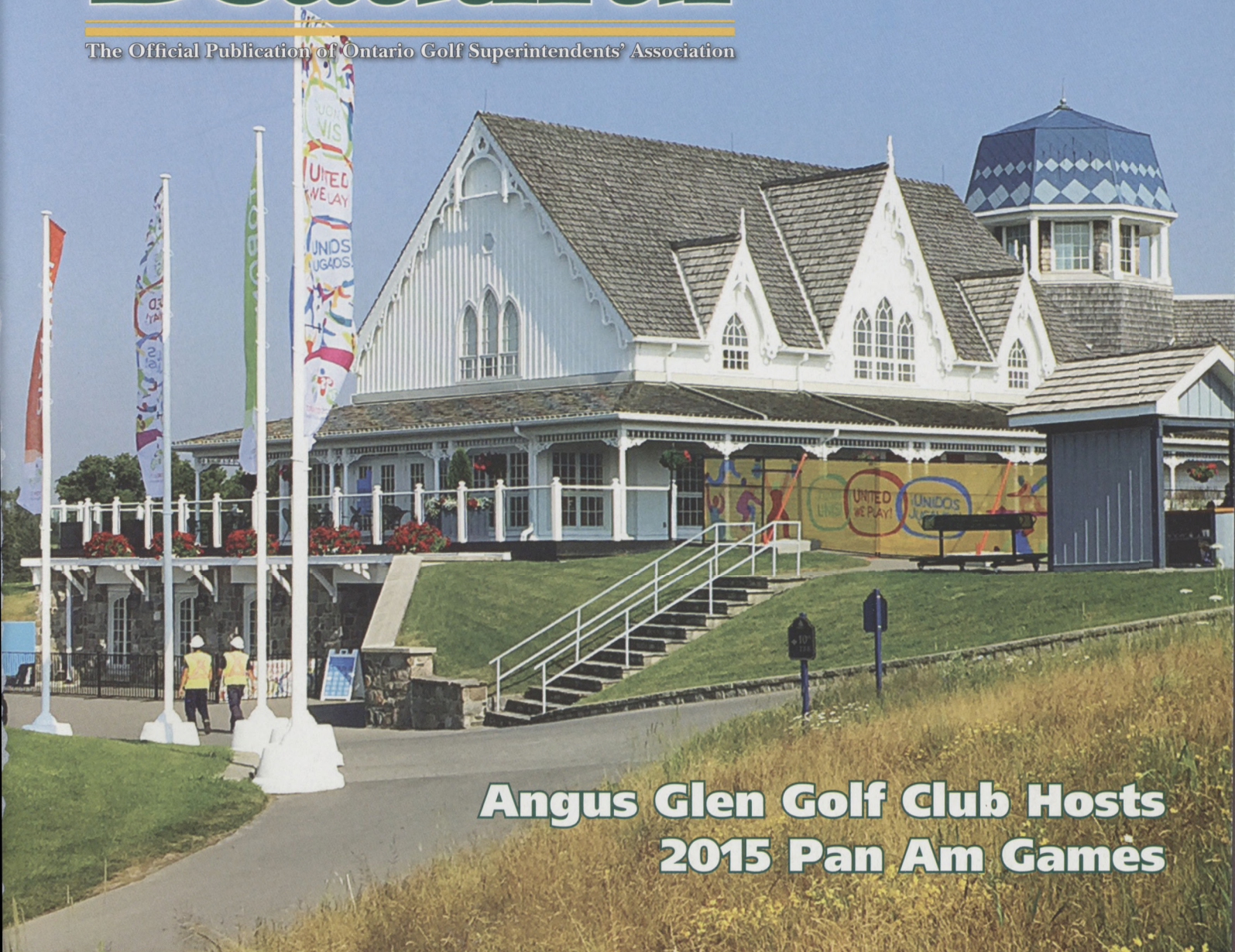


Green is Beautiful

Summer 2015

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association



Angus Glen Golf Club Hosts 2015 Pan Am Games

ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Misled: Public Perception vs. Modern Environmental Practices

The Merits Of A 'Short' Course

Training: It's A Process, Not An Event

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



by John McLinden
OGSA President

I have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity over the last few months to attend several OGSA and regional events throughout the province. Aside from the immaculately manicured conditions of each golf course, the one thing that has impressed me the most is the professionalism of my peers and the way they conduct themselves. It has been a fantastic experience meeting fellow superintendents, assistants and associates at various facilities recently and it is truly remarkable to see how our profession has risen to an elite level.

This has been a valuable learning experience for me and I would encourage our members to participate in upcoming events or simply visit other golf courses. I have found that there is great value in getting away from your club to play a round of golf, network and enjoy the company of your colleagues. It is also an opportunity to revitalize yourself and observe some of the exceptional practices and ideas being used at other golf clubs. As a reminder, it is considered a professional courtesy to contact the superintendent of the club you are visiting to notify him/her of your impending visit.

The 2016 joint conference with the CGSA in Toronto is progressing well and we will be sharing more details with you in the coming months. We are looking forward to an exciting lineup of speakers as you connect with your colleagues from across the province and the country.

We are currently in the midst of the most stressful point of the golf season and I wish everyone well as we look forward to shorter days and cooler nights. ■



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The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

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Green is Beautiful

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

ON THE COVER

Angus Glen Golf Club

Photo courtesy: Doug Erwin
and Angus Glen GC

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

GREEN IS BEAUTIFUL 2015

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EDITORIAL MESSAGE



by Justin Parsons,
Engage Agro Corp.

As Dr. Paul Hersey once said: "If you don't blow your own horn... somebody else is going to use it as a spittoon."

Over the last few weeks Ontario courses have hosted some premiere international golf events;

The Pan Am Games golf competition at Angus Glen, the RBC Canadian Open at Glen Abbey, and the Manulife LPGA Classic at Whistle Bear. It's pretty impressive that one province can host three events of this magnitude in the span of six weeks. It's even more impressive that all the venues were well received, the conditioning was fantastic, and there was a great deal of intrigue right down to the end for each tournament.

When we read about these types of events in the mainstream media though, the attention is almost always on the leaderboard and the players themselves. In fact, if we ever

hear about turf grooming for a major event in the papers, it is usually for a negative reason. I think we would all agree that this is incredibly unfortunate. We rarely hear about what it takes to get these golf courses ready to host a major tournament. We rarely hear about the hours that are put in, the sacrifices that are made, and the three radios that are hanging off a superintendent's belt.

If the efforts for high profile events aren't being recognized amongst the mainstream media, then the everyday efforts certainly stand no chance. There are so many positive things that happen on golf courses every day that the average person is completely unaware of. The OGSA is trying very hard to get the word out with initiatives like the 'Thank a Superintendent' campaign, but the best chance for success lies within a collective effort. To steal a phrase from Sally, "we need to do a better job of blowing our own horn." It's not bragging, it's educating and based on some of the quotes in Robert Thompson's article from golf's attackers, it is clearly needed. ■

WELCOME to Our New Members

Gary Anderson	Class F
Millcroft Golf Club	
Anthony Angelis	Class Supt
Innisfil Creek Golf Course	
Sean Brillinger	Class C
The Country Club	
Liam Bryck	Class C
Rattlesnake Point Golf Club	
Duncan Kirk	Class C
Tangle Creek Golf & Country Club	
Paul Krug	Class C
Victoria Park Valley Golf Club	
Tyler Szela	Class S
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WHAT'S NEW

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager

"THANK A GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT"

Thanks to the acquisition of a grant from the GCSAA, the OGSA has been able to promote the golf course superintendent profession through a series of radio spots, which aired during

the LPGA Manulife Financial Classic held at Whistle Bear Golf Club, the Pan Am Games, where the golf portion of the event was held at Angus Glen Golf Club and during the Canadian Open held at Glen Abbey Golf Club.

Coupled with our Superintendent Recognition Program, this campaign highlights the importance of the golf course superintendent, whose golf courses play host to many significant tournaments around the province. We have seen measurable results through our social media network as well as e-mails and phone calls of awareness for what superintendents achieve day in and day out.

As evidenced by the pictures included in this issue, OGSA Directors made it a priority in their schedules to make these presentations happen. Thanks to all of them and congratulations to our host superintendents and their staff.

TECHNICIAN TRAINING

The association is planning once again to offer technician training this fall. The

OGSA Board decided that the training will be free for our members, or non-members who work at clubs where the superintendent is a member and any technicians who are GCSAA members. Food and any incidental costs will be absorbed by the association. We hope to schedule the training sessions in various areas of the province, including Niagara, London, the GTA and Peterborough. Special thanks to our associate members for helping with this initiative. Stay tuned for further details.

MEETINGS WITH THE CGSA

Recently, a meeting was held with CGSA Ontario Director from Muskoka Lakes G&CC, Jim Flett. The consultation was an opportunity for the OGSA Board to provide input on the planned redesign of the national association. OGSA will also be represented at the CGSA's scheduled meeting this fall in Jasper, Alberta to outline further steps in the process. At this time the CGSA will report on the results of their consultations. ■

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Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament

Markland Wood Golf Club
Toronto, Ontario
Monday, October 5, 2015

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Thanking the Golf Course Superintendent



July 10, 2015 – Investors Group Ontario Women's Amateur Championship – Award presented by John McLinden of Ladies Golf Club of Toronto, to Superintendent Wade Beaudoin of St Thomas Golf and Country Club.



July 23, 2015 – Investors Group Sr. & Women's Mid Amateur Championship presented by Jason Boyce of Smuggler's Glen Golf & Country Club, to Superintendent Jim Burlington of Loyalist Country Club.
Photo: Scott MacLeod, Flagstick Golf Magazine



July 24, 2015 – Investors Group Jr. Boys' (U19) Championship presented by Rod Speake of Mill Run Golf Club, to Superintendent Tyler Ruest of Dalewood Golf Club.



June 7, 2015 – Manulife Financial LPGA Classic – Award presented by Cory Janzen of Westmount Golf & Country Club, to Superintendent Tom Kinsman of Whistle Bear Golf Club.

Pro/Super Challenge

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Director

The OGSA held its annual Pro/Super Challenge on June 1, 2015 at Black Bear Ridge Golf Course in Belleville, Ontario.

Hosted by long time association member Bill Fach and Golf Professional Bill Kerr Jr., the day was successful despite cold and blustery conditions.

Many comments were heard from the golfers throughout the day about how beautiful the course was and how it was in perfect condition.

First place went to the team of Andrew Lombardo, Superintendent and Andrew Critchton, Golf Professional from Wyndance Golf Club. A very close second was the team from Lambton Golf & Country Club, Peter Kinch, Superintendent and Ben McFaul, Golf Professional. In third place was the team from Bay of Quinte Golf & Country Club, Aaron McConnell, Superintendent and Brandon McClean, Golf Professional.

The two closest to the pin winners were Andrew Keffer, Clublink for the superintendents and Bill Keating, Camelot Golf & Country Club for the golf professionals.

Bill Keating also captured the longest drive for the golf professionals, with Richard Butler, St. Andrew's East Golf Club winning the same prize for the superintendents.

Team skins were split between King Valley Golf Club, Wyndance Golf Club, Copper Creek Golf Club and Annandale Golf & Country Club.

A great time was had by all participants, and the Emcee for the event, Jason Boyce,



Pro/Super winners, left, Golf Professional Andrew Critchton, and Superintendent Andrew Lombardo from Wyndance Golf Club.



Host Superintendent Bill Fach from Black Bear Ridge Golf Course.

OGSA Director from Smuggler's Glen Golf Course, thanked our hosts at Black Bear Ridge and all golfers for attending. ■

RattleSnake Undefeated

Saturday, July 25th, saw teams from across Southern Ontario take to the diamonds at Turner Park in Hamilton to participate in the 21st Annual Plant Products Slo-Pitch Tournament. Twenty teams in all showed up for the sun filled day and after the preliminary rounds the quarter finals saw RattleSnake Point beat DiamondBack, Cardinal knock off Rosedale, Willow Valley beat Crosswinds and Deer Creek take out Hamilton. The perennial powerhouses moved onto the semifinals where Deer Creek were knocked out by RattleSnake Point and Willow Valley were sent home by Cardinal. For the third year in a row the final match saw Cardinal take on RattleSnake Point and the outcome did not change as RattleSnake Point came out as the victors of the Plant Products Slo-Pitch Tournament. Plant Products would like to thank all the clubs that participated and made this event a huge success again this year. We look forward to seeing you all in 2016 where RattleSnake Point will defend their championship and possibly earn the right to be called a dynasty. ■



Tournament winners from RattleSnake Point GC.



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Presidents' Day Recap

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Director

The 46th annual Presidents' Day Tournament took place on July 13, 2015 at Lambton Golf & Country Club in Toronto. The day dawned sunny and warm and the great conditions prevailed throughout the day.

Host Superintendent Peter Kinch had the course in tip top condition as the club is preparing to host the Canadian Men's Amateur Championship in early August.

Phil Scully, OGSA Immediate Past President, acted as Emcee for the event, along with OGSA President John McLinden presenting the prizes.

The big winners of the day were the group from The Toronto Hunt, with their Superintendent Scott Heron. Scott also had the confidence in his team to bet on their capabilities in the para-mutuel prize pool and his assurance also brought him a sizeable cash win.

The team from Muskoka Lakes G&CC with Superintendent Jim Flett came second followed by Jason Harris and the Orr Lake Golf Club team taking the third spot. Rounding out the top four was the combined group of Essex G&CC and St. Thomas G&CC, with superintendents Chris Andrejicka and Wade Beaudoin respectively.

A presentation was made to Peter Kinch to acknowledge his contribution to the event, and Lambton Golf & Country



Scott Heron and his winning team from The Toronto Hunt.

Club President Bob Beaumont welcomed everyone to the facility and also saluted the turf maintenance staff as well as Peter for their hard work.

Phil Scully thanked all the Lambton staff and management for hosting the OGSA and a great time was had by everyone in attendance. ■

Peter Kinch, host superintendent at Lambton G&CC accepts his plaque from OGSA President John McLinden.



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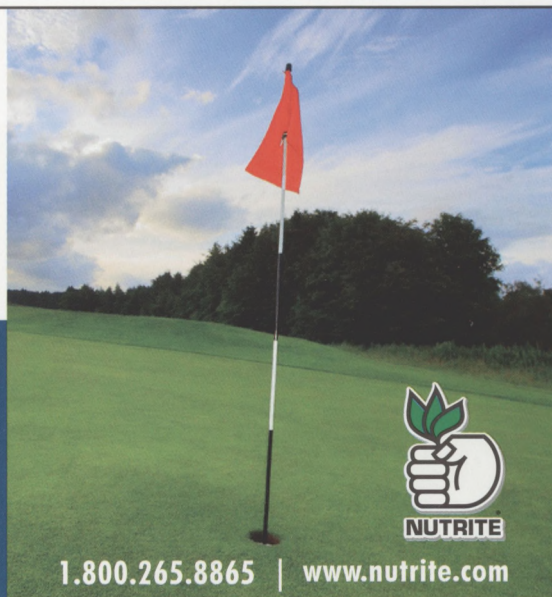
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Golf Goes Green

Superintendents are Leaders in Environmental Practices

By Robert Thompson

In July, popular tech website Gizmodo ran a story by writer Ashley Walker about changes to golf courses in Japan.

The story's lead made Walker's perspective on the game clear as crystal:

"Golf is a dying sport, and country club memberships are seen as an elitist relic of the past," she wrote.

"But cultural changes are only one reason golf courses are falling out of favor:

The chemical-laden, water-guzzling greens are especially irresponsible."

That's the most recent diatribe against the game. A few years ago the Guardian ran this: "The serious case against golf is empirical, and undeniable. That is its environmental impact. The construction and maintenance of golf courses is harmful to fragile ecosystems the world over. Its proliferation as the international pastime of the leisure class is multiplying the problem, and its approval by governments and societies epitomises the wasteful and scurrilous approach to development that is replicated in miniature on millions of suburban lawns."

Golf, it seems, has done a poor job of battling back against these perceptions. But increasingly there are some strong stories of golf superintendents whose strategies for their courses embrace their surrounding environments and even enhance them.

"People see green golf courses and they immediately think high inputs and lots of water," says Jeff Stauffer, the superintendent at Rosedale Golf Club in Toronto. "But things often aren't as they seem."

The truth is that golf courses and the superintendents that maintain them have changed and become far more environmentally conscious. No longer is the "Spackler Syndrome," a phrase coined for Bill Murray's crazed superintendent in *Caddyshack*, common on Ontario courses.

With that in mind, we talk to four Ontario supers about how they are being proactive and how golf contributes to the environment around it.



Jay Honeyball

Oslerbrook
Golf & Country Club

THE BENEFIT OF SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

Rarely does a superintendent get the chance to shape the way a course will interact with the environment from its inception. But that's exactly what Jay Honeyball did at Oslerbrook near Collingwood. Alongside architect Graham Cooke, Honeyball worked hard to make sure the club, which has been open for a decade, met or exceeded all of his environmental goals. Honeyball was all too aware that golf has been at the receiving

end of criticism for not being environmentally responsible, and he wanted to make sure Oslerbrook bucked any perceived trend.

"It really came right down from the original owners and what they wanted for the property," he said. "And a lot of it has to do with the design. There are 232 acres out here and I'm only managing over 100. About half the property is given back to Mother Nature."

One of the key issues for Honeyball was water use—or more specifically, not using water. The goal was not to use any water that wasn't developed from the property. In fact, Cooke and Honeyball added wetlands to the property, and created an elaborate bio-filter system that allows the course to clean and reutilize water from rainfalls. He created Draingarde.

And while Honeyball prides himself on the club's Audubon certification, he's continued to push Oslerbrook forward. Most recently he created a system called Draingarde that blocks the drains on the course when he's applying anything that might disrupt the water system. The goal of Draingarde, which Honeyball has commercialized, is to try to eliminate surface water contamination of chemical applications. Even slight contamination is unnecessary, Honeyball says.

Left to right: Cairn was constructed to celebrate the history of the land before Oslerbrook. The Ontario archeological society presented Oslerbrook with an award for the initiative. All 13 ponds are 100% naturalized. All water is harvested from spring freshet for irrigation and stored in a 52 million gallon reservoir. No water is taken from the ground. Photos courtesy: Jay Honeyball



To Honeyball's way of thinking, golf is still being attacked by critics who aren't aware of what is actually going on at the courses.

"Is it fair? I don't think so," he says, noting the club's new owner is also committed to Honeyball's environmental program. "We've done everything we can to be as environmentally responsible as we can at Oslerbrook and we will continue to try to do more. That's our goal."



Jeff Stauffer
Rosedale Golf Club

DOCUMENTATION ELIMINATES MISUNDERSTANDINGS

To Jeff Stauffer's way of thinking, the best way to battle back against misperceptions is to have stats to back up what you're saying, and to be transparent in doing it.

Stauffer came to Rosedale, located in central Toronto, from Mississauga's Credit Valley and says while he has a minimal approach to inputs at the club, at the same time he recognizes that there's an absolute demand at his club

for top grade surfaces on fairways and greens.

"I've tightened up water use, and making sure we do proper soil and tissue tests," he says. "Really in the end, we try to deliver a quality playing surface while being careful with the inputs. That's my overriding philosophy."

Stauffer has become a big proponent of letting people know exactly what he's doing with his course. Misinformation is the biggest issue, he feels. And though only three people from the surrounding neighborhood showed up at his recent IPM presentation, Stauffer still found it useful.

"The feeling and tone of the questions were very different from what I was used to," he says. "They were very much interested in what I am doing to reduce here. I think these meetings are an opportunity to get out in front and answer questions head on. If you answer them with exactly what you're doing, you might diminish some of those concerns. And you represent the superintendents, and the club, who we work for."

But the key is documenting what he's doing with the club so that he can demonstrate the club's commitment to lessening its impact. In the past much of this was anecdotal, but having clear records allows for an open dialogue.

"When you are sitting with Ministry of Environment staff and can't show them data for the last 10 years, you don't have anything to support yourself," he says. "When I look at 2015 versus 2000, we now have documents to show we are doing the best we can."



Andrew Hardy
Pheasant Run Golf Club

PRUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES BENEFIT THE BOTTOM LINE

Andrew Hardy has been an outspoken proponent of his club's environmental practices for a variety of reasons. He's worried about the



Before (below) and after (above) of one of the areas included in the 25+ acres of renaturalized areas Pheasant Run Golf Club started in 2009.

Photos courtesy: Andrew Hardy



impact pesticides and other products have on developmental issues in children, but he's also pragmatic about the situation. To sell his owner on the need to make an environmental shift, he showed the benefits on the club's balance sheet.

The club, seeking its Audubon certification, determined it renaturalize 22 acres of the 300-acre property, which includes 100 acres of forest. The effects were immediate: it enabled Pheasant Run to gain more time out of two staff, and instead of three staff cutting rough six days a week, the club was able to cut it back to two employees cutting five days.

"I think everything that happens in this business happens because of money," he says. "That said, you need motivation to do the right thing. If you have the motivation then financial change is easy. But it would have been easy to say, 'Let's keep this the same.'"

The club utilized many of its key staff in reclaiming the 22 acres, with the golf pro, an outside consultant and the owner all offering their input. Suddenly new wildlife started showing up on the course, and the club promoted the new look by having members and guests add the names of animals they had seen to a log kept in the pro shop.

"It took a life of its own," he says. "It helps change the perception of the game."

Beyond that, Hardy was able to significantly drop his water use, eliminating 23,000 gallons of water that was used to irrigate the 22 acres that were now left to grow naturally.

Right now Pheasant Run does not pay for its water use, and Hardy admits the Ministry of the Environment could charge the club at any point. So judicious water use just makes sense, he argues.

In the end, every little bit counts, and it makes a difference.

"It is 22 acres we're not spraying or fertilizing," Hardy says. "It is small bits, but seven years later it adds up."

The course has also publicized its environmental initiatives and outside agencies have recognized the achievement. Pheasant Run won the East Gwillimbury Environmental Business of the Year and the East Gwillimbury Chamber of Commerce Environmental Award. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has also twice awarded Pheasant Run with a prestigious environmental leadership award.

"If I can speak to my owner in dollars and cents, and that gets positive environmental things done, that's good," Hardy says. "At the same time it has brought some notoriety, and that's positive too."

...continued on page 13



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Greg McFarlane

Thornhill Golf
and Country Club

THE BENEFITS OF ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

Greg McFarlane wanted his Toronto club to be perceived as a leader when it came to environmental practices. But how would a club measure their successes?

McFarlane was approached by Global Organic Partners, a group that uses Environmental Impact Quotient to determine the environmental effect of a club's maintenance practices. While it is not an inexpensive program, McFarlane

thought it was very important to be able to grade where Thornhill was when it came to the environment. The club was recently given an EIQ score of 129, the lowest among any course in the *SCOREGolf Top 100 Courses in Canada*. A typical club has an EIQ score closer to 1,000.

"This hasn't happened overnight, but it really shows Thornhill as a leader when it comes to the environment," says McFarlane. "We're now getting to the point where we're maintaining playability without using a lot of pesticides and maintaining fertility without overusing fertilizers."

The EIQ concept was developed at Cornell University, and involves approximately 10 key indicators that show the environmental impact

of a golf course. It has been McFarlane's goal to limit pesticides for some time, and though he says the recognition is good for Thornhill, it wasn't the reason he made the move.

"I really think this is where things are headed," he says.

McFarlane feels golf courses are considered by those outside of the sport as not being beneficial for the environment. But in an urban area like Toronto, Thornhill's green space is a respite from the endless roads, houses and commercial buildings. Yes, McFarlane admits that golf courses once used products that were harsh and had mercury in them, but that's in the past.

"I think people would be surprised by our environmental practices," he says. "The general perception is we fertilize, spray and water a lot. But I think my peers are trying to reduce as much as they can. I think people have the perception and the reality is something else. We've only sprayed our fairways once this year."

And the result is good for the environment and saves cash.

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Golf analyst for Global Television, and the bestselling author of five books, Robert Thompson lives in London, Ont.



*Naturalized area at Thornhill G&CC.
Photos courtesy: Greg McFarlane*

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FIRST
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About the Course

Nestled in the attractive valley of Duffin's Creek in the town of Ajax, the Annandale Golf & Curling club is an average-length, 18-hole course that offers an excellent retreat for a game of golf. The course is a par 71 measuring approximately 6,000 yards.

Established: 1963

Original Architect: Donald Annan

Type of Club: Semi-private / Public

Size of Membership: 270

Number of Holes: 18

Number of Rounds Annually: 50,000

Practice Facility:

Driving range and four hole executive.

Member Since 2001

Ken Nelski

Superintendent, Annandale Golf & Curling Club

by Kevin Kobzan, Granite Golf Club

Acquiring an aptitude towards a particular field is something that takes time and dedication. In order to manage our respective golf courses to the best of our ability, gaining knowledge in all facets of the industry goes a long way. For Ken Nelski, Superintendent at Annandale Golf and Curling Club, his exposure to many different golf courses has turned out to be not only a great wealth of experience, but also a great asset in his career.

At 40 years of age, Nelski's involvement with golf has taken him to various properties and a different province, all the while working and managing at golf courses with different budget constraints. This has allowed him to gain valuable experience towards the maintenance of clubs with different demands. In his 28 years of working on golf courses, Nelski has observed and obtained valuable information, leading him to a career he loves.

Even though his devotion and respect for golf has given him a great appreciation for

his trade, his first interest was not studying turf, rather following human evolution. Both archeology and anthropology intrigued Nelski, with his fascination expanding into paleontology. After high school Nelski travelled to Europe and at this time was accepted to The University of British Columbia for Anthropology and Arts. "The whole concept of evolution interested me, and I always loved the paleontology aspect of it," said Nelski.

Prior to his enrollment at UBC, Nelski spent four seasons at Beacon Hall as a back shop employee (1986-89) before venturing on to the maintenance department at St. Andrews Valley. Here he joined his brother Chris, currently Assistant Superintendent at The Marshes in Ottawa, for his first peek at maintaining a golf course. He spent three seasons there developing his turf maintenance skills before heading out west for university. Following his first academic year, Nelski returned for his last summer at St. Andrews, as he would find employment

In the Hot Seat

Q: Favourite golf tournament?

A: The Masters

Q: Favourite piece of turf equipment?

A: Verti-Drain

Q: Favourite golf course?

A: Shaughnessy G&CC

Q: Favourite designer?

A: Stanley Thompson

Q: Ultimate foursome?

A: My brother, my father and Bill Murray

Q: Lowest round and where?

A: 78 at Point Grey G&CC

at Point Grey Golf Club the following year in B.C. While working at Point Grey he discovered that his passion for turf ran deeper than he thought and that this may influence his career direction.

At this point he decided to put aside his first aspiration and work towards another pastime, attending Kwantlen College for their three year horticulture and turf program. "Although I had an interest for archeology and anthropology, I wasn't prepared to remain in school for that long," says Nelski. "Golf was always in the back of my mind; I always liked the outdoors, the physical aspect of it and not sitting in an office."

Nelski spent seven years improving upon his craft at Point Grey. In his third season he was promoted to the assistant's position and that is when he became fully engaged in the industry. "One of the many attractions of this job is you are always learning, there is no monotony," says Nelski.

During his tenure out west he not only learned how to manage day to day operations, but he also learned to grow grass in a much different climate. "The biggest thing out there is getting rid of water because of the extensive rain fall," says Nelski. "We did a

lot of drainage in those years. You would get three weeks of rain and members chomping at the bit to play, but because of the drainage we installed the course would be ready to play the next day."

In 2000 Nelski decided to return home taking a job at Maple Downs as the irrigation technician before getting the second assistant's job at Wooden Sticks. He worked there for three years until he accepted the assistant's job at Lakeridge Links. Nelski feels this is where he learned a different approach to managing a golf course. "After Point Grey, Maple Downs and Wooden Sticks I had exposure to higher end clubs, both private and public. When I switched and went to Lakeridge it was a reality check. You really need to use your head for everyday stuff because you don't have the resources available", admits Nelski.

After seven years at Lakeridge, Nelski became Superintendent at Annandale in 2010, a job he enjoys from sunrise to sundown. "I look forward to work every day, even with waking up at 4 am. My wife thinks I am nuts," says Nelski. "The day you don't look forward to going to work is the day you should find a different job."

Not only is his enthusiasm second to none, he is also appreciative of the bond shared with other clubs. Seven other properties, Lakeridge, Whispering Ridge, Pickering Golf, Eldorado Golf Club, Riverside Golf Club, Winchester Golf Club and Stonehenge Golf Club all fall under the same ownership. The golf season can throw many curve balls at a turf manager and that is why this group of clubs leans on each other through the constant exchange of information. "We are all in contact all the time - there is a lot of help agronomically and we can all rely on each other. It is a family within a family", says Nelski and this is something all eight clubs appreciate.

Although he loves his job and the property he manages, many challenges present themselves, and this is something Nelski thrives on. He enjoys the opportunity to find answers to problems, making do with what is available to him. "The course sees heavy

traffic on small greens with limited resources, you need to be budget conscious," Nelski admits. "But this is something I like, you need to be ingenious, you need to use your brain to figure things out."

Also, with the golf course routed around Duffins Creek, Nelski has often had to deal with flooding on a few holes, which can be challenging due to the silt deposit. "It will go up 15 feet, usually during the spring and fall," he says. "All my heads get clogged and we end up spending a day cleaning out nozzles, so it can be quite a challenge."

Through his tenure in golf, Nelski has met many people who have helped him along the way, most notably John Trelford who was the superintendent at St. Andrews Valley and Frank Vargas, Superintendent at Point Grey. He credits Vargas for being a great motivator and Trelford for his fairness and intellect. Both men were influential in his decision to pursue turf as a career. This has helped shape Nelski's approach with his own staff. "Thank you goes a long way, especially after a hard day", he says. "One of the things I do enjoy is getting the younger guys, who have zero experience even with a basic tool, and watch them mature over just a few years."

Overall Nelski is happy with his decision to pursue turf maintenance as a career, because he has had the opportunity to work on many different golf courses and see an array of different landscapes. All these experiences have helped transform him into a turf enthusiast and allow him to appreciate the industry he is a part of. ■

What You Need to Know

Predominant Grass Type: Poa annua / Bentgrass

Predominant Soil Type: Loam / Silt

Type of Greens: Push Up

Course Length: 6,100 yards

Size of Property: 160 acres

Size of Greens: 1.75 acres

Size of Tees: 1.25 acres

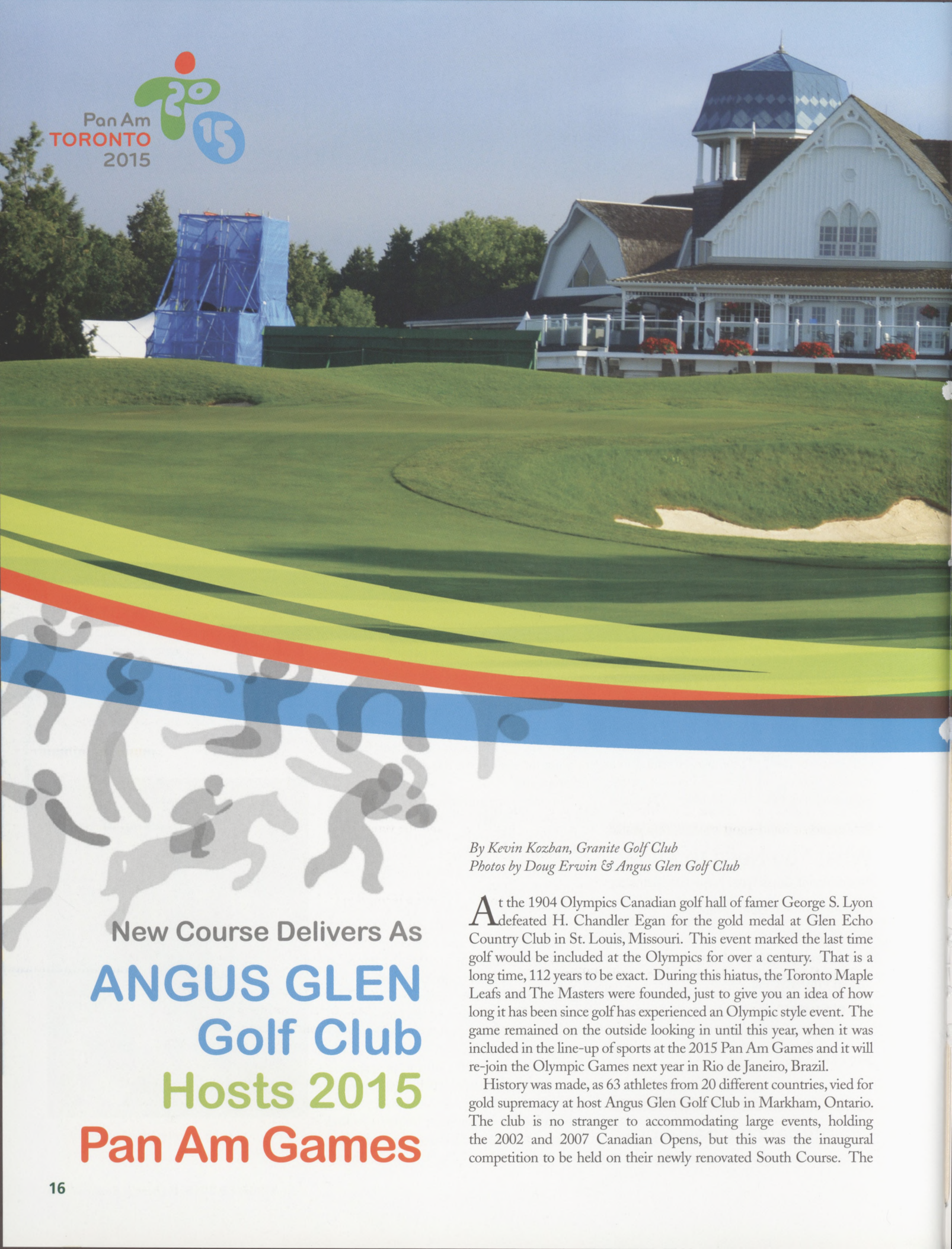
Size of Fairways: 23 acres

Maintenance Challenges

Small green sites, high traffic and flood(s).



Ken Nelski with his two dogs, Meekah, left, and Milo, right.



New Course Delivers As

ANGUS GLEN Golf Club Hosts 2015 Pan Am Games

By Kevin Kozban, Granite Golf Club

Photos by Doug Erwin & Angus Glen Golf Club

At the 1904 Olympics Canadian golf hall of famer George S. Lyon defeated H. Chandler Egan for the gold medal at Glen Echo Country Club in St. Louis, Missouri. This event marked the last time golf would be included at the Olympics for over a century. That is a long time, 112 years to be exact. During this hiatus, the Toronto Maple Leafs and The Masters were founded, just to give you an idea of how long it has been since golf has experienced an Olympic style event. The game remained on the outside looking in until this year, when it was included in the line-up of sports at the 2015 Pan Am Games and it will re-join the Olympic Games next year in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

History was made, as 63 athletes from 20 different countries, vied for gold supremacy at host Angus Glen Golf Club in Markham, Ontario. The club is no stranger to accommodating large events, holding the 2002 and 2007 Canadian Opens, but this was the inaugural competition to be held on their newly renovated South Course. The



challenge to host an event the size of the Pan Am Games, third largest international multi-sport event in the world, was a first for both the city of Toronto and Angus Glen, which makes Superintendent Doug Erwin very proud to be a part of it.

With a plethora of experience hosting both large and small tournaments, Angus Glen boasts not only a challenging golf course, but the facilities and infrastructure necessary to entertain large crowds. "The Pan Am Games really falls into place for us because we are all about hosting events and making them into something personal," says Erwin. "We are always looking to be a little different from everyone else, so this means a lot for us because nobody has done it and we will have been the first. That keeps us ahead of the curve in that respect."

The city of Toronto got the bid to host the Games on November 6, 2009, while Angus Glen got the news that they would be hosting the golf event in early 2013, while planning for renovations to the South Course. "We didn't renovate the golf course for the Pan Am Games, that process really began in 2010 as we were looking for efficiencies and where to save money in the operation of the club," says Erwin. "We got the bid to be the site and I was wondering if they knew we were going to be renovating because it was a lofty goal in terms of timeline,

but they did know, it didn't faze them and the venue seemed right." With the City of Markham fully behind them, the Games were officially heading to Angus Glen. With a full golf course renovation in the cross hairs, the pressure for those involved to deliver was about to begin.

As technology progresses and the costs to sustain businesses continuing to rise, reconstruction was deemed necessary to an aging course from a maintenance and player perspective. Erwin and company wanted to create efficiencies in the day to day operations while updating the property. They wanted to correct performance issues on greens and bunkers, while decreasing fertility and water use by adding approximately 20 acres of fescue, eliminating large expanses of maintained rough.

...continued on page 18



Continued from page 17...

Additionally, they wanted to stay competitive amongst professional players, while remaining an enjoyable outing for newer and average golfers. The goal was to create and maintain a course that could cater to all skill levels. "We felt like we needed to do the renovations before the Pan Am Games because they fell into something we were renovating for," says Erwin. "We wanted to stay challenging for future Canadian Opens or tournaments like the Pan Am Games, we needed that upgrade."

During the redesign Erwin worked closely with architect Martin Ebert of McKenzie and Ebert International Design Team, both familiar with each other from the construction of Goodwood Golf Club. Erwin praises Ebert's hands-on approach and ability to include others in decisions to leave behind a manageable golf course. Although the original layout was built by architect Doug Carrick, a lot of thought was put into incorporating his design with the new one. "It was a tough decision because Carrick designed both the North and South courses and we wanted to leave some of the Carrick feel in it," says Erwin.

As the rebuild and grow-in neared completion, the stage was being set for the Pan Am Games. At the beginning of 2014, preparation was underway and requirements by the Pan Am group were being set. "The club as a whole had a larger number of deliverables required in stages," says Erwin. "They had a lot of information they required to

ensure their expectations were met." Erwin acknowledges the efforts of other Angus Glen employees, including Lori Saint, Director of Food and Beverage, Terry Kim, Head Golf Professional and Paul Shaw, Director of Construction and Facility Maintenance for their involvement with the entire process. "There was a lot of work done behind the scenes that (we) as golf people probably don't think about," says Erwin. "It was almost easiest for me because we are just getting the golf course ready."

During the week leading up to the opening round, a heightened level of security was instituted to ensure the event was safe. Drones with cameras were set up daily to scour the grounds from above to spot any irregularities, with a huge police presence on the ground scouting the property. "I don't know how many hundreds of police officers were here walking side to side throughout the whole property," says Erwin. "The security protocols were set by Pan Am and they needed to be followed at every event. Everybody had to be accredited beforehand to get on site, including the guy delivering bread. It was an incredible process."

Those security protocols also played a part in acquiring volunteers to help with the added turf maintenance requirements during the event. The strict process made it not even worth the effort to recruit volunteers from the turf industry. Even though a lot of people were

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interested, two volunteers were added, John Bladon and his wife Sabrina. "He was a huge part of us coming up with the greens specs for the renovation and a lot of our programs leading up to the games," says Erwin. "He is a good friend and it was great having him here."

Golf Canada convened the event, giving a list of requirements to follow. Erwin says that the rules they wanted to govern the tournament were not too far-fetched. "Essentially, there is not a lot of stringent requirements," says Erwin. "They don't want the greens rolling at 13, they want to have a little control on how the course is playing." As the practice rounds approached there was still a laundry list of items to take care of, but as time dwindled the course would have to stand on its own. "What a difference between the day it starts and the week before it starts—huge in terms of the pressure and stress you are feeling."

Once the tournament got under way the maintenance staff would work split shifts, taking advantage of the time they were allotted. Mornings would allow for greens preparation, removal of dew, cutting of competition tees, hole changing and anything that needed sprucing up. The majority of cutting and bunker work took place in the evening. Other than the schedule and being very tired it was business as usual. "We were just ready for it," says Erwin. "We had our schedules set and we needed to hit our marks." The only issue that arose was when a competitor jarred her approach shot into the fifth hole, damaging the cup. Under certain rules the hole can be moved if deemed unplayable by the rules official. "They sent us out to fix it, we used tooth picks to try and hold it for the rest of the day and then hole-in-white again to harden the edge," says Erwin.

Considering the importance of the event the contrast between the Pan Am tournament and Canadian Opens is different in scope. Not only were the number of competitors lower, but the number of spectators and media coverage were considerably smaller as well. On average, 2000 tickets were sold daily, however during the PGA event, approximately 10,000 patrons roamed the property per day. 42 acres of farm land adjacent to the north and south course was devoted to parking for the Canadian Open, while only 25 per cent of that land was used for the Pan Am Games. With the number of spectators smaller, less damage to areas of the golf course occurred. "It's funny because people stayed out of the fescue. I expected the fescue to get trampled, but they stayed to the cart path," says Erwin. "They were well behaved, it was a different type of atmosphere."

As the tournament came to a close all those involved were elated with the outcome, including Erwin who was very impressed with those on his side of things. He recognizes the efforts of his entire staff, most notably Assistant Superintendent, Dan North and Second Assistants, Chris Jones and Jack Nobile, as well as Equipment Technicians, Randy Noel and Kevin Hennigar. Erwin is also appreciative of the efforts of Kyle Whitman and Adam Haines from Goodwood Golf Club. "All of these individuals worked many hours in preparation. I couldn't have asked for anything more from my staff," says Erwin. "They were all here, paid attention to detail and they rose to the challenge. I don't think from my side of things that the event could have gone any better in terms of conditioning of the golf course."

With the success of the renovation coupled with a great Pan Am experience, Angus Glen showcased its new look on an international scale, and are now looking forward to the future. "We like to be known globally and we have risen to the occasion and showed everyone listening we are here, we are just as good as we used to be, perhaps better, and we can still hold these events." ■



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The Merits Of A 'Short' Course

An Alternative to Traditional Course Design

By Cam Tyers

The final project I worked on before leaving Carrick Design was Turnberry Golf Course in Brampton. I was given complete control of the project from initial routings to overseeing the project in the field. It was clear from the start that this project, which was being built in 88 acres, was perfect for something different—an alternative to what is typically being built these days.

Early concepts, which called for more acreage, included routings featuring six par 4s or 5s and 12 par 3s, as well as a practice range. A reduction in acreage changed our initial concepts and opened up another opportunity. What evolved was a short course offering a different way to experience golf. With sixteen par 3s and two par 4s, it was neither typical in length or amount of time needed to play.

Short courses are an interesting and I believe viable alternative to regulation length golf facilities. The golfer who is locked in to

the belief that they must hit a driver or play standard length holes to feel satisfied, either from a financial value or exercise perspective, may feel that a course with mostly par 3s is not right for them. I would counter that notion by suggesting it is the quality of each hole and overall experience of a golf facility that determines the value derived by a golfer. That was the mindset when we sat down with ownership to discuss the goal for Turnberry.

In many ways, short courses are better

Even though I had been involved with some challenging builds, such as Bigwin Island and Eagles Nest, I was not prepared for the unpredictability of unstable ground.

suited within or in close proximity to large urban centres because of reduced land requirements. The immediacy to major centres provides a better chance of exposing

the game to a larger demographic. I think short courses also provide an opportunity to get walking back into the game. Moreover, they also tackle one of golf's most polarizing issues—the length of time it takes to play. The lesser time requirements cater to those for whom it is a premium—which is pretty much everyone these days. Par 3 holes also have a greater potential at creating excitement and interest for a golfer. When you have these two ingredients present in a hole it becomes memorable for the golfer. With one view and one shot to execute to the final target, I believe the golfer remembers that image with more frequency than a par 4 or 5 that require two or three shots to arrive at the final target.

One of the keys to stimulating interest for the Turnberry course was creating interesting green complexes. Bold internal contours combined with decent sized putting surfaces, and short grass bailout areas, were my inspiration for creating a memorable playing experience. Another guiding principle was variety in length of shots. It was important to have the golfer use every club in their bag. However, executing these design thoughts on the Turnberry site would prove more challenging than I had anticipated.

Even though I had been involved with some challenging builds, such as Bigwin Island and Eagles Nest, I was not prepared for the unpredictability of unstable ground. What also became clear was the importance of not bringing in too much fill. On the surface this 88-acre parcel presented a neat, tidy project that theoretically could have been built in one season. Unfortunately nothing was further from the truth.

Constructing Turnberry taught me the importance of knowing as much about the history of a site as you can, particularly one that had been used for dumping, as this site was once an active aggregate pit. After being mined of its valuable resource, it became a dumping area for fill, not an uncommon



Involving a superintendent from the start of the project helped overcome some of the challenge inherent in building Turnberry.



By using outside fill, Turnberry was turned from a wasteland into a courses laden with dunes that looked like they've been there for years.

scenario as pit owners begin to look for alternative uses. An empty pit can generate income by providing a home for fill. There are stringent guidelines for filling, but it is an accepted way to rehabilitate a pit. Nowadays imported fill must be highly scrutinized for hazardous material or inorganic material before it is dumped. However, this was not always the case. Many years before a golf course was even contemplated at Turnberry, fill had been deposited on this site. Anything could have been in that fill.

When I first viewed Turnberry, I thought there were several areas where minimal grading would be required. I remember looking at the future location of the 11th green as one such area. It possessed two outstanding rolls, one from the north and one from the south, that appeared as if they intersected, yet were a decent distance apart from each other. It was a unique location for the green.

In the summer of 2008 the green was shaped, drained and green mix installed. In the spring of 2009 I was now looking at a large depression in the back part of the green that was not part of the design. Even though I was not shy about undulation within greens, the depression I was looking at was severe. Over the winter months and after spring thaw a section of the subgrade had settled to a new resting place. The summer before we had thoroughly compacted the subgrade during the building of this green to the point where it felt more like a highway than a green cavity, so it was surprising to see the failure in the subgrade.

To correct the problem we removed the greens mix and the drainage on the back half of the green, removed the bad fill, installed geotextile, brought in new fill and engineered

it so that it would not fail again, and finally reinstalled the drainage and green mix. This was costly both in terms of time and dollars. It would not be the only time that we encountered this type of subgrade failure within a green.

One aspect of importing fill to consider is the financial gain can offset construction costs. Another side is importing too much fill can make it difficult to complete areas within a scheduled time frame. At Turnberry we created very significant and bold landforms within the site to separate holes from one another. However, the idea of adding more fill was always part of the financial model. At times we struggled to complete areas because of the possibility of adding more fill. Eventually we had reached our importing threshold where financial gain was being diminished by project delay.

Running into examples such as the subgrade failure is one instance where having the superintendent involved at an early stage can be invaluable. The more intimate a superintendent's knowledge is of the property,

the better they are able to react to both future problems and opportunities.

The turf and construction team assembled for Turnberry was headed by Brent Rogers. Brent, a talented golf course builder, in addition to being the Director of Turf at Eagles Nest Golf Course (at the time), oversaw the construction of the course. The daily construction duties of the site were handled initially by Mark McIvor, and then taken over by Shane Courtney. Both men had tutored under Brent during the building and grow-in of Eagles Nest. Shane looked after daily turf responsibilities and has continued in that role.

To date Turnberry has been well received. The idea of a course with predominantly par 3s is still a new concept for golfers, but I believe it is providing a much needed alternative for both new and existing golfers. ■

Cam Tyers worked for Carrick Design before launching his own firm, Cam Tyers Design. He can be reached at cam@camtyersdesign.com.

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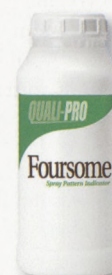
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Training: It's A Process, Not An Event

by Mark Thompson, McKinley Solutions

Training is often viewed in the Canadian golf industry as something that is required to meet compliance, and to a large extent that is very true. The challenge is that training is all too often viewed as an event and not a process. True learning happens over time and requires regular reinforcement to stick. Statistics show that if no reinforcement is a part of your learning plan than 30 days after the training event occurs your ability to apply it on the job is less than 10 per cent! That is an ROI (return on investment) that is just not acceptable and can be overcome very easily by operational leadership and a little bit of planning.

First and foremost, we need to remember that we are training adults and they learn differently than children, so why is it that most training is merely the talking head lecture style of a traditional classroom? The game has changed, but training is still lagging behind. We are not suggesting you go out and spend money that you do not have; your leadership team can handle a practical approach to high performance and efficiency from your full team.

Here is your challenge as an operational leader for training. Look at the lessons that you are teaching, from out on the course to handling a team meeting. Then take the full season of about six months and establish 6 – 12 follow up learning opportunities. We call these learning loops because you are looping back to the content that was shared previously. They should last for 5 – 10 minutes and this applies to training for an individual or a group. Every two weeks provide reinforcement and your productivity will increase and your engagement will increase. These learning opportunities are great stretch challenges for your supervisors so the work does not always fall to you.

The key, and I cannot stress this enough, is that these are not ad hoc or on the fly, rather they are planned and well thought out. On the job training is critical, no question, but does not have the same "stickiness" as planned learning opportunities. The difference being that one situation is reactionary and the other is proactive. So I challenge you to look at your training and if it consists of one directional lecture with some hands on training in April and then the rest is more or less reactionary, then you have a great opportunity to take it to the next level.

The next piece that I will share is something that has been around for years. It is storytelling. We all love a great story. It cuts past our preconceptions and connects us to the content being shared. Training

stories are rooted in facts, but their messages are driven at the heart not the head, and that makes them the strongest tool in your training toolbox. We would recommend, *The Story Factor* by Annette Simmons, and the classic *Harvard Business Review* article by Stephen Denning called, *Telling Tales*, as an opportunity to learn more about storytelling as a leader. As a trainer look for Stolovitch's, *Telling Ain't Training*, as a great resource.

One unique challenge the golf industry faces is the high turnover and seasonality of the business, so the best in class challenge for their supervisors is to document the learning stories as they happen throughout the season. In doing so you create a story book that grows over time from "what not to do stories" to the stories that share the team pulling together for a major event. If learning stories are not documented then they cannot be shared with the consistency needed for others to learn from.

The final piece to increase the stickiness of your training is more multimedia. With more technology in the average pocket than there was in an entire office building 25 years ago, it is easy to add multimedia to your training and your learning loops. If you can take a picture of it, do it! If you can make a video of it, do it! A picture of what a clean mower looks like verses a dirty mower is a

lot more powerful than a checklist. Look to your suppliers of the tools, technology and resources you use each day for multi-media resources they have. Be mindful though that you need to provide context at your course to make it really stick and do not forget those learning loops to ensure reinforcement.

The biggest pet peeve I have is when operational leaders say to me, "I told them how to do it (in April) and they just do not get it (in July)". More often than not it is the training that needs to change, not the staff. These are great times we have in the industry and a great future, and I hope after reading this I have challenged you to look at your training differently. If you are like some, your course training may require an update so take advantage of this information. Training and development is key to your success, and do keep in mind it is also why staff leave an organization 72 per cent of the time. Operational leaders can do something about it and the potential is exciting! ■

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Maintaining a Golf Course During Drought

by Josh Clevenger, Superintendent,
Claremont Country Club,
California, USA

As we all know California is in the midst of a record drought. While we did get some much needed rains early this season, rain totals are well below average for the fourth straight year. Temperatures have also been abnormally high during this period. Since January 1, the average high temperature has been 70 degrees with just 3.4 inches of rain falling. Last month, Governor Jerry Brown mandated a 25 per cent reduction of the use of potable water. While we are fortunate to have a good supply of non-potable water to irrigate the golf course with, we must be responsible and show we can and will do the right thing for the course and environment. Over the years, we have accomplished much in the way

of becoming more efficient users of water and we are prepared to maintain the course nicely throughout the drought.

We are constantly looking at ways to be more efficient with our use of water. We evaluate the efficiency of our irrigation system on a daily basis. The course is inspected daily for wet spots or dry spots and irrigation run times are adjusted accordingly. Irrigation leaks are detected and repaired quickly. My goal has always been – no wet spots! This month, we will be going through sprinkler heads in fairways replacing all nozzles and checking pressure to ensure proper coverage is achieved and water is applied as efficiently as possible.

We've used handheld and in-the-ground soil sensor technology to monitor soil moisture levels for years now. The use of these sensors allows us to properly monitor soil moisture and insure that the correct amount of water



About the blog

The purpose of this blog is to share information on the maintenance of the golf course and grounds here at Claremont Country Club.

claremontturf.blogspot.ca

Contributor: Josh Clevenger, Superintendent

is applied to a given area of turf. Our in-the-ground soil sensor data can be monitored in real time from our desk top and handheld devices.

With our on-site weather station, we have the ability to monitor weather data in real time as well. The weather station communicates with our irrigation computer calculating daily evapotranspiration (ET) rates. This information is downloaded to the irrigation computer and used to determine appropriate sprinkler run times insuring we are replacing just the amount of water used

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by the turf and lost to evaporation (ET).

Over the last five years, we have seeded the tees, approaches and fairways at times of aeration with a drought tolerant chewing fine fescue seed. This turf requires approximately 10 per cent of the water needed by many other cool season grasses. Each year, as our stand of fine fescue multiplies, we are able to manage more for the fescue and in turn use less water. There will be times when the weaker grasses stress due to drought conditions and this is part of managing toward the desired turf species.

The use of soil surfactants (wetting agents) is an important part of our agronomic plan. A soil surfactant is a material that allows us to be more efficient with our water by helping the soil to better hold on to water applied. Surfactants aid in breaking surface tension of tight soil/turf conditions allowing water to better penetrate into the root zone helping to move water deeper and more evenly. This promotes better rooting of turf and a more healthy soil condition. The club invested in an injection system last year to deliver these materials onto the course via the irrigation system.

Organic fertilizers are an important part of building healthy soils and healthy soils use

water more efficiently. These organic fertilizers make up nearly 70 per cent of all fertilizers applied to the course.

If you are on the golf course during the summer months, you have no doubt seen the staff out hand watering various turf areas. There is no more efficient way to deliver water to the desired location than through hand watering.

We have invested a lot of time, effort and resources into providing a high level of turf condition while being environmentally responsible with our use of water. Many of the above practices were implemented years ago, well before the drought. While these changes to our program have resulted in improved playability of the golf course, they have also put us in position to better weather the current

drought. The majority of increase in the golf maintenance budget over the last few years has been directly related to the practices discussed here and I commend the club for supporting the golf course in such a way.

The fascination with a wall to wall green golf course in California should have changed years ago. As a responsible member of the community and the golf industry, we should be doing all we can to limit the amount of water we use, mandate or no mandate. Greens, tees and fairways can and will be kept in top condition, but we need to get used to rough and areas out of play becoming more natural, un-irrigated and brown. As we move through the summer months, there will be more areas of off color turf and that is OK. It will come back when it rains. ■



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Top Five Garden Plants For Golf Courses

What You Need to Know to Make the Right Selection

For this edition of *Green is Beautiful* I compiled a top five list of plants to use in gardens in a golf course environment.

The criteria for making my list is as follows:

- **Water requirements:** Does not need a lot of water to perform at its best and can tolerate some drought like conditions without aesthetic value or plant health being compromised.
- **Flowering time or season of peak interest:** For our location the peak season of interest is in July and August. That is when we see the most traffic on the golf course so that is when everything should look at its best. So for me I'm looking for bloom times from July to August or plants that are their most attractive at those times.
- **Length of bloom time or interest:** Some plants bloom for one week, while others for well over a month when we consider some perennials. Obviously annuals bloom for months on end. When it comes to grasses and shrubs there are many that have high aesthetic value from spring to fall as their shape or foliage colour change throughout the growing year and even

throughout the winter.

- **Pest resistance:** If the deer won't eat it, I want it. I'm also talking about mildews, aphids and other pests that commonly affect certain species of plants.
- **Structure and hardiness:** I'm looking for plants that do not require staking and can support themselves through whatever Mother Nature throws at them. We in the north see a lot of snow and really cold winter temperatures. With the amount of snow we receive we can see long periods of wet soils through the thaw and crushing weights from snow loads through the winter months. So, I'm looking for plants that can handle some wet feet in the spring and the ability to support some weight without having to be pruned in the spring.
- **Invasiveness or growth habit:** Some plants spread like crazy underground and can take over a garden and others throw a ton of viable seed that you'll be pulling out of your garden in the spring. Avoiding species with these characteristics is a must.

Before we go any further with my favourites there are a couple of things I would like to

mention in regards to my earlier statement about the golf course environment. Firstly, choosing the right plants for the right location is a must, as most of you may already know. Trying to force something to grow in conditions it doesn't like can be time consuming and costly. For example, growing something near a tee deck that may get watered often in times of drought. This may cause mist getting onto nearby plant material that is susceptible to mildews or other disease caused by excessively moist conditions. Secondly, providing proper soil conditions is also very important for overall plant health. If you can accomplish these two basic things you will increase your chances of success greatly, resulting in healthy plants and savings on time, fertilizers, water, spray products and new plants to replace the ones that you would have had to give up on.

Now, moving on to my list of favourites and why I chose them. Please note that these are in no particular order.

RUDBECKIA 'GOLDSTRUM'

I know this plant is in many gardens across North America and it is an easy one, but based on my criteria it is a no brainer and a staple to the low maintenance plant category. The only negative thing I personally have to say about it is that it is not deer resistant. This may be a key factor to consider if you have deer grazing in your area.

CROCOSMIA 'LUSCIFER'

This is a bulb and it works great as a cut flower. The flower colour is a striking red that can be seen from a distance and the individual flowers can be greatly appreciated up close. Even when it is not in flower, the sword-like, upright leaves of dark green provide a nice texture when used in contrast to finer textures.

ASTILBE

I have nothing bad to say about any of the hundred varieties of astilbe that are out there. Ranging in flower times from early summer to early fall, heights from 8" to 4", and flower colours including red, white, multiple shades of pink and lavender. You can design an entire garden with astilbe varieties alone, and be quite successful in doing so. These are perfect plants for areas that get direct morning sun and appreciate afternoon shade. They will do

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Astilbe, pictured left, is at the 1st tee at Muskoka Lakes Golf and Country Club

well to brighten full shade areas as well. Give them rich, moist soil and keep them out of baking afternoon sun and these will perform amazingly.

NEPETA 'CATMINT'

This plant, also known as Catmint, as simple as it is, I think is extremely underrated. It performs well in any soil condition, it is drought tolerant, it seems to bloom forever and when the plant finally appears to be getting tired it can be pruned to the base and within a couple of weeks you have another perfectly mounded plant again carrying soft purple flowers. Catmint, when planted en masse, has great impact from spring to fall due to

its silvery green foliage, excellent shape and flowering length.

CALAMAGROSTIS

I am much more interested in using bright colours, but based on my criteria this grass definitely makes the list. Calamagrostis 'karl Foerster', much like Rudbeckia, it is often used, but there is no denying the visual impact that can be achieved using this plant on its own as a specimen or en masse. From spring to fall it is an amazing performer especially during the weeks it transitions from flower to seed. The colour change can be seen almost daily starting with a light pink, to weeks later being in seed and showing light brown. As the

flower transitions to seed the entire structure of the plant changes as well - It goes from being airy and light while in flower to rigid and very upright while in seed.

Unfortunately I can only say so much. My list is much longer than just the five plants I have mentioned today. I hope my criteria list is helpful when it comes to the decision making process when choosing plants for your locations. Feel free to contact me with any design questions or if you're interested in knowing what else is on my list. ■



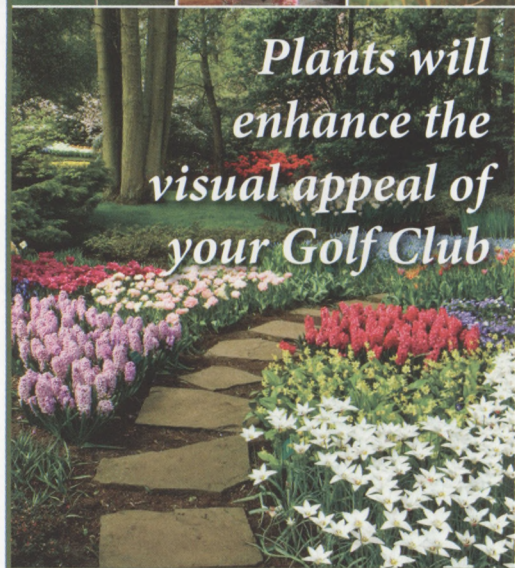
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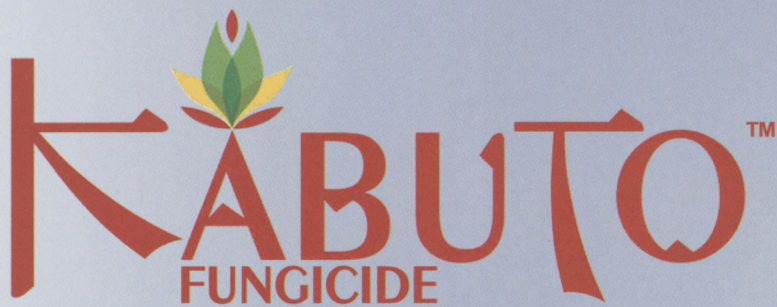
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Twenty Years Ago Today

The Board of Directors of the OGSA in 1995 was: **John Taylor** (President), **Twenty Valley G&CC**, **Alex La Belle** (Vice President and Newsletter Editor), **Merryhill GC**, **Bruce Burger** (Past President), **Lakeview GC**, **Simon George** (Treasurer), **Oakville GC**, **Ian Bowen**, **Oshawa G&CC**, **Bob Heron**, **Beacon Hall GC**, **Paul Dodson**, **Lionhead G&CC**, **Doug Suter**, **Credit Valley G&CC**, **Paul White**, **Mississauga G&CC**, **Ken Nelson**, **Jerry Richard**, **Craigowan** and **Keith Bartlett**, **Thornhill G&CC**. **Cindi Charters** was the office secretary.

ON THE MOVE: **Thom Charters** moved to **Bayview G&CC** from **Weston G&CC** and **Jeff Burgess** took over his position. **Jim Molenhuis** left **Lionhead G&CC** to work at a new golf course, **Lake Joseph GC**, which was being built by **ClubLink**. **Paul Dodson** from **Aurora Highlands GC** went to **Lionhead G&CC** and **Peter White** from **Credit Valley G&CC** (Assistant) went to **Aurora**. **Blake McMaster** moved from **Brampton GC** to **Royal Montreal GC**. **Jay Lavis** left **Cardinal GC** and went to **Blue Mountain G&CC** and was replaced by **Robert Sloan** from **Sudbury**. **Gary Morris** left **North Bay GC** and went to **John Evelyn Golf Centre** and **North Bay G&CC** hired **Kevin Wingerton**, who was the Assistant at **Thornhill G&CC**. **Mark Courneya**, Assistant at **Markland Wood GC**, moved to the **Loyalist Estate GC** near **Kingston**, **John Scott** became the new Superintendent at **Rivermead GC** and **Mike Cote** moved from **Port Carling G&CC** to **Glendale G&CC**. **Chris Andrejicka**, Assistant at **Devil's Pulpit GA**, became the new Superintendent at **Essex G&CC** and **Bernie Martin** from **Osprey** moved to **Hunters Glen GC**. The **Beverly G&CC** hired **Scott Dyker**, **John Parker** moved from **Greystone GC** to **Trafalgar G&CC**, **Andrew Keffer**, Assistant at **Emerald Hills GC**, took over at **Greystone GC** and **Derick Powers** moved from **Brockville CC** to **Carleton G&YC**.

ACHIEVEMENTS: **Paul Dermott** and **Dave Gourlay Jr.** were both nominated as directors of **GCSAA** by the **OGSA**.

Paul Dermott, **Paul Scenna** and **Greg Williams** won the **Environmental Steward Award** from the **GCSAA** in **San Francisco**.

Dr. Jack Eggens was the recipient of the **John B. Steel Distinguished Service Award** at the **Canadian International Turfgrass Conference** and **Tradeshow** held in **Ottawa**.

Rob Witherspoon was appointed as the new director of the **Guelph Turfgrass Institute**.

EVENTS: A retirement reception for **Dr. Jack Eggens** was held on **January 4th** in conjunction with the **Ontario Turfgrass Symposium**. It was organized and directed by **Gordon Witteveen**, and the presenters were former students and friends: **Nigel Rennie**, **Rob Ackermann**, **Dean Baker**, **Keith Bartlett**, **Ian Bowen**, **Angelo Capanelli**, **Paul Dermott**, **Bill Fach**, **Ron Heesen**, **Jerry Richard**, **Paul Scenna**, **Pelino Scenna**, **Mike VanBeek**, **Paul White**, **Mark Schneider**, **Marie Thorne**, **Hugh Kirkpatrick** and **Daisy Moore**.

Ransomes America Corporation and **G.C. Duke Equipment Limited** announced the new revolutionary all electric riding greens mower which operates on eight, six volt golf cart style batteries which offer quiet pollution free operation.

A law was passed in **Ontario** that signs must be posted 24 hours prior to pesticide applications on golf courses and remain in place for 48 hours after an application.

TOURNAMENTS: The **Pro/Superintendent** day was held at **Monterra GC** hosted by **Ron Heesen**. The winning gross team **Dan Lavis** and **Pro John Davis** from **Ingersoll GC** and the low net prize went to **Ed Farnsworth** from **Deerhurst** and **Pro Paul Kennedy**.

The **Superintendent/Greens Chairman** event was held at the **Rosedale GC** hosted by **Bill Fach**. The winners were as follows: 1st low gross, **Brampton GC**, 2nd low gross, **Bay of Quinte G&CC** and 3rd low gross, **Galt G&CC**.

The **OGSA, GTI, OMAFRA Field Day** was held at **Springfield GC** hosted by **Ray Dlugokecki**. Low gross scores were **Thom Charters** (70), **Jeff Stauffer** (72), **Paul Scenna** (72) and **Ted Ellis** (73).

The **OTRF Golf Tournament** was held at **Spring Lakes GC** hosted by **Max Frost**. **Jay Evelyn** was the low gross winner with a 71. ■



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Death From Above

by Doug Breen, Superintendent
GolfNorth Properties

My son Walker has been working on the grounds crew at a golf course for a few seasons now. Last night, we were driving someplace, and he mentioned in passing that he'd never been hit by a golf ball. I got hit a handful of times during my first summer, and about the same number of times in the three decades since. My first thought, which I immediately stated (we don't have a lot of unexpressed ideas at our house), was that the kid is obviously lazier than I was. I would be working so hard, and concentrating so intently on what I was doing, that I'd often forget to keep an eye on the tee – and *whammo*. He interpreted the facts in another way, and concluded that he was just smarter than me.

Furthermore, he theorized that getting struck by a golf ball "really wouldn't hurt any more than getting shot with a



paintball." I said that he was correct, if the paint ball was made out of NASA plastic wrapped around a ball bearing, and shot out of a cannon. I've been hit by both, and it's about as similar to getting shot with a paintball, as having someone chuck an egg and a hammer at you.

There have been countless near misses as well; steering wheel from a powered bunker rake, tank of a sprayer (several of those). There was one particular day, where I was admonishing one of the young staff, while he was doing bunker maintenance. There was nothing wrong with the work he was doing, but he had stated in no uncertain terms that he thought that "Marilyn Monroe, Rita Hayworth, and all those other old 50's pin up girls were too chubby." Obviously, I couldn't stand for that. It's really the only thing left that I can get angry enough, to argue with people about. As I've grown older, I've become too weary from the fight – and I'm willing to sit idly by, while people say unbelievably stupid things about pesticides, GMO foods, vaccination, or three down football. Any of those topics would have once brought me to me feet, to rain down a well-rehearsed defence of my position. Not anymore; I'm now perfectly willing to let people wallow in their own crapulence. But if you don't think that Elizabeth Taylor was hot in *A Place in the Sun*; well sir, we will have words! So there I was, standing in the bunker, with my back to the tee, defending the honour of Jane Mansfield, when suddenly, the young fellow I was lecturing, reached past me and caught a golf ball in full flight, with his bare hand – three inches from my head. I thanked him, didn't shake his (probably broken) hand,

and we agreed to settle on our admiration for Tawny Kataen – our only common ground.

I once worked on a course, where someone on the Board was an employee of the Ministry of Labour. He was quite concerned that we should all be wearing hard hats while on the golf course.

I made a presentation, where I explained that we were certainly in no danger, as long as we

stood in the middle of the fairways and greens, as most shots go flying into the deep rough, where everyone seemed to want us to stand. I continued; since they were so worried about our safety, what we really needed were shin pads to protect us from their hosel rockets. Everyone had a good laugh, and the vote was lost. Less than 48 hours later, while filling in for someone who called in sick, I took one off the forehead cutting fairways. They still have to wear hard hats on that course, and the fairway mower has a cage on it.

Some have tried to use bump caps instead of hard hats. For a while, suppliers were selling a plastic safari hat that looked like a pith helmet. The idea, was that it would afford you some protection from the sun, as well as golf balls. Unfortunately, they would slide off, if you tipped your head more than five degrees off of dead level. I lost several into rivers, wet wells, and one into a ravine. We have a course, where there's one nailed to the shop wall, labelled in memory of the superintendent who tried to make the staff there wear them.

So, has Walker avoided contact because he's more clever than I was at his age, or does he just not work as hard? I've undertaken an utterly unscientific poll, and it seems that the more times a person has been struck; the more likely they are to be generally rammy, and a tad OCD about the project they're working on – like me. Sure there are wild cards (I had an assistant take a ball in the mouth from two holes away that was 90 degrees off course) but for the most part, it appears that getting hit is primarily a function of just not being aware of your surroundings. I plead guilty, and my father would have agreed. ■

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