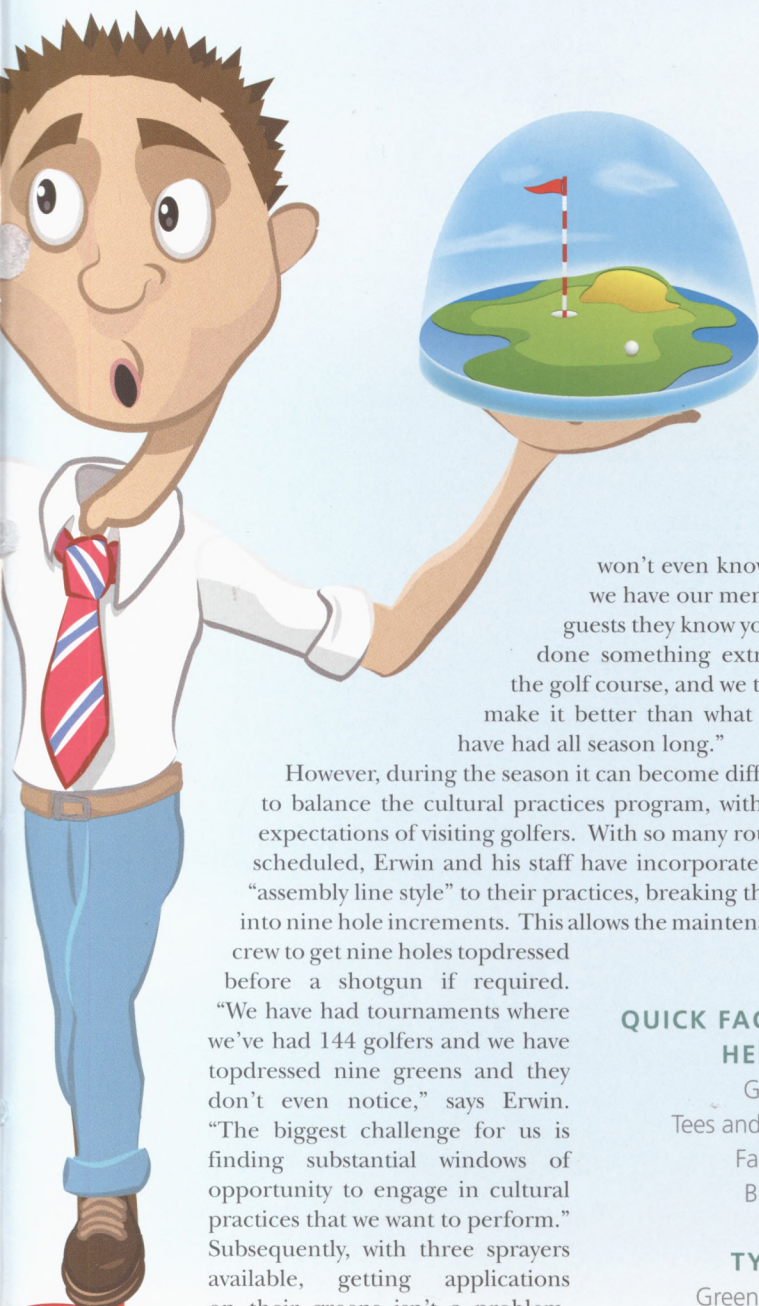
"The biggest challenge for us is finding a window of opportunity to engage in cultural practices that we want to perform."

Doug Erwin, Superintendent,  
Angus Glen Golf Club

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won't even know. If we have our member guests they know you've done something extra to the golf course, and we try to make it better than what they have had all season long."

However, during the season it can become difficult to balance the cultural practices program, with the expectations of visiting golfers. With so many rounds scheduled, Erwin and his staff have incorporated an "assembly line style" to their practices, breaking things into nine hole increments. This allows the maintenance crew to get nine holes topdressed before a shotgun if required. "We have had tournaments where we've had 144 golfers and we have topdressed nine greens and they don't even notice," says Erwin. "The biggest challenge for us is finding substantial windows of opportunity to engage in cultural practices that we want to perform." Subsequently, with three sprayers available, getting applications on their greens isn't a problem, the challenge is getting coverage to other areas of the golf course once pest pressures arise. "That's a difficult thing to do on a regular basis is to get all 74 acres of fairways sprayed for dollar spot."

Since some agronomic practices can be disruptive to play, both courses are closed separately for two days in September for greens aeration. Fairways and tee decks are a different story, making it next to impossible to escape golfers and their disapproval. "The issue is that on any day in September, when we want to aerate, and a couple of fairways aren't fully cleaned up, which takes forever, the perception people have is why did you do that on my day," says Erwin.

"Sometimes you have to settle with less than perfection, if the greens are relatively fast and smooth and everything else is green they think the place is perfect. But we know we have elevated levels of thatch in the fairways and tees, but we don't have time to aerate them three times a year" says Erwin. "Here you're trying to manage the chaos and keeping it as it is, so making improvements is far more difficult."

Other challenges the club faces in regards to tournaments relates to event bookings and the time it takes to prepare for large groups. Also, getting the players organized and on the course while co-ordinating with the kitchen to ensure the food service is adjusted for the tournaments pace of play is another important aspect. "They have that down to a science, we've been through quite a few rodeos," says Erwin.

Since Angus Glen's opening, it has hosted some prominent events, from the 2001 Telus Skins Game to the 2002 and 2007 Canadian Opens, with competition residing on both the South and North courses respectively, a trait the club is very proud of. Regardless of what course you play on, you can relish the fact that some of the world's best golfers stepped foot on the same greens, tees and fairways as you did. In 2002, as assistant of the North Course, Erwin was only impacted by some of the pro-am tournament. In 2006 however, he took over the renovations aspect of the golf course in preparation for the 2007 Canadian Open where he was involved with locating irrigation for construction of tournament infrastructure. "All the tents and grandstands that get put up involve driving a lot of things into the ground, but they are very good at what they do, they've done so many," says Erwin.

Furthermore, the PGA assesses the course one year before the tournaments arrival and give recommendations in relation to where it should be come tournament time. During the week leading up to the championship, their agronomy team help guide the maintenance crew through tournament preparation.

#### QUICK FACTS ON ANGUS GLEN HEIGHT OF CUT:

Greens – 0.100"  
Tees and approaches – 0.400"  
Fairways – 0.425"  
Bluegrass – 1.5"

#### TYPE OF TURF:

Greens – South seeded to Pennncross, North seeded to Dominant Extreme  
Tees and Fairways – Dominant Extreme

#### ROUNDS PER YEAR / COURSE:

Approx. 30-35,000  
Approx. 300 golf events

continued on page 16...



During The Open, the PGA perform moisture checks and conduct stimp-meter readings which help them provide direction as to when and where you can water to ensure adequate green speeds. Meetings are held daily to go over mowing, rolling or irrigation practices. For example, during the 2002 Open, the greens were becoming too quick so they changed the evenings routine from a double cut to a single roll. "They will do moisture levels, and come up with a green speed based on the type of course. The South course benchmark was 10.5 because of the two tiered greens, which was great because that is our standard," says Erwin.

He admits to feeling pressure in the weeks leading up to the big event and jokes that you think of everything and anything possible that could go wrong. "Here is what you think about when you have a Canadian Open: you've gone through two practice rounds, it's Wednesday night and the show starts tomorrow and all you can think of is, 'I know my pumps are off but what if something breaks?' But for me, when it starts and you've done everything you absolutely can, you settle with it and let it take its course."



*Aerial view of Angus Glen Golf Club (courtesy Angus Glen GC)*

Additionally, Erwin gives a lot of credit and praise for those who volunteer their time to the event. With so much to do leading up to and during the Open, volunteers play an integral role in the flow of things. Although the window for training staff to be efficient and do their jobs correctly is very small, things usually work out well with the occasional growing pain. "They really want to be here, to be a part of it and without volunteers we would be hard pressed with time and payroll," says Erwin. With cleanup, setup and bunkers on the

top of the list for volunteers, training them is not feasible with the time allotted. "The mowers are set and you have five or six specialists on the greens mowers."

Regardless of a tournament's prestige, golf courses have a lot of responsibility in regards to playing conditions and appeal of the property as they try to assure patrons a remarkable outing. However, for those unaware of the work put into maintaining a golf course, it is truly a balancing act managing turf health with tournament and golfer expectations. For Angus Glen Golf Club, finding this balance is just another up and down for par. "We do it everyday, maybe that's the difference," says Erwin. ■

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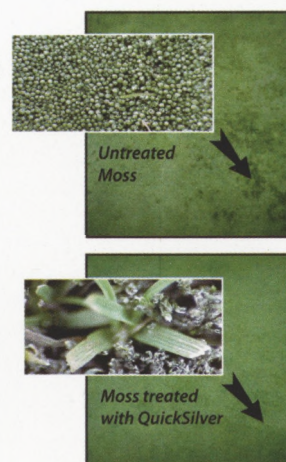
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# Fall Fertilization – Are We Doing It Right?

From the time that I started in this job (which is now 21 years ago) we, in the turfgrass extension world, were extolling the benefits of late fall fertilization. The benefits were thought to include:

- Improved fall colour
- Early spring green up without excessive shoot growth
- More and deeper roots
- Increased carbohydrates for improved winter-hardiness

The current late fall fertilizer recommendations in Ontario call for 1.0-1.5 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup> applied in late October to early November. The recommended nitrogen (N) sources are water soluble or quick release N sources that do not rely on soil microbes (which are not active at that time of year because of the cool soil temperatures) for N release. These are sources such as urea, ammonium sulfate and IBDU. The recommendations do not take into consideration the fate of nitrogen applied to turf at this time, a time of year that is characterized by abundant rainfall and low evapotranspiration.

In 2012, Bauer et al. published a literature review of the agronomic and physiological responses of fall applied nitrogen to cool-season turf. In this review they cite 36 studies on late fall fertilization that were conducted in North America between 1930 and 2006, as well as two international studies (Italy and Turkey). The problem with some of the pivotal studies on late fall fertilization is that they were conducted in regions of North America that have a very different climate from us here in Ontario and some of the studies are on different species than we traditionally grow here. Also, it is difficult to draw sweeping conclusions because almost every study looked at something a little bit different than previous studies, whether it was timing, rates, location, soil type, turf species or N sources. In addition, every year is different for rainfall and temperature, which have a big impact on N uptake and potential leaching. All of this is a real trove of information, but it is difficult to draw sweeping conclusions that apply to all situations and all locations.

## What the Research Reveals:

### Spring Colour

Research conducted in Virginia on creeping bentgrass and tall fescue by Powell et al. (1967a) found that late fall and winter N improved year round colour and quality without stimulating foliar growth in the winter. They also observed that fall and winter N applications did not reduce the cold hardiness of cool season turf. This is an area of North America that has much milder winters, more precipitation and no snow cover so the results are not that relevant to Ontario.

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The problem with some of the pivotal studies on late fall fertilization is that they were conducted in regions of North America that have a very different climate from us here in Ontario.

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Later studies conducted in Rhode Island (Wilkinson and Duff, 1972) evaluated colour, growth and cold resistance of Kentucky bluegrass under various fall N timings. Treatments of 0.98 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup> were made every two weeks from October 1 to December 15th. Applications of N made before November 1st resulted in increased fall colour. All of the fall treatments provided good spring green-up and treatments applied after November 1st had greener colour and greater clipping yield by spring. Fertilizer treatments applied before November 1st produced a growth response in the fall, while later applications provided a growth response in the spring.

Ledeboer and Skogely (1973), again in Rhode Island, compared spring and fall applied N at a range of rates on fescues and bluegrasses. They found that early fall and/or late fall (after growth ceased)

fertilization provided better turf quality and green colour longer in the fall and earlier in the spring and did not increase mowing requirements compared to spring N treatments. Another group of researchers found similar results. Late fall nitrogen treatments resulted in better turf colour in the early spring. Studies in Wisconsin (Kussow, 1992) found improved spring colour but they also found that spring growth response was observed from the late fall N applications.

More recently, Mangiafico and Guillard (2006) conducted research in Connecticut that showed there were no differences between N applied on September 15, October 15, November 15 as far as early spring green up, but they did show there was less N uptake when applied after September 15th.

I think that most of us have witnessed this early spring green up from late fall fertilization and the research does support this.

### Increased Root Growth

Study results supporting increased root growth as a result of late fall fertilization are not as conclusive. Again, the studies in Virginia (Powell, 1967b) found increased rooting of 30 per cent during February on greens that received no fertilizer treatment in October versus greens receiving 0.98 or 2.94 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup>. By April there were no treatment differences for rooting. By June the treatments receiving 0.98 and 1.47 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup> between October and February had 40-50 per cent greater root mass compared to the untreated control and treatments receiving the highest N rates (1.96 and 3.92 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup>). Again, these results have little significance to our situation in Ontario.

In the mid-Atlantic, Hanson and Juska (1961) found that late winter root mass was significantly greater in the treatments that received 1.47 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup> in September or when this rate of N was split between a September and October application compared to the unfertilized control. However, in May the greatest root mass was from turf fertilized in March. In



Iowa, Moore et al. (1996) compared late fall N application with a heavy spring and a balanced N fertility program. The late fall and the balanced N fertility program produced 9 and 8 per cent more root mass respectively, compared to the heavy spring application. Rooting studies conducted north of the mid-Atlantic (Kussow, 1992; Mangiafico and Guillard, 2006) did not find root mass differences as a result of N applied in either September, October, November or December.

Again, studies supporting the claim that late season N fertilization of turf produces more roots in temperate climates is not supported by the research to date.

### Increased Photosynthesis and Carbohydrates

There is a claim that late fall fertilization increases winter-hardiness by increasing photosynthesis without promoting growth through carbohydrate storage and accumulation. The increase accumulation of reserve carbohydrates is thought to make turf more resistant to winter injury. Powell et al. (1967a) reported high N rate plots had higher levels of net photosynthesis. The authors of the literature review did not find any other research on low temperature photosynthesis outside of the work by Powell et al. This claim is not substantiated in any research reports conducted in other climates besides Virginia. There was some interesting work by Moon et al., 1990 that reported an 85-90 per cent reduction on photosynthesis in perennial ryegrass with one single chilling event (8°C day and 5°C night). They also reported that this photosynthesis reduction lasted for 5-7 days after plants were returned to more moderate temperatures (22°C day and 17°C night). Given this research and our temperatures in Ontario after mid-late September, it is difficult to see much of a temperature window when growth would have ceased, but photosynthesis could still occur.

### The Clincher

Let's refresh ourselves about how turfgrass takes up N. It takes up N through the roots in the form of nitrate or ammonium found in the soil solution through mass flow. This process depends on evapotranspiration. Evapotranspiration decreases in cold temperatures, which also decreases N uptake.

To really know if late-fall fertilization

is effective, it is important to know how much of the N that is applied is actually being taken up by the plant. Research has shown that on average throughout the season, turfgrass recovery of applied N is 50 per cent (Liu et al., 2008). Miltner et al., 1996 used radio-isotope labeled N to see where the N ends up. They found that of the N applied on Nov. 8th in Michigan on Kentucky bluegrass, 33 per cent was taken up by the plant and the rest remained in the soil and the thatch. On the same plots in 2006, Frank et al. applied N at a rate of 0.245 and 0.49 kg N/100 m<sup>2</sup> on October 17th and found that 17 and 19 per cent of the N fertilizer was recovered from the low and high N rates respectively. What this is saying is that in the late fall, a small percentage (17-19 per cent) of applied N is taken up by the turfgrass plant.

### Environmental Considerations

So the question becomes, if such a small percentage of the N is recovered or taken up by the turfgrass plant in the late fall, what happens to the other roughly 66-80 per cent? Petrovic (1990) concluded that there is greater potential for nitrate leaching in the late fall because of reduce evapotranspiration, increased precipitation and decreased microbial mobilization of N. Recent studies evaluating late fall N applications to turf have found elevated nitrate levels in the leachate. The amount of leaching varied with each study depending on the rate, nitrogen source, timing and rainfall with the greatest losses from applications made after September 15 (Mangiafico

and Guillard, 2006). In another study, the greatest nitrate losses were from season long fertilization with ammonium nitrate (16.8 per cent) compared to 1.7 per cent with polymer coated urea and 0.6 per cent with an organic N source (Guillard and Kopp, 2004).

### So, when should turf be fertilized in the fall?

The only benefit from late fall fertilization of turf that has been demonstrated in the literature for temperate climates like Ontario is enhanced fall colour and early spring green up. The benefit of increased root mass has not been substantiated for our climate. In addition, research has shown based on recommended N rates in late fall that there is a potential for nitrate leaching. We do not have all of the answers yet, but with the information that we do have, perhaps we should follow the precautionary principle and refrain from applying nitrogen after September 15th. Or, perhaps adjust the rates down until the research can establish what the appropriate rates, timing and N sources are to give the optimum agronomic response without any harmful environmental effects. ■



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# Precision Turf Management – The Future Unleashed

Precision Agriculture (PA) has been adopted by the agricultural industry for well over a decade now. Basically, the application of inputs (water, fertilizer, chemicals) are applied only where needed, and the amount needed is based on site specific information gathered from sampling with multi-sensored devices that are geo-referenced by a GPS.

Precision Turf Management (PTM) on golf courses is based on the same principles as PA. Golf courses are just getting on board with this technology and since most individuals carry a smart phone with GPS built into it, this should come as no surprise.

Unlike crops, turfgrass is not grown for yield. But if we equate crop yields to visual imperfections or reduced playability on turf, we desire similar outcomes. A farm manager does not wait until harvest to manage a crop. Likewise, we as course managers don't wait for visual imperfections or reduced playability to apply products or implement cultural programs to strengthen our turf as part of a solid IPM program.

The cost of the equipment to deliver the PTM technology has gone down significantly over the last several years making it a viable option for golf courses. If you add up the total amount of dollars spent per year at the average 18-hole golf course on fertility, plant protection products and water, it would add up to at least \$100,000. PTM is known to save 5-8 per cent on inputs due to more precise application. That's a \$5,000-\$8,000 savings per year making the payback on investment a reality within a few years and even less depending on the intensity of your fairway application programs. Toro estimates savings can be 20 per cent or more.

Every golf course has its micro-climates, its site-specific management units that perform in the same manner around the property. These areas can be defined as:

1. Areas with similar soil or plant species that require unique levels of inputs.
2. Areas with effects from inappropriate levels of sunlight, shade and air movement.
3. Areas with different levels of topography.
4. Certain zones with a history of pest incidence.
5. Playing areas with concentrated foot, cart and maintenance vehicle traffic or teeing areas or landing zones with more concentrated divots and seeding requirements.

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*Precision Sense 6000 (image courtesy The Toro Company)*

Anything that can be quantified can be mapped using GIS software to graphically display their relative geographic location and impacted size on the golf course. Once arranged in segmented management units, strategic plans can be implemented to address the varying conditions knowing the area calculations of the areas involved.

Mobile multiple sensor devices are necessary to measure multiple factors efficiently in a timely manner on a close spacing across a whole playing area. Recently, the Toro Company has developed the Precision Sense 6000 mobile sensor that collects soil moisture, compaction, salinity, topography and turfgrass health data. The multiple-sensor device has a mapping speed of 2 mph and covers 2.5 acres (1 hectare)/hour using an 8 x 8 foot sample grid or 600 to 700 samples per acre. A typical 18-hole course can be sample mapped in 2-2.5 days.

Most courses claim they have good operators spraying their turf so automated sprayer systems are not necessary. This may be the case, but different operators produce different results of total area and amount sprayed.

The next wave of sprayers will utilize single nozzle control with sub-centimeter accuracy, which is now more affordable than ever. In PTM, variable rate/location spray jobs are loaded into the sprayer controller and the individual spray nozzles will turn on and off as you reach the boundaries of the targeted spray area. Auto steer (part of the system) will assist operators to avoid spray overlap and misses and to avoid the environmentally sensitive 'no spray zones' to help ensure the protection of the environment on our courses. The golf course management industry will be greatly elevated as more operations adopt Precision Turf Management. ■



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# MSD Bulletins

With winter moving in, this is a great time to reflect on issues that the Ontario Ministry of Labour (MOL) is targeting over the next few months. By addressing these issues, you will have the opportunity to prepare for that potential MOL inspection.

Every few months the MOL puts out a list of targeted issues that the inspectors are responsible for identifying in various workplaces across Ontario. Over the next few months, the target will be on machine guarding and lockout hazards. The inspectors will also check on hazards involving musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), chemical and noise exposure and workplace violence and harassment.

This article looks at issues around musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). This is a very broad subject when it comes to workplace injuries. In this blitz the MOL is targeting MSD's associated with climbing and lifting. While the number of workers at your clubs may be low at the time that this blitz is happening, it is important that you identify these concerns now to ensure that your club and your department are prepared for the spring start up. It is much more effective to set your standards when the pressure to complete the work is low. In this way you can ensure that the rules are in place once the hiring starts next spring and the workers are returning to work.

Section 73 of Regulation 851 (Industrial Establishments) made under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (the Act) prescribes the required features and use of portable ladders in the context of an industrial workplace. Non-compliance with Section 73 may create a hazard for the worker. Requirements for the instruction/training of workers, maintenance of equipment, and the use of personal protective equipment, such as fall arrest, may also apply in specific circumstances. In addition to legal requirements relating to the features and use of ladders, workplace parties should also consider safe practices, such as: the correct choice of ladder in specific circumstances, how to set it up, its weight capacity, and environmental conditions in which the ladder is being used in the workplace.

Some of the jobs that you need to consider are the climbing of ladders to access tree limbs for cutting or trimming or the access to stored materials that are located on racks or shelving.

It is important when you are considering the execution of these tasks that you remember that it is not only the workers employed directly by the club, but also the contractors engaged by the club to do work on club property. All workplace participants are covered by The Act and, as superintendents, it is your responsibility to ensure their safety.

There are many aspects that need to be considered when reviewing your rules for access to heights that may affect the potential risk for MSD's.

In this article I only have space to name a few.

*Face the ladder for climbing/descending; use handrails when available; only carry objects that do not impair ability to climb/descend; keep belt buckle (i.e., navel) within centre of ladder when reaching sideways (belt buckle stays within outer edges of side rails); avoid leaning backward; avoid rising up on toes when reaching above to place objects; and maintain balance and three point contact (two feet and one hand in contact with the ladder).*

When objects are lifted by hand, the rule is that when lifting an object with one hand it should be less than 9 kg, male; 6 kg, female. When lifting with two hands, the weight may increase to 21 kg, male; and 12 kg, female. However, when lifting over the head the weight is reduced to 16 kg, male; and 8 kg female.

To get more information on reducing the possibility of MSD's when using ladders and other equipment go to: [www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/sawo/pubs/fs\\_manufacturing.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/sawo/pubs/fs_manufacturing.php) ■

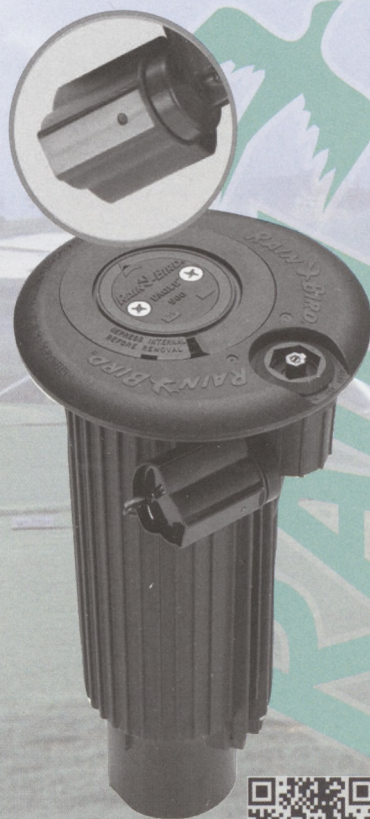


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*Tim Muys, Superintendent at Piper's Heath Golf Club stands amidst the club's garden plot.*

## An Abundant Harvest at Piper's Heath

In 2008, Tim Muys, Superintendent at Piper's Heath Golf Club, started to expand his repertoire beyond growing grass and planted up a plot of land near the grounds department with herbs and a few vegetables. Since then it has grown to approximately 7000 square feet and includes almost everything, quite literally, from A to Z.

In the beginning, vegetables such as lettuce and carrots were grown. Lettuce is quite labour intensive because of the amount of cleaning it involves, so it has been replaced with more successful crops such as beets and beans. Beets require thinning and sometimes the rabbits find the beans, but overall they are easy to grow and have earned a top spot in the garden. Growing novelty vegetables, such as blue fingerling potatoes, has also been a successful and worthwhile venture. Saving a few potatoes as well as garlic cloves from each year's crop provides the seed for the following year. Perennial crops such as asparagus, rhubarb and raspberries are a great addition because they only have to be planted once and the kitchen has been particularly fond of the rhubarb.

Herbs also play a key role in the garden and this year's basil crop has been particularly bountiful. Tim says there are two things key to growing basil



*The garden includes, quite literally, everything from A to Z, from asparagus to the zucchini above.*

successfully. Firstly, when planting, if there are multiple seedlings in the pot, separate each individual plant and plant them on their own. This reduces plant competition. Secondly, when harvesting, only harvest individual leaves instead of trimming stems with leaves. This practice saves the job of plucking the leaves off the stems later and reduces the likelihood of plant burnout.

In addition to all things edible, the garden also boasts a beautiful array of cut flowers, such as sunflowers, snapdragons and huge State Fair Zinnias. The tips of the sunflowers are clipped to promote branching and produce an abundance of blooms. Gladioli are dug up in the fall and overwintered to be planted the following

year. This year the early start to the season meant the 500 gladioli in storage didn't get planted, but considering the hot dry weather earlier in the summer, this was a blessing. On the other hand, the dry weather was fantastic for the drought loving zinnias. Cut flowers are picked by clubhouse staff to brighten up areas inside the clubhouse such as the bathrooms.

One staff member spends about one day a week maintaining the garden and is helped by a few others. The kitchen staff is responsible for harvesting, although getting them out of the kitchen into the garden can be a bit of a challenge.

Overall, the garden has had few pest problems and most things have been easy to grow. Although it requires a lot of work, it also boasts great rewards. And when Tim is nowhere to be found on the course, his staff know exactly where he'll be. ■



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# Last Check Can Save You

By now all golf courses but those in the southern most regions of the province will have their irrigation systems blown out, pump houses winterized and winter applications of product put down on the turf. Decisions will be made about how long to hold off on putting the tarps down and flights will be booked to winter conference and vacation destinations. In between surfing for travel advisories and trying to arrange for your first round of winter golf, it is also time, once again, to give your equipment fleet some thought while the season's issues are still top of mind – or not too far from the surface. Hopefully you have been keeping your service and maintenance records up to date so a quick glance through them over a cup of coffee should be enough to alert you of any maintenance concerns that need to be addressed, and remind you of any repairs that have been done over the season. Winter service time is the perfect opportunity to revisit these areas to ensure that the repairs are still sound and to adjust anything that needs adjusting. Remember, just because it was right when you left it, doesn't mean that time and the law of probabilities hasn't had its hand in things.

Don't let the opportunity to take advantage of some great payment terms and reward options that your OEM and aftermarket parts providers have available at this time slip away. These are usually limited time offers so get on it. The info is on your desk there somewhere and you can even have it sent to you electronically if you call up and ask nicely.

Earlier this year I shared with you my musings on whether or not to buy one expensive rotary push mower or two of a cheaper and, more importantly, lighter variety. Our operators wanted lighter so we went cheap and light. One season in now and they have had what I would describe as light commercial duty, mostly lady driven – seriously. The wheels and height of cut assemblies are showing signs of wear and aren't quite as tight as when new, but this is to be expected and they are still well within acceptable tolerances. The handlebar, cables and operator presence system are minimalist at best with no allowance for taller operators, but the lighter weight proves to be an adequate compromise,

making this mower very manoeuvrable and easy to use. To summarize, I have to say that for our purposes, going with the lighter, cheaper option proved to be the right choice. No complaints from the operators (and, as we have learned already, happy operators make for better and more careful operators) coupled with acceptable performance and quality of cut makes it a no-brainer. As always, you must make your purchasing decisions based on your own experience and set of circumstances.

Before things freeze up completely, take one last walk around your yard and maintenance facility, looking for anything that has been forgotten or simply overlooked. Outdoor taps that aren't frost free, wash stations and hoses need to be drained, gutters and storm drains all need to be clear and free of leaves and debris. Don't neglect the indoor things either like clean furnace filters and cold air intakes that most high efficiency furnaces have nowadays. Remember to check mouse traps daily and clean up their mess carefully with an eye for sanitation. The point is, having a look now for things left forgotten can save you time, money and aggravation later.

I have told you before about the rope tow device that we have here at Donalds Golf Club that has proven to be a unique, but always interesting challenge for me over the years. I know for a fact that many of you have similar unique aspects to your jobs that provide for hours of hand-wringing and teeth-gnashing frustration. However, when these quirky tasks are overcome, they often result in euphoric satisfaction when you finally figure it out. Now I want to hear about them. Call or email me with your stories of trial and conquest and I will share some of the best ones with you in future issues. ■



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## The Season of 'Too'

This past golf season was best described to me by Owen Russell, Superintendent at Markland Wood Golf Club, as the season of "too". In our conversation, he said it was a year of extremes. "It was too early, too hot, too dry and then too wet". I could probably add to that list: too hard and too long. To that end, in Doug Breen's spring *President's Message*, he wondered if the odd weather would result in a summer plague of "locusts, frogs and golfers". While I'm still on the lookout for the locusts and frogs, I did see and hear of issues concerning nematodes and bacterial wilt.

Bacterial wilt is a turfgrass pathogen that affects both poa annua and bentgrass with symptoms such as yellowing and etiolating of leaf tissues and, in severe cases, turfgrass decline. There is debate among academic circles as to whether the bacterium is related to the Xanthomonas strain that wiped out Toronto Bentgrass in the early '80s or is derived from Acidovorax. Also, earlier theories connecting plant growth regulation products as being the cause of these etiolated plants seem to have been discounted. This pathogen has been labeled "a game changer" south of the border as resulting damage can be quite extensive. Jeff Kent, Superintendent at Quail Hollow Club, has had remarkable struggles with this pathogen. Unfortunately, there are no known chemical control options. Early findings point to acibenzolar-s-methyl, copper based programs and cultural management as

possible preventative management programs.

Similar to Bacterial wilt, turfgrass decline caused by plant-parasitic nematode damage is most apparent during summer heat stress. To my knowledge, optimum temperature range for nematode activity/feeding is 20-27 degrees Celsius. While Dr. Katerina Jordan, Assistant Professor at the University of Guelph, found the presence of nematodes in lab samples in 2006, I had only begun hearing local superintendents talk about associated damage within the last year.

### Turf Tip

Upon my last visit to Toronto Golf Club, Assistant Superintendent Bill Green and I were greeted by Lance Forrester from Forrester signs. While meeting Forrester, I had the opportunity to see the pesticide signs he had custom made for posting pesticide applications. Quite simply, a metal sign, with the infamous "Warning Pesticide Use" in bold red font, is used in conjunction with magnetized labels. A toolbox is used to house all the labels for the varying pesticides, names of contact personnel and numbers for application dates or contact information. Quick and easy, these magnets will have you ready for any last minute audible. Goodbye carburetor cleaner and good night dry erase marker that never worked!



It appears that we have had plant-parasitic nematodes in our soils for some time but never saw any damage due to lower stress levels placed on greens. Postulated reasons for increased levels of nematode damage (or any visible damage in the first place) are higher demands for faster greens – resulting in weaker plants, drier green surfaces – resulting in increased stress placed on turf and reduced usage of thiophanate-methyl. Preliminary work with chitin based products seems to have a positive effect on nematode suppression. ■

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# Fifteen Years Ago Today

The 1997 Board of Directors were: Simon George (pres.), Oakville, Alex LaBelle (past pres.), Merry Hill, Ian Bowen (vice), Oshawa, Paul Dodson, Lionhead, Bob Heron, Beacon Hall, Lamont Anderson, Pointe West, John Gravett, Credit Valley, Rob Ackermann, Markland Wood, Keith Bartlett, Thornhill, Jim Flett, Muskoka Lakes, Mark Piccolo (editor), Galt and Jeff Burgess, Weston. Jacqueline D'Amato was the OGSA office manager.

**ON THE MOVE:** Chris Dew, National, Robert Cowan, Royal Woodbine, Steve Holmes, assistant at Devils Pulpit moved to Maple Downs, Phil Brown moved to Sarnia and Marc Brooks moved to Sawmill Creek.

**TOURNAMENTS:** The Summer Field Day was held at The Cutten Club on Monday, August 25th hosted by Richard Creed. Trevor Hunter, Foxwood, was low gross with a 71 and Colin White, Donaldal, was low net. Terri Yamada, RCGA, was low women with a 90.

The President/Greenschairman/Director Tournament was held in Buffalo at the Park Country Club hosted by Scott Dodson, formerly from Summit. The winning team was from Markland Wood, Rob Ackermann and the team from Weston, Jeff Burgess, came second.

The Georgian Bay Golf Superintendents Association had golf meetings at Blue Mountain, Jay Lavis, Parry Sound, Jeff Alexander, Hawk Ridge, Bruce Dodson and Bonaire, Randy Fielder.

Al Beeney, North Halton, hosted another March curling day. Skip Richard Butler, St Andrews East, Cara Shephard, AllTurf, and John Stein, Toronto Ladies defeated last years champ Dean Baker, Glen Abbey.

**ACHIEVEMENTS:** Conestoga Golf Course, Rob Stevens and Nobleton Lakes Golf Club, Barry Endicott, became fully certified under the Audubon Sanctuary Program.

David Gourlay (Sr.) received the John B. Steel Distinguished Service Award and Hugh Kirkpatrick, Westmount, received the Superintendent of the Year Award from the CGSA.

Paul Dermott, Oakdale, won the Environmental Steward Award from the GCSAA.

**EVENTS:** The CGSA's 48th Conference and Trade Show was held in Montreal. Keith Bartlett, Thornhill, was presented with the Gordon Witteveen Superintendent – Authored Article of the Year Award. The president of the CGSA was Pelino Scenna.

The tenth annual Ontario Turfgrass Symposium was held in Toronto

for the second time after an extended run in Guelph. The keynote speaker was Hockey Night In Canada broadcaster Ron MacLean. Teri Yamada provided an update on the Audubon Sanctuary Program and Gordon Witteveen talked about his book "The Magic of Greenskeeping". The Popular Innovative Superintendent Session included talks by Jerry Richard, Craigowen, Ian Chapman, Glen Eagle, Alex LaBelle, Merry Hill and Paul Scenna, Donaldal.

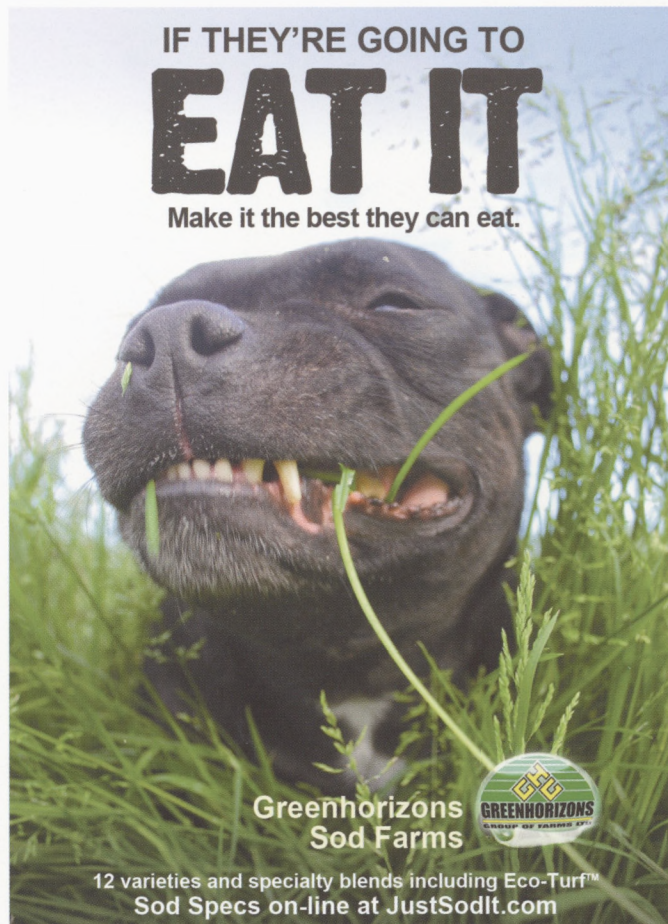
**MILESTONES:** The OGSA became an affiliated chapter of the GCSAA, which allowed us the privilege of voting representation, the use of promotional materials and logo, members lists and participation in co-operative programs.

Cindy Charters, OGSA office manager, retired after 14 years of service. ■



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# Golf 1890's Style

by Doug Breen, Superintendent  
GolfNorth Properties

I'm going to tell you a secret – it's my "million dollar idea". Every guy I know has one of these, and if you get him drinking, he'll tell you what his is. One of my buddies plans to open a topless hairdressing salon called *A Little Off The Top* – that's a pretty good idea – but mine is better. I want to open a golf course, built and maintained with the technology of the late 1800s, played by golfers using 1890s club and ball technology, and using the rules of 1890s golf. Mashies, niblicks, gutta perchas, and stymies – maybe even knickers and wool jackets.

Now your first thought is bound to be, "Doug, you're out of your mind, what kind of loser would want to take part in such a preposterous idea?" Well, this summer, I saw my target loser market at the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Stoney Creek – war of 1812 re-enactors. If literally hundreds of people are willing to dress up in period costumes, argue about the authenticity of each other's breech buttons, and live on pemmican in canvas tents for a weekend - I can get 150 people a day to come out to my course for an authentic 19th century golf experience. And have you ever looked at the parking lot of one of these events? Audis, BMWs, and Lexus vehicals as far as the eye can see. Apparently, there's a lot of disposable income among the undatable! When one considers that the war of 1812 crowd is but one tree in the geek forest, and that there are also well heeled people playing recorders at renaissance fairs, dressing as knights, or playing out WWII scenarios on paintball fields - the harvest is ripe, and the labourers are few, my friends.

For many years, I've been driving around back roads, looking for exactly the right piece of crappy farmland. The kind of land, that would have made the first pioneer settler cry for a week when he saw it. Hilly, swampy, lots of rock walls, and hardscrabble trees growing sideways to get away from the wind. Then I'd lay out a course without moving any soil except around the greens, and very little there. Then I'd buy a bunch of sheep (Rosedale had 120 at one point), and use them to "cut" the rough and fairways. The greens would be cut with walking reel mower, because that technology is about 200 years old. If the sheep can't keep up,

we can pull a three gang mower with one of my wife's horses – it's about time they started earning their keep anyhow. Then we'll shear the sheep, and turn them into haggis for the dining room. For irrigation, we'd use a "hoseless watering system", which was essentially a horse drawn gravity sprayer, and only use it on the greens and approaches. I'm pretty sure that you can't buy lead arsenate in large enough quantities to spray fairways anymore, and I'd like to live to see fifty, so I'd use modern pesticides.

I was a little concerned about finding someone to make 1890s golf clubs and

balls, but after listening to an investment banker from Oakville, explain to an architect from Forest Hill, that he now makes his own musket balls, because the commercially available ones weren't authentic enough for his taste – I know that some dork will fill the void for me. Same with the period clothes.

Only match play would be allowed. It's how God intended the game to be played. Alistair MacKenzie (God's golf prophet) wrote in the 1930s that "The card and pencil set will destroy the game, as they'll be forever crying about what is fair." Man, did he have that right. If match play is like old time hockey; then stroke play is like deciding the Stanley Cup by total goals for and against, while ignoring who won the individual games. And there will be no picking up your ball on the green either – play the stymie. The Bible lays out the importance of all this – I think it's in Leviticus.

So that's my million dollar idea. I'm not sure why I'm telling you all this. Maybe because I'm realizing that nobody but me thinks it's a good idea? Maybe because the idea is just so fantastic that I can't hold it in anymore? Maybe because I'm hoping that one of you will steal my idea, take on the financial risk, and then I can sue you for half the profits, due to me publishing the idea in *Green is Beautiful* as my intellectual property. (I likely shouldn't have said that last one.) ■



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