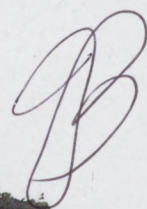


Summer 2013



Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association



Superintendents Doing More: Going the 'Extra' Mile

ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**Forget Snedeker and Mahan,
Where is Luke List?**

**Alternative Broadleaf Controls
Combating Fierce Disease Pressure**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



by Rob Gatto
OGSA President

We are in the midst of yet another season of record-breaking weather, not from heat this time, but from rain. It seems every year Mother Nature provides yet another challenge.

Recently, many courses around Ontario, and, especially the GTA, experienced some level of flooding and subsequent damage. Moreover, as I write this message, we are once again experiencing scorching temperatures with high humidity. Such is summer in Ontario, I suppose. Hopefully, when you read this, course reconstruction will be complete and the affected courses will all be playable once again.

The torrential rains of early July caused the OGSA to cancel our Presidents' Day Tournament, which was scheduled to be held at Weston Golf & Country Club on July 15th. It was unfortunate for all those registered, and, in particular, for host Superintendent Rob Ackermann. Many clubs see the value in a day of networking and camaraderie with the decision makers at their clubs, and it is unfortunate that they were unable to enjoy the event in 2013. We look forward to next year's tournament, which is scheduled for Westmount Golf & Country Club in Kitchener, Ontario with host Superintendent Cory Janzen.

The OGSA has been working hard on Conference 2014 and our 90th Anniversary. We are delighted to announce that we will be inviting all our retired past presidents, honorary members, and 50 year members and their partners, to be our guests at the 90th dinner and show, to be held on Thursday, January 23, 2014 at the Westin Harbour Castle. Many of these folks have made strong contributions to the association throughout the years and have helped to build it into what it is today and we want them all to be there to help us celebrate this milestone.

Our conference pages on the OGSA website are comprehensive, and online registration is now open. Your all inclusive registration package will include everything listed on the conference schedule, including the 90th celebration; an evening with Colin Mochrie and Deb McGrath. Along with all the great food and entertainment, you can acquire all your IPM points required for the year!

The Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament, our season ending event, is scheduled for October 7th, 2013 at Trafalgar Golf & Country Club with host Superintendent Mark Prieur. I hope to see everyone there, and until then, best wishes for the balance of the season. ■

Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

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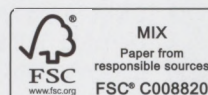


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Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

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**Divot Filling Program,
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Photo courtesy: Scott White

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the quality of golf and its environment.

GREEN IS BEAUTIFUL 2013

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EDITORIAL MESSAGE



by Justin Parsons,
Engage Agro Corp.

My Grandpa always used to say that it doesn't cost anything to be nice. It's a very simple notion really, but one that often gets neglected. Kindness towards others never hurts anyone. In fact, everybody wins. As I read through the summer issue of *Green is Beautiful*, I am reminded of this concept and how sometimes it's the smallest gestures at the unexpected times that have the most impact.

I've never been a golf course superintendent, but I've been close enough to the position to know how demanding a job it is. You are the "go to" guy for everything. Every decision that is made for 150 to 200 acres of property comes down to your call. It all falls on your shoulders and that's a lot of responsibility when you think about it. Especially when the environment that you are managing is in a constant state of change, yet the expectation is continual perfection.

That's why when you hear stories of superintendents who spearhead additional community initiatives above and beyond the day-to-day golf course maintenance operations, it is most impressive. These are guys who, in

all likelihood, have barely enough time for family, yet here they are trying to use whatever professional means they have at their disposal to give back to those in need.

I've never been a PGA Tour professional either, but I think we can all appreciate the kind of pressure these guys are under. Especially the young gentlemen on tour who need to make cuts at every event to put food on the table. Every tournament, every round, every shot could be the difference between them moving forward in a career that they have devoted their lives to and going home broke and scrambling to find a new way to make a living.

That's why when you hear about a young PGA player who lifts the ropes for two young kids during a practice round of the RBC Canadian Open, you can't help but feel touched by such a simple, yet extraordinary gesture. This is a young man who devoted his entire afternoon to two kids and their enjoyment of the game at a time when he was preparing for another critical tour event.

Lately in golf, there seems to be a lot of negativity. Between discounted rounds and budget cuts, legislation changes and increased workloads, it's sometimes tough to stay positive. At a time when our game, and more appropriately, the careers that are devoted to sustaining it are struggling, the stories you are about to read mean all the more. ■



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WHAT'S NEW

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager

FROM THE OFFICE

By the time this magazine arrives on your desk, our online registration for the Ontario Golf Course Management Conference and Trade Show will be open. Exhibitors have been reserving their booths over the past month, and before we know it, the conference will be upon us.

The speaker line up is looking good for the upcoming conference and we are happy to have GCSAA President Patrick (Pat) R. Finlen speaking on the trade show floor on Friday, January 24th. Along with bringing greetings from the GCSAA, Pat will tell us about his year as GCSAA President and will also speak about being host to the US Open in 2012.

In the office, we have recently completed our own review of the IPMAP to see how our members are doing. We are delighted that almost 80 per cent of our OGSA members have reached Level 2 in the accreditation program, and all courses where we have superintendent or assistant members working, are registered in the program. We wish to commend the professionalism of our OGSA members.

We will once again be a sponsor at the upcoming OTRF golf tournament and presenting the OTRF with our annual donation of support on behalf



Doug Breen, OGSA Immediate Past President, presented a plaque to Jeff Haynes, host superintendent of the Manulife Financial LPGA Classic held recently at Grey Silo Golf Club in Waterloo, Ontario.

of all our members. We hope to set up a display of old pictures on our assigned tee deck, so if you are playing in the tournament, don't forget to look us up!

We will also be meeting with the CGSA to talk about their 50th Anniversary in 2016, and will be attending the Paws in the Park fundraiser for the Toronto Humane Society. Our attendance at this event is due to the monies received from Lebanon Turf for our "Ontario" dog of the year in the annual GCSAA dog

calendar.

Don't forget to fill out our public meeting survey for this year. The links have been sent out and are available directly from our home page at www.ogsa.ca

Nominations for our distinguished service award are accepted at any time, but the deadline date is October 1st, 2013. Scholarship applications are due November 1st, 2013. Details are available on our website under the SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS tab.

Have a great balance of the season;

MARK YOUR CALENDAR UPCOMING 2013 OGSA Tournament & Events

Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament

Trafalgar Golf & Country Club
Milton, Ontario
Monday, October 7, 2013

Welcome to Our New Members

Jeff Adams..... Class F
Ballantrae G & CC

Perry Beausoleil Class A
Hylands Golf Club

Michael Keinan Gentry..... Class C
Silver Lakes G & CC

Susan Hill..... Class F
Lambton G & CC

Colin Hindle..... Class A
Emerald Hills GC

Matthew Johns..... Class A
Baldoon GC

Andrew Marsan..... Class C
Caledon Woods GC

Vergeer Golf Inc Class E
Andy Vergeer
Derrick Vergeer

see you at the Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament on October 7th at Trafalgar Golf and Country Club!

SUPERINTENDENT RECOGNITION

As part of the OGSA's Superintendent Recognition Program, Doug Breen, OGSA Immediate Past President, presented a plaque to Jeff Haynes, host superintendent of the Manulife Financial LPGA Classic held recently at Grey Silo Golf Club in Waterloo, Ontario.

Once again, Jeff and his crew outdid themselves getting the course ready, especially with the large amount of rain they received just prior to the tournament. Well done Jeff and the gals and guys at Grey Silo!

The OGSA also wishes to recognize the efforts of the grounds crew and host Superintendent Andrew Gyba of the RBC Canadian Open, held recently at Glen Abbey Golf Club. Well done! ■

Niagara on the Lake Golf Club Ranked Amongst Top Short Courses

In the June 2013 issue of Golf Digest magazine, Niagara on the Lake Golf Club was ranked ninth in the publications Top Nine Short Courses Outside the United States list.

The publication defines a "short course" as one with fewer than 18 holes and playable in two hours or less. The courses on this list were selected by Contributing Editor John Barton and the magazine's international affiliates.

Congratulations to Superintendent Mike Magwood and his team for garnering such a prestigious acknowledgement.



*Feature layout in Golf Digest Magazine.
Credit: Golf Digest Magazine*

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Alternative Broadleaf Controls

Recent restrictions on the green industry in Ontario have created a flurry of activity around developing selective broadleaf weed controls. While golf is exempt from the bans of traditional weed controls through IPM regulation, there still may exist interest in making the alternative weed controls work within your management program. Many golf superintendents are also in charge of the surrounding lawns of the course and it is important to remember that out of play areas such as lawns and clubhouse gardens are only allowed to receive Class 11 pesticides.

Managing Expectations

One of the biggest hurdles that turf managers using new alternative broadleaf weed controls have to overcome is the effectiveness of the traditional three-way broadleaf herbicide. The standard is set high by its ease of use combined with its safety and reliability. Traditional selective broadleaf controls in grasses have been in use since the 1940's when 2,4-D was introduced and subsequently viewed as a miracle herbicide. Years later, in the 1960's, dicamba and mecoprop were also introduced. This effectively meant that for 20 years the green industry was happy to have a broadleaf control that limited ability to reduce populations of clover as well as a number of other weeds. Several years many improvements have been made to these technologies including different adjuvants and special formulations to increase effectiveness and reduce phytotoxicity at different times throughout the year. These many years of refinement have led to a product that is easy to use, safe for the grass and very reliable under a number of different conditions. To expect such a high level of performance from new technologies when they are first introduced is unreasonable. Unfortunately, the pesticide restrictions were put into place immediately under the assumption that many viable options were waiting to be introduced into the market. This viewpoint was naïve. Although there was not a flood of alternative products once the ban was put into place, some products have been registered and others are being developed that do show promise for controlling broadleaf weeds in turfgrass stands.

Alternative Products

The first product that was marketed in mass after the ban was a bio-control that contained *Sclerotinia minor* as the active agent. *Sclerotinia minor* is a fungal pathogen of many broadleaf plants, but is not known to infect grasses. The pathogen is introduced in the turfgrass stand on grain particles and then has to grow and infect the undesirable plant in order to be effective. One of the limitations of this product was that the grains had to stay on the plant to allow the pathogen to infect, making it most effective on rosette style plants. While effective on smaller broadleaf plants like clover in trials, on an in-use stand, the inoculum would fall off the leaves into the soil, not allowing the fungus to infect the plant.

Another limitation of this control was that like all

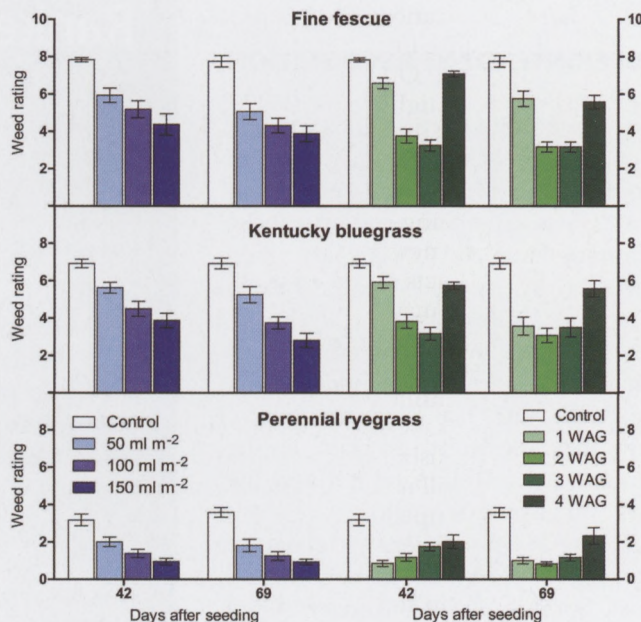


Figure 1. Weed control at 42 and 69 days after establishment of newly seeded areas when using chelated iron product at different rates (blue bars) and applied at different weeks after germination (WAG) (green bars).

pathogens, conditions must be right for infection to occur and disease to develop and cause death to the host plant. For the homeowner or lawncare company where irrigation and timing of application are limited, this leads to a reduction in the product's usefulness as extended moisture is key in ensuring infection occurs. For golf course managers, however, there is flexibility in application timing and water availability allowing this technology to potentially be more effective. Recent research, performed at the University of Guelph by Katerina Jordan and graduate student Cynthia Siva, has shown under which conditions the pathogen is most effective. The need for specific conditions for infection to occur and the limitations in efficacy for non-rosette style weeds limited the adoption of this bio-control herbicide. Their research will help with the refinement of existing bio-control herbicides and with the development of new more effective alternative controls.

Another new product that is widespread in the green industry is iron that has been chelated with EDHTA. Chelating agents are molecules that bind to charged metals such as iron and make them more easily absorbed into plants. Chelated iron works based on the higher toxicity of iron to broadleaves than to grasses. One limitation to the technology is, as is the case with many toxic elements, repeated exposure is often necessary before death will occur. This creates a limitation since repeated applications are necessary within a particular time frame and spot spraying becomes difficult because the previous weed sprayed may be smaller and harder to find

due to the damage sustained from the first application. Research at the University of Guelph has shown that chelated iron, when applied as a broadcast application 21-28 days apart, is an effective broadleaf weed control (Figure 1). Our research is performed under tight application standards where the product is being applied at the proper rate with the proper spray volume.

An important thing to remember when working with new technologies is, while the products may not be as optimized as they may be ten years from now, there is still more to a herbicide than the active ingredient. The adjuvants and other materials within the product can change how well the product works. One factor effecting plant uptake of metals is pH and using chelated iron that is not buffered properly for pH will not be as effective as one that is at the optimum pH for uptake. In addition, the material must be applied at sufficient levels to cause toxicity, while not damaging the grass. The dark green colour iron gives grass is desirable in the golf industry at times, however, it does result in a decrease in the health of the plant for a period of time (Figure 2). Our research on the safety to the grass of repeated applications of chelated iron have shown that the grass is less healthy, but it recovers. Also, despite the reduced health of the plant, visually the grass appears dark green, so rather than visual rating, we rate the health of the grass by the quality of light reflectance from the plant (NDVI).

In the past few years we have tested a number of products for their effectiveness to control broadleaf weeds in turfgrasses and many of these products simply did not work. Others have shown potential applications in turfgrass



Iron toxicity on plantain with the regrowth occurring at the center of the rosette, requiring repeat applications for full control. Photo credit: Pam Charbonneau

but have not come to market. Still, there are a number of new products awaiting registration to fill the void left by the pesticide restrictions. These products will probably not be close to technology that has been optimized for over 60 years, but they will be a step closer to providing the green industry with alternatives. These new technologies, while not effective enough for in play areas, may be ideal for your clubhouse lawns and less important in play areas and will help you achieve some IPM goals by reducing traditional herbicide use within your operations.

For more information on alternative weeds controls please visit the research section of the the GTI website at: www.guelph turfgrass.ca/research.html#reports ■



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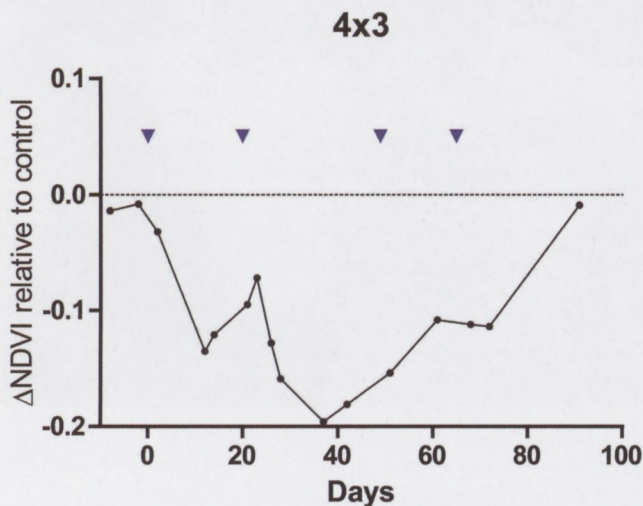


Figure 2. The reduction of turfgrass light reflectance quality (NDVI) in response to repeated chelated iron applications throughout the season. No long lasting effects on visual turfgrass quality or growth were observed.

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L to R: Caddie Jeff King, PGA Tour pro Luke List, Tyson and Kyle walk the 17th fairway together. PGA Tour player Luke List answers many questions during his practice round. Photo credit: Mark Prieur

RBC Canadian Open: Forget Snedeker and Mahan, Where is Luke List?

*by Mark Prieur, Superintendent
Trafalgar Golf & Country Club*

Something pretty cool happened at The Glen Abbey Golf Club a few weeks back during the RBC Canadian Open. In addition to the great conditions and fantastic golf, there was something else that occurred that never made it into the papers. After many visits to this storied course, it is interesting to see the club from an 11 and nine-year-old boy's point of view. Despite the history of Open's past, the smell of fresh cut grass and the sheer beauty of an impeccably maintained property, none of that seemed to even register with these boys, as they were about to be treated like golf royalty.

After a few autographs from Allenby, Bubba and a stalwart caddie whose autograph only read "Fluff", it was off to the valley holes. After all, no walk at the Abbey is complete without heading into the valley.

This section of the golf course during the practice round is not busy at all. The boys waited around for over half of an hour for a pro, any pro, to come through. And they weren't disappointed as one player made his way down to the 11th, then the par 3 12th to hit his shot. Luke List.



L to R: Luke and Tyson, Jeff and Kyle pose for a post-round picture.

Photo credit: Mark Prieur

Quietly both boys watched as Luke, a rookie on the PGA Tour, hit a perfect shot into 12. "Wow Dad! Did you see him drill that one?!" shouts Tyson, my nine-year-old, 36-handicapper. "Can we follow this pro," asks Kyle, my

11-year-old. As we head up to 12th green, the pro generously hands a couple of his gloves to my wide-eyed boys.

After watching Luke practice putt the 12th and crush a towering drive on the par 5 13th (Luke is ninth in driving distance on tour and led all pros at the RBC Canadian Open this year), Tyson asked to carry his driver back to the fairway. Not only did Luke oblige the young boy, he asked if both Kyle and Tyson would like to go inside the ropes!

Luke and his caddie, Jeff King, walked down the fairways with the two boys while I took photos. Kyle

and Tyson watched a pro talk to his caddie, discuss yardages and hit a very long ball – up close and personal.

No walk in the valley holes would be complete without a personal escort with the tour pro up the steep 15th hill in a BMW SUV. Yes, the boys were treated as if they were truly a part of Luke's team.

After watching this whole thing unfold, I was wondering who was enjoying the afternoon more, the pro and caddie or the boys. Indeed, Luke and Jeff's generosity has instilled in two young boys a love for golf that will last the rest of their lives. ■

At the Seniors Tournament



The 8th annual Seniors Tournament was held August 6, 2013 at Mono Hills Country Club.

Photo credit: Sally Ross

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager

The temperate weather prevailed once again, as the sun shone on the OGSA seniors for their 8th annual tournament on August 6, 2013 at Mono Hills Country Club. Superintendent Nick Amsen had the course in wonderful condition for the event.

The low score of the day belonged to John Alpaugh from Allturf, a newbie at this event. Upon my arrival in the office the next day, I went through my directory and checked off the folks I had met, most of whom are listed in the past presidents, life, and honorary member category. The

draw was a veritable who's who of OGSA history, and while eating my steak, one of fifty cooked by BBQ chef extraordinaire, Pelino Scenna, I enjoyed watching the camaraderie between this group.

It was my pleasure to be able to announce that the association would be inviting them to share our 90th anniversary celebration, to be held at the upcoming conference. Hopefully, we can entice some of our retirees away from the southern sunshine this coming January, because our younger members deserve to have the opportunity, like I did, to meet many of the builders of our great association. ■

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Hole #8, Oviinbyrd Golf Club
Photo Credit: Sally Ross

Pro Super Challenge Recap

A great time was had by all participants at Oviinbyrd Golf Club on the 5th of June for the Pro Super Challenge.

The rain held off with moderate temperatures and a mostly cloudy sky which made for comfortable playing conditions.

Participants were all excited to play this exclusive layout and the course did not disappoint. In only one area of the property is another fairway visible and while the McBroom designed course is only nine years young, it looks like it has existed for many years.

Mark Prieur, OGSA Director from Trafalgar G&CC acted as the emcee and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of host Superintendent Greg Aljoe and host Golf Professional, Curtis Pitre as well as all the Oviinbyrd staff and GM Dave Gardiner.

Supers who had a great outing: Mike Powers (National Pines GC)



Mark Prieur made presentations to Greg Aljoe, Host Superintendent, Oviinbyrd GC, Curtis Pitre, Host Golf Professional, Oviinbyrd GC and Mike Powers, Superintendent, National Pines GC.

with a net score of 67 led the charge, followed by Jason Winter (Deer Ridge GC) and Jason Crawford (Eagles Nest GC), who also snagged the longest drive for the Supers.

The Pro's were well represented with their winners: David Miller (Hamilton G&CC) came out on top with a gross score of 73, followed by George Lacy, Mary Pat Quilty and Colin Imrie (Westview GC).

The George Bowen Trophy was awarded to the team from National Pines, Superintendent Mike Powers and Golf Professional Kevin Bailie.

Skins winners who shared a \$930.00 prize pool were Jeremy Geer and Mike Grierson from Rocky Crest GR, Marty Kopp and Emerson Mahoney from Brampton GCC, and John Taylor and Bob Culig from Grand Niagara GC. ■



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MEMBER PROFILE

Nic Bell

Superintendent at Muskoka Highlands Golf Links

*by Reg Langen, Assistant Superintendent
Richmond Hill Golf Club*

Every summer thousands of Ontario cottage-goers make their way north to visit Muskoka. Known for its beauty, natural landscapes and fabulous golf courses, most people think of Muskoka as a weekend getaway. For Nic Bell, this is home.

Bell started in the turf industry working as a high school student at the Bay of Quinte Golf and Country Club. After spending three seasons working in the clubhouse, he moved into the turf maintenance department. It was at Bay of Quinte G&CC under both Jim Burlington and Peter Lucas, that Bell decided the turf industry was where he saw his future. His new found passion and drive to become a superintendent lead him to the Seneca College Golf Course Technician Program. It was after attending school that Bell's career and life began to flourish.

In 1998, between his first and second year of school, Bell did his internship

at Cardinal Golf Club in Newmarket. Fast forward a year later, and he took a position as a spray technician working for Wayne Rath at Magna Golf Club in Aurora. The golf course was still being built at this point, and this is where a new part of the industry would trigger another one of Bell's passions. "I think everyone should be involved in at least one grow-in of a golf course in their lifetime. They were great experiences." This would not be his last chance to get involved in the construction side of things. After leaving Magna Golf Club in 2003 to accept the position of Assistant Superintendent at The Club at Bond Head, he got another chance to get his hands dirty in the construction aspect of the industry. Working under the tutelage of Ian McQueen, he stayed at Bond Head until 2007, where he had a big hand in the construction and operation of both the North and South courses.

...continued on page 14



Nic Bell, Superintendent, Muskoka Highlands Golf Links

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Continued from page 13...

"Three grow-ins in eight years! It was a little exhausting I have to say, but an incredible experience. I wouldn't have changed it for the world", says Bell.

In 2008, a great opportunity arose; the superintendent's position at Muskoka Highlands Golf Links. Muskoka was a long way from Bradford where Bell, his wife and two children had just settled down, but it was a decision that would give him his shot. Unlike some of the other properties that Bell had worked at, a smaller crew and smaller budget meant a need to adjust his management style and expectations. The challenge was moving from golf clubs with so many staff to running a very small crew and having to be much more hands-on.

Nevertheless, it was time to pack and move to a place most people

only wish they could spend more time in.

After just his first season as a superintendent, Bell was approached by a friend who wanted him to take on a side project running a company that installs synthetic turf. Their company, Real Golf West, has done work for many golf clubs around the Greater Toronto Area and has even serviced places like British Columbia, Massachusetts and Thailand. "We install everything from backyard putting greens, driving range tees to lawn bowling facilities." Bell somehow finds time in his already packed schedule to even do some installations himself. Just this past winter, Bell agreed to take on another set of responsibilities by becoming the superintendent of a second golf club called Fairways at Kirrie Glen. Bell will oversee operations at this club, as well as continue his responsibilities with Muskoka Highlands and Real Golf West. "I was approached by The Fairways at Kirrie Glen to oversee the operations of their turf department. For the 2013 season, I will be splitting my time between the two properties as the Golf Course Superintendent."

If all of that weren't enough, he also sits on the board of directors of the Georgian Bay Golf Superintendent's Association (GBGSA) and somehow finds time to help with the Muskoka's Watershed Council. Also, along the way he has helped Muskoka Highlands achieve Audubon certification. Two golf courses, an artificial turf installation company, two boards, a wife and two kids; these things would easily leave a lesser individual wondering where the time has gone, but somehow Bell makes it work. Certainly his time management skills must be well developed and his impressive resume more than shows his extraordinary work ethic. Perhaps the best part is, he gets to do it all in beautiful Muskoka. ■

IN THE HOT SEAT

Q – Favourite major

A – The Open Championship

Q – Favourite piece of turf equipment

A – Toro 648

Q – Favourite golf course you haven't played?

A – St. Andrews (Scotland)

Q – Favourite golf designer?

A – Stanley Thompson

Q – Favourite course played outside of Canada?

A – The Black Pearl (Honduras)

Q – Ultimate foursome

A – Fred Couples, Jack Nicklaus, Jose Maria Olazabal and myself

Q – Lowest round and where

A – 63 at Muskoka Highlands Golf Links

Q – Favourite movie

A – *Anchorman*

Q – Favourite meal

A – Masala Chops, Biryani Rice and Chapati's

Q – What's on your iPod?

A – NWA and Snoop Dogg... they are actually on CD's. I'm not allowed to borrow my kids' iPods!

Q – Rate your home lawn on a scale of one to ten (1 worst, 10 best)

A – 2.5

Q – What would you envision yourself doing if you weren't working in the turf business

A – Chef



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Hole #2

Photo courtesy: Wildfire Golf Club

COURSE PROFILE

About the Course

Beautiful layout with two distinct areas of the course. The first 7 holes are much more wide open, consisting of penal bunkers and in play fescue areas. The remaining 13 holes are tight and treelined, accented by granite outcroppings. Host of the 2013 to 2015 Canadian PGA TOUR's Wildfire Invitational.

Established: 2003

Original Architect: Tom McBroom

Type of Club: Private

Number of Holes: 18

Number of Rounds Annually: 11,500

Practice Facility: Driving range and short game

Biggest Maintenance Challenge

Managing thatch levels due to reduced play, which results in localized dry spots on fairways.

A CLOSER LOOK

What You Need to Know

Predominant Grass Type:

Bentgrass greens, tees and fairways

Predominant Soil Type: Sand

Type of Greens: Dominant Extreme

Course Length: 5,188-6,745 yards

Size of Property: 185 Acres

Size of Greens: 3.5 acres

Size of Tees: 3.5 acres

Size of Fairways: 26 acres

A man wearing a red polo shirt, light blue cargo pants, and a blue baseball cap is walking away from the camera on a golf course. He is carrying a white bucket in his right hand and a small orange cup in his left. The background shows a green golf course with a sand trap and trees in the distance.

Superintendents Doing More: Going the 'Ext

*By Reg Langen, Assistant Superintendent
Richmond Hill Golf Club*

It is pretty obvious at this point that golf course budgets are shrinking, time is limited, and finishing the tasks necessary on tight deadlines with less staff is a challenge in itself. What's even harder, is finding any resources to do the little "extras" on the golf course, never mind devoting some of those resources to help other people. Most superintendents' to-do lists are usually quite large, and often include staff that need to be trained, turf that needs to be maintained, meetings to attend, piles of paperwork to deal with, and this doesn't even take into account all the personal obligations that demand attention. With this in mind, it is completely understandable when someone says they would like to do more for their community, but just don't have the time, not to mention the spare resources these gestures often require. So what happens when somehow, despite the busy schedules and commitments, someone finds the time

and resources to help? Amazing things!

After reaching out to members across the province and listening to some great stories of truly Good Samaritans, these are a few great stories of people who found the time and resources to develop and implement community programs that benefit everyone involved.

One of the most time consuming and tedious tasks on any golf course will forever be filling those pesky divots that are often left behind after a ball is struck. Back in the 1990's, several golf clubs in the GTA found a way to limit their club's resources that they devote to this irksome duty, all the while being able to offer employment opportunities to handicapped adults.

Community Living Toronto participants (cltoronto.ca) fill divots on tees and fairways all season long at golf clubs in the GTA area. The club pays this organization a small fee for this service, but it is significantly smaller in comparison to what it would cost to have staff complete the job. It's a great way to have an important, yet time consuming job

ra' Mile

done by individuals who may not find other employment opportunities very easily. The best part is participants in the program really seem to enjoy and embrace the opportunity to work.

Once the season is over, Community Living employees often stick around doing some indoor work throughout the winter. Although this is still great, most of them, like the rest of us, prefer to be out on the course.

Superintendent Scott White of Donalda Golf and Country Club, says, "Honestly, we don't hype this program enough, but I can tell you that our staff, as a whole, really embrace the program and they are all known and loved by the members." Since the program started, more than a dozen courses in the GTA are on board and it has grown into a mutually beneficial and rewarding experience for everyone involved. Great work guys!

...continued on page 18



Above: Vino is a participant in the divot filling program at Donalda Golf and Country Club. Inset (l-r): Staff members Kevin, Kyle, Vino and David. Photo courtesy: Scott White



Zumba, named by the membership at Muskoka Highlands Golf Links, is a service dog in training

Photo courtesy: Nic Bell

Continued from page 17...

Training Support Dogs

There is no doubt that for many superintendent's there is one member of their team that they would never want to be without; their loyal dog. One of the great benefits of a superintendent's position is they have the opportunity to bring their dog to work with them. Indeed, many superintendents would never dream of giving up their loyal work companion, but what if you had to turn over this employee every year? That's exactly what Superintendent Nic Bell and the team from Muskoka Highlands Golf Links does every season.

Bell and the team at Muskoka Highlands assume the responsibility of guardianship and training a two month old puppy every year. Now, these are not your every day run-of-the-mill puppies; they are future support dogs for people with disabilities.

"Most people don't understand how we can just borrow a dog for 10 months and then just give it back. Trust me it's hard sometimes because of how attached you get to the dogs, but knowing you are helping someone in greater need far outweighs the disappointment of having to give the dog back," says Bell.

The program began back in 1993 when Don and Joyce MacKay of Bracebridge, Ontario, decided to build a golf course on a vacant piece of land on the edge of town. During their first year of construction, their 15-year-old yellow lab Ramsey passed away, leaving a void with their family and no dog presence at their new facility.

Fast forward to later that same year and while travelling to a conference in Vancouver, the MacKay's stayed with some friends who were training aid dogs and giving them a home for a period of a year. This sparked a great idea and the beginning of an annual tradition.

The pups don't come with a name, but with a "batch letter". This allows the foster caregivers to name the dog, so long as the name begins with the batch letter. Every year

the membership takes a vote to determine the new pups name, the most recent being Zumba. After each pup's first birthday, they begin the intense aid dog training program and then the cycle starts all over.

It is not just all fun and games with the pup though, the "fosters" need to implement some basic training and the pups are given a green cape, which they are required to wear during "work time". Most of the time the pups just run around and cause Bell headaches by digging up greens and gardens, but they quickly learn that when the green cape comes out, it is all business.

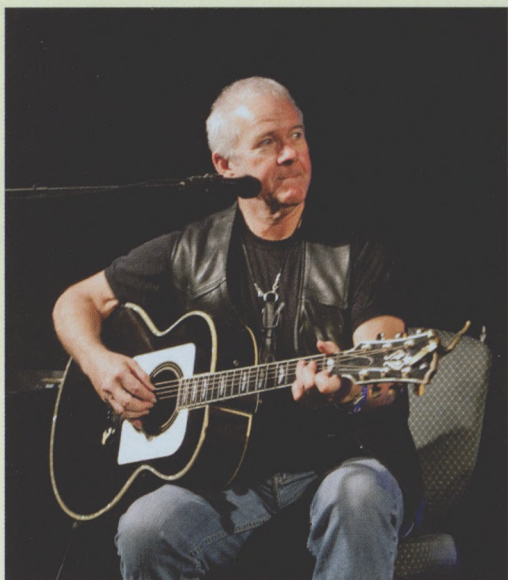
"They will walk right beside you and when you stop, they stop and sit. When sitting in a meeting, they lie down and don't bother anyone. They quickly realize that when the green cape is on it's work time", says Bell.

To this point, the club has fostered a total of 13 dogs, 10 of which have gone on to pass the rigorous program and become support dogs. This is an amazing statistic to say the least. Once Zumba has completed his first two months of the intensive training program, Dog Guides Canada (www.dogguides.com) will contact the club to pick up another puppy and begin the process all over again. Truly a bittersweet labour of love!

Fundraising for Educational Opportunities

As we all know, golf course superintendents must conduct their operations in an environmentally sensitive manner. Most, if not all, golf courses currently do all they can to help the environments they manage. Superintendent Neil Acton and the team at Deer Creek Golf Club have taken this one step further.

Back in 2009, Deer Creek Golf Club teamed up with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and initiated the Sunny Days for Conservation fundraiser (www.sunnydaysforconservation.ca). The purpose is to help the TRCA improve children's outdoor education opportunities and create accessible outdoor recreation in Durham region. The driving force behind this event



Murray McLauchlan and the Canadian band, Lighthouse



Photos courtesy: Neil Acton, Deer Creek Golf Club

is a benefit concert, which provides the funding for elementary students from underprivileged areas in the Toronto and Durham regions to attend programs at the Claremont Outdoor Education Centre. This facility is located just north of Pickering. It is a 160 hectare property along Duffins Creek, a cold water stream which offers a great place for kids to explore. To date, the show has raised upwards of \$80,000, and this does not include the monies raised at this year's event. The funds help maintain and assess four kilometers of trails on the grounds at Claremont, in addition to helping evaluate infrastructure improvements needed to support accessibility for guests. The money raised also goes toward promoting healthy living for Durham residents, supporting private land stewardship programs for rural and urban residents, and the restoration of the Atlantic salmon habitat in Duffins Creek. For this year's event, the proceeds were specifically directed to building support infrastructure to aid in the accessibility for all guests.

The name Sunny Days for Conservation came from the inaugural event which Canadian band Lighthouse headlined. Lighthouse allowed the concert to utilize their song Sunny Days as the theme. Some other notable Canadian artists that have since performed at the event

include Ian Thomas, Cindy Church, Mark Jordan and Murray McLauchlan, who just returned for a second time at this year's event. Thanks to Neil Acton and the Sunny Days committee for all your hard work. You guys rock!

A major skill that all superintendents employ is the ability to manage the resources that they are provided with. Stories like these ones show us that even with all the mounting restraints, the industry finds ways to do more with less. The overlooked truth of these stories is, perhaps, that although these programs are designed to help others in need, those who initiate them benefit as well. Many clubs obviously no longer need to be as focused on finding time to fill divots, someone gets to play with a puppy all the time, and a bunch of people get to rock out while saving the environment. This seems like a win-win situation for sure.

Certainly these are only a few of the many stories that could be told around golf courses in Ontario, which exemplifies the type of great people we have in this industry. If these stories are any indication, the superintendents in Ontario are extraordinary people, who often use the resources they have to better the lives of those around them. Kudos to these clubs and to any of the other clubs that may be doing something similar to aid people in need in their own communities. ■

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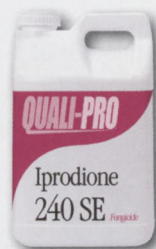


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WHMIS Update – Globally Harmonized System

Since 1988 employers in Canada have been required to train all workers likely to be exposed or who work in close proximity to hazardous materials or any materials regulated by the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS).

Over the intervening years there has been an ongoing effort to harmonize our WHMIS program with other WHMIS programs around the world. This effort to harmonize WHMIS with other countries is now coming to fruition.

This means that all employers in Canada will soon be required to update their WHMIS programs to meet the requirements of the new Globally Harmonized System (GHS). Across-the-board retraining in WHMIS may be needed in Canadian workplaces within the next few years upon the introduction of the GHS. The GHS is designed for classifying and labelling chemicals and will introduce a universal template for conveying product information in safety data sheets and a consistent labelling format using updated pictograms.

Manufacturers and suppliers will also be required to follow new rules for identifying health, physical and environmental hazards that will give users a more comprehensive disclosure of a product's potential harmful effects. These include additional categories of disclosure, such as risk to the ozone layer and aquatic environment, which will broaden the scope of the material safety data sheets (MSDS) currently mandated through our WHMIS legislation.

Currently, labels and MSDS differ from one supplier to another. The MSDS may also differ in format from one product to another. This makes finding important information on various controlled substances somewhat difficult. The GHS system will standardize the format and content of the MSDS. So if something is flammable in the old system, it is still going to be flammable in the new system. However, the risk phrases will be standardized and this will assist workers and managers in their efforts to understand the risks associated with various controlled substances. The risk

phrases used for product A will be the same as the risk phrases on similar products.

While there are still a number of details to be worked out, Canada is committed to implementing the GHS.

We expect new training requirements that will most likely rely, to a greater extent, on pictograms, which will be used in an effort to address language literacy challenges. It is expected that there will be new requirements for posting information to ensure that it is readily available to all workplace participants. For example, information about the pictograms will need to be posted in places where the use of the controlled substances is taking place and workers must know who to contact for more information. It is likely that training and updating of WHMIS information will be much stricter in the future.

The GHS puts greater reliance on pictograms to communicate warnings. It will take time and repeated exposure to the images before users associate a message with a symbol.

Current regulations require WHMIS training for all workers who handle or may be exposed to hazardous products. WHMIS training should be reviewed by the Joint Health and Safety Committee and training updates are required if new controlled products have been introduced into the workplace or if product information or workplace conditions change. There is a good chance that everyone will need to be retrained as Labels and the MSDS's will be different.

To follow the GHS implementation, visit: www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/ and watch for Government of Ontario updates.

Have a great autumn! ■



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It all started out so well this spring. It was cool and wet, which are perfect conditions for growing turf. In fact, I heard a few superintendents utter, "If you can't grow grass in a spring like this, you shouldn't be in this business." All that changed with the coming of summer. I think now that summer is here, they would probably like to retract that statement. Where to begin? There have been biblical like floods, trees uprooted, extreme heat, waterlogged soils, diseases, algae, crabgrass and insects, just to mention a few things.

As I am writing this (July 21, 2013), we are in the aftermath of a massive storm front that brought flooding and downed trees again. This is the third major event like this so far this summer. It is not yet clear how much damage has been caused to golf courses in the area, but you can bet it has been extensive. One nice thing about this latest storm is that the temperatures have dropped to a manageable level and are now much more in the range for optimum growth of cool season golf course turf. Even though temperatures are ramping up, there is nothing in the 14-day forecast to suggest that we will have another one of these heat waves soon. The real blessing is that night time temperatures are going to be hovering around 10-15°C.

The searing temperatures, high humidity and high nighttime temperatures have produced fierce disease pressure on golf courses. The brown patch pressure has been intense. Here at the GTI, where we don't spray the pathology green (for obvious reasons), roughly one third of the turf has brown patch symptoms. In my entire 23-year career, I have never seen this

"If you are in a Japanese beetle infested area, you will now be seeing many adults. They love flying around on warm, sunny days. If you have them, you can bet golfers are complaining."

Adult Japanese beetle



much brown patch pressure. There was a confirmed Pythium outbreak as well, but it was short lived thank goodness. There have been reports from the field of anthracnose basal rot, summer patch and a confirmed report of bacterial wilt (*Acidovorax*) from the GTI Turf Diagnostics lab. Some people are complaining about fungicide failure, but quite frankly, fungicides can only do so much when the pressure is as intense as it has been. The bulk of this disease pressure will subside now because, as mentioned above, the nighttime temperatures are going to be much cooler.

Another looming threat now is damage from turf insects. The annual bluegrass weevil damage has peaked, but the black turfgrass ataenius are mostly in the second instar, so there is still more damage to come. This situation will be exacerbated by the low humidity that has blown in in the wake of the huge storms. If turf is wilting or off colour in the next couple of weeks, it could be because all the heat over the last three weeks has shortened up the turf roots or it could be because of the black turfgrass ataenius grub damage, or both. Based on our monitoring here at GTI, we are expecting a bumper crop. If you are in a Japanese beetle infested area, you will now be seeing many adults. They love flying around on warm, sunny days. If you have them, you can bet the golfers are complaining. My



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Brown patch symptoms on a golf green

Photo credit: Pam Charbonneau

summer student and I were trying to do some point quadrats at a soccer field last week in Oakville and we were constantly being dive-bombed by Japanese beetle adults. European chafer adult grubs flights are pretty much finished for the season and now is the last window in which to apply a preventative application of insecticide to control these grub species for the upcoming fall and next spring.

So, how can you make the most of the rest of the season? Keep your fingers crossed and hope for the best? Probably not. From now on in, pay particular attention to your irrigation regime. High evapotranspiration rates and/or black turfgrass atenius grub damage can result in rapid turf loss if you don't stay on top of irrigation. Remember there has been tremendous root loss over the past three weeks, so less water more often might be necessary. Consider raising the height of cut and reducing the mowing frequency. If the long term forecast holds and we have more moderate day and night temperatures, attempts to aerate and overseed badly damaged areas can probably begin by the time this article goes to print.

I know that this probably isn't at the forefront of your thoughts at the moment, but the number of CEC's awarded to an IPM related education session for the mandatory Golf IPM Accreditation program has changed to 1 CEC for 60 minutes of educational contact (instead of 45 minutes) and a total of 6 CEC's are needed for the year (instead of 8 CEC's), beginning June 1, 2013. For more information visit the IPM Council of Canada's website at www.ipmcouncilcanada.org

There is always an open invitation to either follow my blog or follow me on twitter. The blog can be found at www.onturf.wordpress.com and my twitter account is @onturf. ■



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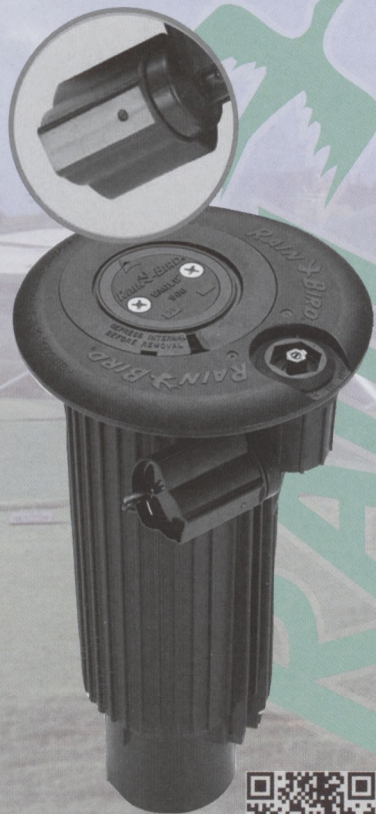
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The Golfing Salesman

A few weeks ago, as I was delivering a product to a customer, I got caught fitting the description of a stereotype that is sometimes used to describe what some might think the job of a salesman entails. As I opened the cargo area to my vehicle to access product, my customer, who was kind enough to offer a hand offloading the order, saw my golf bag inside my vehicle. Jokes ensued: "Typical salesman", "working hard?" and "I wish I had your job!" It was actually a very humorous situation because for those who know me well or have had the unfortunate luck of playing a round of golf with me, know that I don't often play. I happened to have played my first round of the year in a corporate tournament the day prior and had forgotten to take my clubs out of my truck. Which, by the way, is a huge pain as it takes up precious space that should be devoted to product.

After a few more laughs and my failure in trying to convince my customer that I don't keep my golf bag in my truck 24/7 in hopes that I can get a daily round in, I was on my way. As I drove off, I realized that much like the vocation of a golf course superintendent, there exist uncertainties as to what exactly a salesman duties are in our industry.

1. What Exactly Do You Do in the Winter?

Ah... the most frequently asked question! While a superintendent/assistant job is becoming increasingly busy in the winter months, winter is also a busy time of year for an industry representative. For one, conferences and trade shows can take up the bulk of time throughout the winter months with all the preparation involved for each event. All said and done, a sales rep might be asked to work a booth at half a dozen 'shows' (utmost respect to the equipment representatives who have to float in and stage all that equipment!). Once you factor in all of the internal sales meetings, time spent organizing and preparing for the coming season and finally taking vacation, it's not long and another season is in full swing.

2. You Must Play Lots of Golf

Unfortunately, this is not true – unless there is some secret that I am not privy to. This job is like any other, to be successful, you have to work hard at it and that cuts into play time. With a repressed economy, golf courses cutting budgets and increasing competition amongst a multitude of vendors, one can't risk resting on his laurels. More so than ever, it is important to be seen in the field, be educated on product offering and be able to provide second to none customer service before and after a sale. Similar to a superintendent or an assistant, it's hard to find the time to get away from the job and play golf. Most days, you're too tired and just want to get home.

3. At Least You Have Weekends Off

I'm not going to lie and say that we work as many weekends as golf maintenance staff. That being said, there definitely are times of the year where weekend work is a must. The seasonal nature of the business can place such demands on an industry rep that in order to stay ahead, one must get caught up on weekends. There sure are periods of the year where there doesn't seem to be enough time in the day to get everything accomplished. It's also not uncommon to work after dinner into the night as administrative duties can't be accomplished while on the road.

I hope this has shed a little bit of light on what exactly it is that we do. A job in sales can be very rewarding, especially when you can help out a customer in need or when you receive a call from a customer soliciting advice. See you on the road! ■



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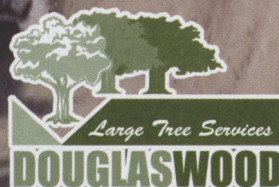
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Spring is in the Air... Huh?

It's the middle of August, right? But alas, although watering and weeding are usually the most important jobs on a gardeners' mind right now, spring bulb orders will be arriving in just a few short weeks. Our bodies are working like it's August, but our minds are often thinking about April. So as we start to think about the coming of spring in our gardens, I thought I'd share some of my favourite spring flowering bulbs.

Daffodils / Narcissus

If you are like me, you are tired of fighting with the squirrels and seeing all the holes left in your gardens where you worked painstakingly planting hundreds of bulbs. So I consistently rely much more heavily on bulbs that squirrels won't touch such as daffodils. One of my favourites is 'Barrett Browning', a small-cupped cultivar with white petals and an orange cup, which I consistently plant at the front of our clubhouse. I like to change things up so I've tried several other cultivars, but always come back to this one. It's bright and cheery and something different from standard yellow. Although the flower is a little smaller than traditional trumpet narcissus, it still stands out and makes a statement. I also really like the botanical narcissus, which are smaller and often have several blooms on one stem. They are good for naturalizing in areas that aren't too dry and many cultivars bloom later than traditional ones.

Fritillaria imperialis

It has taken many years for me to learn to appreciate this upside down flower as it is a bit unusual. However, it has now become a must plant at our first tee every year. One year I thought I would try it and the response was so positive that I thought I had better keep planting them. Members ask about them even after they've long finished blooming. And when the General Manager notices something, and likes it, keep doing it! At about ten times the price per bulb as an average tulip, the cost might make you cringe, but it takes a lot fewer bulbs to make an impact and in the right place they are definitely worth it.

Puschkinia and Chionodoxa

As much as I do not enjoy fighting with the squirrels, I also do not like replanting bulbs that are only guaranteed to flower well for one season. I tend to favour planting bulbs in areas where they do not need to be removed to make room for annuals, and choose species and cultivars that are more likely to naturalize. These two bulb species add some variety to a traditional palette of daffodils, alliums and muscari, and thus far they seem to be growing quite well for me.

Iris

For very early spring colour, I like to plant 'Joyce' or 'Harmony' in high traffic areas. One of the first places to warm up in the spring is a large area at our back entrance, where I keep adding more of them mixed with snowdrops. Although sometimes they get a little confused by early snow melts and sudden frosts, they bring a smile to the faces of members who are anxious to get out of the winter doldrums. Another cultivar, 'Katharine Hodgkin', is a much lighter blue with delicate blue

and yellow markings. Due to its light colour and intricate detail, it needs to be seen up close to have an impact. The first time I tried them I made the mistake of planting them too far away from where they would be seen so early in the spring and I never got around to cutting away the dead perennial foliage that was covering them until it was too late. Last fall I planted several clumps in high traffic areas, such as entrance walkways, where they were assured to be seen and appreciated up close. I was not disappointed!

Tulip

Even though I promise myself every year not to buy another tulip, they seem to have some kind of magical power that I can't escape, because a few always seem to find their way onto my order form. In spite of the challenges, they do provide a great deal of pleasure with their success. One combination of single late tulips that was recommended to me and has been very successful on our patio is 'Menton', 'Renown', 'Queen of the Night' and 'Maureen'. They bloom about the middle of May, when it's a little early for annuals, but everyone's antsy to see some flowers blooming, and it's often warm enough to sit outside for lunch and a drink. Species tulips are another option as they are great for naturalizing and there are many options to choose from. A few that I've tried are the yellow Tarda, the orange and blue 'Little Princess', and the pink and blue 'Little Beauty'. I also like the soft yellow of species tulip 'Honky Tonk' (pictured left) mixed with the light blue *Muscari* 'Valerie Finnis'. ■



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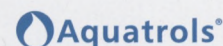


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Ten Years Ago Today

The Ontario Golf Superintendents Association executive for 2003 was **Mark Piccolo** (pres), Galt, **Jim Flett** (past), Muskoka Lakes, **Rob Ackermann** (vice), Weston, **Paul Scenna**, Donalds, **Bob Burrows**, Rosedale, **Jeff Alexander**, Parry Sound, **Chris Andrejicka**, Essex, **John Bladon**, Guelph Lakes, **Randy Booker**, Dundas Valley, **Sean DeSilva**, Taboo, **Greg O'Heron**, Peterborough and **Jeff Stauffer**, Credit Valley. The office staff consisted of **Dorothy Hills**, administrator, **Pat Thomas** and **Deborah Badger**.

ON THE MOVE: **Bill Fach** left York Downs to start a new golf course in the Belleville area called Black Bear Ridge Golf Club. **Paul Dermott** took the job at York Downs after 27 years at Oakdale. **Mike Dermott**, Paul's brother and assistant, took over Oakdale. **Martin Kopp** left Lionhead and moved to Brampton GC and **Dave Caldwell** left Carrying Place and went to Vespra Hills. **Gary Sutherland** was the new Superintendent at Carrying Place. **Gary Gravett** left Saugeen in Port Elgin and purchased his own golf course called Goderich Sunset Golf Club. **Mark Schneider** took over at Saugeen and Mark's assistant, **Brent Siekierzycki**, took over at Owen Sound.

TOURNAMENTS: The Pro/Super Challenge was held at Grey Silo Golf Course hosted by **Tom Margetts**. First place went to Essex Golf Club, **Chris Andrejicka**, second to Diamond Back, **Blair Rennie** and third to Fox Glen, **Kelly Barnett**.

The Spring Field Day was held at Springfield Golf Club, hosted by **Ray Dlugokecki**. First low net was **Bruce Burger**, Lakeview (75), **Dave Svab**, Savannah Golf Links (76) and **Kevin Brohman**, Merryhill (77).

The Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament was held at the Taboo Golf Club hosted by **Sean DeSilva**. The George Darou Trophy went to low gross senior **Bruce Burger**, Lakeview, with a 79.

The OTRF fundraising tournament was held at Copper Creek and was hosted by **Robert Bell**. **Dave Schmelfske**, Ontario Seed Co., was low gross with a 73.

EVENTS: The IPM Accreditation Program for golf courses was officially launched in December headed by **Jeff Stauffer**, Credit Valley.

The 10th Anniversary celebrations were held at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute.

IN MEMORANDUM: **Jeff DeCook**, superintendent at Fox Golf Club, passed away.

ACHIEVEMENTS: **Art Dodson** and **Keith Nisbet** received their 50 year OGSA membership plaques at the President's Reception at the Ontario Turf Symposium.

Art Dodson started working for his uncle, **Bill Bluett**, at Mississauga G&CC and went on to Summit and then to Maple Downs from where he eventually retired. Art was the president of the OGSA in 1964 and has three sons, Paul, Scott and Bruce and a nephew Matthew in the business.

Keith Nisbet, with his brother Doug, sold the family golf course, Aurora Highlands, and started the Westview Golf Club. Keith was the president of the OGSA in 1966 and in that same year was a founding member of the CGSA. He was the winner of the John B. Steel Distinguished Service Award in 2001. Keith was on the GAO's greens committee and later became president. Keith was the Mayor of Aurora in 1963. Keith's son, Colin Nisbet, presently runs Westview Golf Club.

This year's 25-year membership plaques went to **Peter Barnett**, Richmond Hill, **Bruce Dodson**, Heritage Hills, **Craig Evans**, Pheasant Run, **Bill Fach**, Black Bear Ridge, **Cecil Hoekstra**, Cherry Hill and **Mike Mayne**, OTEC.

Paul White, superintendent at the Briars, was recognized by the CGSA as the Superintendent of the Year. ■



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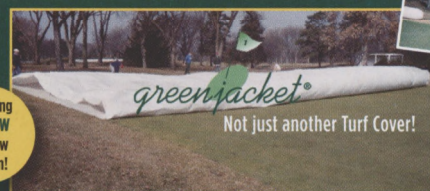


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Guidance Councillor

by Doug Breen, Superintendent
GolfNorth Properties

I watched my son cut greens for the first time yesterday. It doesn't seem like all that long ago that someone was showing me how to cut greens for the first time; but in reality, it was nearly thirty years ago. A lot has transpired since then. There's a lot less hair, and a whole lot more Doug for example. In the 1980's golf was flying high, and our only concern was where we were going to put all the retiring Baby Boomers that we assumed would clog our tee sheets. They either didn't retire, or didn't take up golf, or both. We've spent a lot of time making the industry more "professional" – less "Mom and Pop", for better or for worse. It's a very different business now, and with Walker in exactly the same place that I was three decades ago, I'm not sure what to advise him. If I had it all to do again, would I? Should he?

First of all, I'm keenly aware that he (like I did) will do whatever he wants to do, and any advice that I have for him will surely fall on deaf ears. My family had (still have) a successful dairy farm that my father would have been tickled pink to see me show any interest in whatsoever – but I didn't. Very little advice from him about the relative merits of farming as a career option was getting through; but enough of it did, that I feel obligated to do the same for the fruit of my loins.

Whatever decision he makes, there's no question that he'll

be making it with his eyes wide open. He's been exposed to the seamy underbelly of golf, literally since the day he was born. For years, I kept a daily Journal. Not some girly Journal where I wrote my feelings – I don't have any of those. Rather, I kept a daily Journal of course conditions, fertilizer applications, weather, staff duties, equipment maintenance – anything that I thought I might find handy later on. I still have

them all in a box in my office, and on June 30, 1997 it says, "Boy, Walker Hamilton Breen, 7 lbs even, 20 inches, 9:15am". That note is sandwiched between one about a sticky valve on #8 fairway, and a part number for a faulty voltage regulator on a National. He was helping me change holes on weekends when he could barely walk. He was on the cover of Green is Beautiful, on a golf course, at four. He once got his hand stuck in the pop machine at the GTI. So he knows what he's getting in to.

But the question is, do I recommend this as a great summer job, or as a career? It's certainly been great for me. I've met terrific people, had many experiences that I wouldn't have had otherwise, paid off a mortgage, and it's waaaaay better than milking cows. On the other hand, I'll never have a summer vacation, and I'm never home. It's still a fun business to be involved with; nowhere near as fun as it used to be, but what business is having a good time right now?

His high school Guidance Councillors can't help. All they ever do is recommend that kids become teachers like them, go into academia, or take up a trade. They'd never be able to figure out which category to put Superintendent into – because it's a bit of all three. So it's up to me to be his Guidance Councillor and honestly lay out the pros and cons for him, (some would say that Pros are one of the cons, but that's too easy, so I won't say it). It's entirely possible, that after one summer of hauling his arse out of bed at 5:00am while all his friends are sleeping until noon, that he'll find the whole idea as abhorrent as I found dairy farming, and this will all be moot. But after giving it some serious contemplation, I can honestly say that if I had it all to do again, I would. So we'll see what he thinks after a season of it - and if he wants my opinion (which he likely won't) – I'll tell him that it's the best choice that I ever made. ■



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