

Green is Beautiful

June 2016

The Official Publication of Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

Disappearing Act How Developers Are Impacting Golf

ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Pretty Fly For Some Turf Guys

The Best Inspire Success

Can/Am Challenge 2016

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



by Mark Prieur
OGSA President

Get out and grow the game. That is the message we hear from all levels of golf today. Think tanks regurgitate how golf is time consuming, expensive and elitist. The sport of golf is facing competition, not only from each other, but more from other activities. Indeed, cycling, running, and even baseball (thank the Toronto Blue Jays for that one) squeeze the ever important consumer to make decisions on what to do with their disposable income and time. Golf is seemingly under attack from all sides. Golf course superintendents must play a role in the counterattack.

The very first step in doing so is superintendents need to get out and play more. Not only at their own facility, but others as well. Start with a call to your neighbouring colleague, or perhaps a regional event. Join the league at your club. There are as many excuses not to play golf as there are not to go to the gym. No time, bad back, we have heard them all. Cost is minimal, sometimes free if you are the host. Isn't this why we got in the business to begin with? Think back to before the wife/kids/mortgage. We all fell in love with the game of golf and began to weave our life into the rich fabric of the game. There is so much to be learned by just getting out and playing one extra round. Please, take some time out of your busy schedule and call a friend/colleague/member and play. The worst that can happen is your swing may improve. ■

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Green is Beautiful

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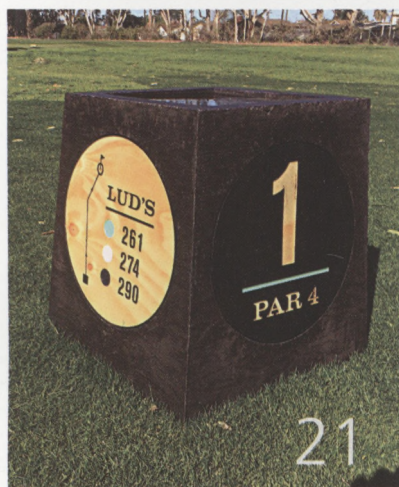
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EDITORIAL MESSAGE



by Justin Parsons,
Engage Agro Corp.

“Turf related stories seem to be making it into the mainstream media more frequently these days. It all started with the Toronto Blue Jays and the pressure from some sections of the game, mostly players and fans, to move toward a natural playing surface inside the Rogers Centre. What has made this desire more plausible, if only slightly, has been the move of the Toronto Argos from the dome to BMO Field – another big sports story with turf at the centre of it.

Toronto FC recently played their first home game following major stadium renovations which have impacted the amount of sunlight that certain parts of the field will see. Soon enough the Argos will be running up and down the same playing surface for nine home games this coming summer and fall. One of the big story lines has, and will continue to be how the turf responds to double the traffic.

A little more close to home for us members of the golf community has been the story of turf that is being lost to real estate development. There have been multiple media outlets that have brought attention to the fact that high value golf property is being sold to developers, mostly due to the fact that more value for the land can be extracted in the form of homes versus fairways.

Sadly, the news angle that is being taken by the press is from that

of the homeowner's perspective, with little or no emphasis on what is actually being lost. They are concerned with the view from their back patio, which, when it gets bulldozed is unfortunate. But the greater concern should be the loss of an ecosystem that has been properly cared for and nurtured by a superintendent and their staff. Indeed, the ecological repercussions are of far greater consequence.

In this issue Robert Thompson takes a closer look at this topic and, as it turns out, this trend may not be as new as some may think. Jeff Mingay, noted Canadian golf course architect, details in his article that all is not lost for the golf industry as some of the best and most successful golf course launches have taken place over the last handful of years.

Readers will also find a story from Cam Shaw that offers a glimpse into what a group of turf professionals do in their spare time – and, perhaps surprisingly, it involves getting up before the crack of dawn. You will find all this and more as you flip through this edition of *Green is Beautiful*. ■



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WHAT'S NEW

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager

THANK A GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT AND RECOGNITION PRESENTATIONS

We will once again be running the 30 second audio segment of the "Thank a Golf Course Superintendent" commercial. The spot will run on both Sportsnet 590 The Fan in Toronto during the Saturday morning golf show and more intensively during the Canadian Open at Glen Abbey Golf Club, and on 1200 TSN Radio in Ottawa during the 2016 National Capital Open to Support Our Troops, which will be held at Hylands Golf Club.

We will of course be making presentations once again to the host superintendents of significant tournaments held throughout the province this summer.

OGSA SHORT COURSE AWARD

Congratulations to Nicholas Blaney, Assistant Superintendent at RiverBend Golf Community. Nicholas had outstanding marks in the recently held University of Guelph Short Course and received \$1,300 and a one year OGSA membership for his efforts.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Our membership directory accompanies this issue of *Green is Beautiful*. We have tried to make it as accurate as possible; if your information is incorrect, please contact the office. As per usual, the online search function will always be the most reliable source of information as it contains updates made since the directory went to print.

GCSAA CHAPTER EXECUTIVE/ CHAPTER LEADERS SESSION

The OGSA Vice President and I attended this event in Lawrence, Kansas in

late March. These sessions are held each year, however, it has been a few years since the OGSA last participated.

The GCSAA invites a limited number of chapters to participate in these sessions which provide educational, networking, leadership and association best practices presentations. The event is geared towards Directors who are new to an executive position on the Board, along with the chief staff person of the association. We both found the sessions enlightening, the networking outstanding, and all in all the experience was of great value.

TECHNICIANS TOUR AND TRAINING DAY

We would like to thank and acknowledge John Deere, GT Golf & Turf and Podolinsky Equipment Ltd., and their respective staff for organizing this no charge, "sold out", full day event for our 30 technicians who participated this past March.

Watch out for our conference program release which will include a full day specifically for technicians, to be run concurrently with our regular conference program. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, January 18, 2017.

SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUR ASSOCIATION

As always we encourage our members to support our associate members. If you are unsure as to whether a company is a member of the OGSA or not, please go to our website and click on "OGSA Associates", the button on the right hand side of the home page.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER MEETING

A meeting to review the new format for the conference in January 2017 was held

recently at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute.

Information provided to our associate members included the registration procedure and forms, an overview of the conference schedule, including networking and educational events, and a reinforcement of what we need from our associate members in order to make the new format successful without a trade show. ■

MARK YOUR CALENDARS UPCOMING 2016 OGSA Tournament & Events

Pro/Super Challenge

Grand Niagara GC, Port Robinson, ON
Monday, June 6, 2016

Assistants Tournament

Brantford G&CC, Brantford, ON
Tuesday, August 23, 2016

OGSA Seniors Tournament

Mono Hills CC, Mono, ON
Wednesday, August 10, 2016

WELCOME to Our New Members

Nicholas Blaney	Class C
RiverBend Golf Community	
Dennis Kim	Class C
Scarboro Golf & Country Club	
Robert Lewis	Class C
Deer Creek Golf & Banquet Facility	
Aaron Lowe	Class C
Ladies Golf Club of Toronto	
Shawn Raposo	Class A
Savannah Golf Links	

And The Winner Is...

Congratulations to Mike Kehoe from Nutrite, who has won the "Name Our Magazine" competition. The title chosen is – **ON COURSE** – a new masthead is being designed.

Mike will be awarded a free registration to the 2017 Ontario Golf Course Management Conference this coming January.



CAN/AM CHALLENGE 2016

Seventy golfers participated in the Annual OGSA/MiGCSA Can/Am Challenge held recently at Forest Lake CC with MiGCSA hosting. Ontario retains the cup, winning by a score of 33 - 18. The event returns to Ontario next year and will be held at Essex G & CC with host superintendent, Chris Andrejicka.



The winning Canadian team.



Forest Lakes Country Club



Can/Am Cup

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Pretty Fly For Some Turf Guys

April 23rd, 2016 — The alarm goes off. It's 4:30 am as per the usual routine.

I sluggishly drag my protesting body from its deep slumber and hobble my way to the mug of hot coffee which patiently awaits my gullet. After a few sips and a quick bite, I am ready to face the day — but something is different about this particular morning. My grin rises a little higher and as I bounce out the doorway, there is a less than subtle swing in my step. My work uniform remains neatly folded upon the dresser by my bedside, and my CSA approved footwear sullenly rests in its quarters away from sight in the closet. Today I will not be heading to the golf course. Today, I am going fly fishing.

Story and Photos by Cam Shaw, Assistant Superintendent, Piper's Heath Golf Club

For the past two years, I have been heading up to Osprey Valley Golf Club to meet with Aaron Hill, Assistant at the Toot, and Scott Brook, Superintendent at the Heathlands Golf Course, where we have been learning the profound and complex art of fly fishing. What started out as an interest, grew into a hobby, and has now evolved into a deep passion and borderline obsession. As a child growing up in Morrisburg, Ontario, I was nurtured into the sport of fishing by learning to hook bass, pike and walleye with a spin caster out of the St. Lawrence River. I loved the comradery, conversation, and the rush of a lurking monster bass smashing through a calm glassy surface after a well-chosen lure and a precisely placed cast. I still love my old spincaster, but catching something on a fly rod has a different feel to it. For me, there is something more cathartic and enriching about standing in the river, feeling the push of the water on your legs, watching the movement of the river,

reading the fish, presenting a perfectly chosen fly (especially one you've tied yourself) and then setting the hook as you entice your target to strike. The sport is juxtaposed by both the excitement and rush of a striking fish and the beautiful solace found in the space between catches. A profound connection can be made at any moment with the natural world around you. Even in an afternoon with little to no action, I always leave feeling fulfilled, and engrossed in curiosity over the mysteries and puzzles surrounding the sport.

This past April 23rd, the fourth Saturday of the month, was opening day for trout season. In total there were six of us that participated. The aforementioned Osprey Boys, myself, Aaron's brother Adam and his friend Craig Franklin, as well as Aaron's long-time friend and our resident fly fishing guru, Sheldon Durkin. After a brief gathering at Aaron's place to show off our new gear, set up our rods and change into our chest



Aaron Hill casting into the honey hole.



From Left: Craig Franklin, Adam Hill, Sheldon Durkin, Aaron Hill (missing Scott Brook). Below, top inset: Brook Trout caught by Scott Brook in 2015. (Credit: Scott Brook); bottom inset: Brook trout caught by Sheldon Durkin.

waders, we were chomping at the bit to get our lines wet. As we set out, we all branched off into smaller groups and tried our luck at various locations on the Upper Credit (River). Since most of us are still relatively new to the sport, Sheldon acted as a quasi-consultant. We often looked to him for advice on where, how and what to use. He has been fly fishing for six years and is a wealth of knowledge regarding line set ups, rod and reel combinations, fly choices, as well as being an all-round patient and helpful guy. If you ever choose to indulge in the sport, be sure you find yourself a guru like Sheldon. It will save you time and money, I promise. The Osprey boys are well practiced too. After all, why wouldn't they be? The coveted brook trout grounds of the Upper Credit flow directly through the golf course property. On a daily basis, Aaron and Scott can be knee deep in the crystal clear, fertile head waters of the Credit River within minutes of leaving work. I try not to be too envious, but it is hard. The topography of the land surrounding Caledon is incredible, and anyone who has enjoyed the winding road through Belfountain and the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park would attest to this.

We couldn't have asked for better weather; full sun, no clouds and very little wind, which helps in the casting department. Admittedly it was a little cool, which can limit the activity of the fish, but the weather has been a touch uncooperative this spring, so a calm sunny day is a win in my books. As I worked my way down the stream, I came across Aaron working his magic on a nook he had found near our starting point. As I watched him craft a majestic cast into this little pool he had stumbled upon, I couldn't help but ponder the connections that exist between our careers and this sport which we have come to love so much. One of the most obvious is the deep appreciation for the outdoors and the natural world that is required to enjoy both. I would find it hard to believe that even in our high paced summers there isn't one person in this industry who doesn't stop to enjoy a sunrise, the sparkle of morning dew, or a trespassing deer nibbling on the fresh grass that steers our lives so mercilessly.

Another connection is the complex knowledge required on the

various biological cycles that drive success and failure in each pursuit. A good entomological understanding in fishing is just as important as it is in turf. Knowing insect life cycles, appearances, habits and prey is crucial to your success as an angler. Pick the wrong fly, the wrong colour, and the wrong presentation and you could be waiting a long time before you see a bend in your rod. A wise fisherman will take five or ten minutes to "scout" a location out before he chooses his strategy. What flies are currently buzzing around your fishing hole? What's floating in the water? What's

emerging and rising to the surface? Are the fish feeding on the surface or are they picking up nymphs drifting on the bottom of the stream? Likely the most pervasive connection between our jobs and the sport is the ubiquitous topic of sustainable management that surrounds them both. Just as turf is handling pressures of reduced resource capacities, heavily scrutinized inputs, and increased focus on creating naturalized wildlife sanctuary, so too is fishing. Trout Unlimited Canada and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority often organize several volunteer days where participants help to re-establish spawning areas for native trout, as well as release new fish into the river system which helps boost existing populations. There is also an increasing effort to thwart growing numbers of the non-native Asian Carp, which represent a very real threat to the future of many North American sport fisheries.

As opening day drew to a close, we made our way back to Aaron's house for steaks, bacon wrapped pickerel, beer and a campfire where we shared stories from the afternoon and times passed. As the laughter resonated through the fading light of the day, I was reminded how lucky we were to have had this opportunity to get away from our daily grind and relax without any turf talk... well, almost no turf talk. The next day, before we all went our separate ways, we decided to reconvene when the temperatures were higher and the golf courses are in their prime. The idea being if we aren't very successful on the water, we can always switch rods for clubs and hope for a little luck on the course instead. ■



Eagles Nest Golf Club

10,000 Dufferin Street
Maple, Ontario
L6A 1S3

Tel: 905-417-2300

jcrawford@eaglesnestgolf.com

www.eaglesnestgolf.com

Twelfth
Hole

About the Course

Eagles Nest Golf Club was built on an old sand and gravel pit located just a few minutes north of Toronto. The course resembles a difficult, old Irish links layout, including massive dunes, high-walled pot bunkers and wispy fescues.

Established: May 2004

Original Architect: Doug Carrick

Type of Club: Public

Number of Holes: 18

Number of Rounds Annually:
24,000

Practice Facility: Yes

Member Since 2008

Jason Crawford

Director of Turf Operations, Eagles Nest Golf Club

*by James Horvath, 2nd Assistant
Superintendent, Richmond Hill Golf Club*

Growing up in the town of Coburg, Ontario, Jason Crawford spent his childhood like many youngsters, playing a variety of sports, but golf held a special place in his heart. He recalls being exposed to the game while chasing his grandfather's shots up the fairways of the local courses in Grand Bend, Ontario.

"I participated in many team sports growing up but I always felt golf was special. Surrounded by nature and great friends, it was me versus the course and I loved that challenge. I fell in love with the game."

Crawford's story begins in a similar fashion to many; in his senior year of high school, he was still unsure of which career path to take. Upon graduating, he made a decision to accept a job in an automotive parts factory not far from his family's home. It didn't take him very long to discover his distaste of being confined to working indoors and performing a repetitive job,



Jason Crawford with his wife Aja and 15 month old son Parker.

even though it was putting money in his pocket. The factory would eventually close later that year, leaving Crawford looking for work and wondering what his next step would be.

Being only 20 years old at the time

In the Hot Seat

Q: Favourite golf tournament?

A: The Masters

Q: Favourite piece of turf equipment?

A: Greensmower – The joy of being first out on the course while the sun is coming up and the birds are chirping, bring back fond memories of my early days in the business.

Q: Favourite golf course?

A: Cabot Links

Q: Ultimate foursome?

A: Arnold Palmer, Steve Yzerman and my late Papa Johnson

Q: Favourite Movie:

A: *Pulp Fiction*

Q: Lowest round and where?

A: 67 at Thornhill Golf & Country Club (although the course was playing as a Par 70 during a renovation)

Q: If you weren't a Superintendent what would you be?

A: *Unhappy*

with few responsibilities, Crawford found himself along with a few friends spending more time on the golf course. It was at this point that the idea of turning something he loved into a career came into being.

"I remember spending plenty of time playing golf and travelling to many different courses. Although I wasn't quite sure in what capacity, deep down I knew I wanted to be in the golf business."

It was in the spring of 1999 that Crawford would acquire his first true taste of turf life when he accepted a seasonal position working for Superintendent Trevor Clapperton at Dalewood Golf Club in Port Hope, Ontario. It was this exposure at Dalewood Golf Club that opened Crawford's eyes to the possibility of pursuing golf course management as a career. He enjoyed spending time outdoors and being involved in the setup of the course day to day. During a conversation with fellow Coburg resident and friend Mark McIvor, Crawford learned

of the Golf Course Technician program that McIvor had started the year before at Seneca College and he enrolled in the fall of that year. McIvor and Crawford would move into a house backing onto Aurora Highlands Golf Club in Aurora, Ontario. Crawford found the classroom setting to be invaluable in helping him better understand the operation of a golf course.

An integral part of the Seneca program was completing an internship. Crawford applied to and was hired at Oakdale Golf Club in Toronto, Ontario working under Superintendent Paul Dermott. When speaking about his time at Oakdale, Crawford recalls being inspired by two of the young managers at the club. Former OGSA Board Member and Superintendent at Mad River Golf Club, Chad Vibert and current OGSA President and Trafalgar Golf & Country Club Superintendent, Mark Prieur.

They were each in charge of nine holes at Oakdale Golf Club and Crawford viewed them as inspirational leaders on the path he wanted to follow.

"I remember watching them running the crews and the way they managed their time and priorities. I was still pretty new to the industry and I admired how they carried themselves like seasoned professionals. I learned a lot from them even though I was only there for a short time."

The summer following his graduation from Seneca, Crawford was promoted to the position of Second Assistant Superintendent at Oakdale Golf Club. He was thrilled with the challenges of the role and worked there for another two seasons until a new opportunity presented itself following a conversation with his friend Michael Rossi.

A new Doug Carrick designed links golf course was being constructed in Maple, Ontario and Rossi was already working on the project. The course was being constructed on an abandoned sand and gravel pit that surrounded the Keele Valley landfill. It would be an authentic

links style golf course, including many sod wall bunkers, fescue covered dunes, roughs, fairways and tees. It was later decided that the greens were to be seeded with velvet bentgrass, which was a first for Southern Ontario.

"Rossi and I were talking and he expressed his amazement with the project so I went to visit the site. He put me in a dozer and I was giddy like a three year old in a sand box. I remember stopping for a second that day and thinking wow, this place is awesome."

Crawford's excitement with this project led to an interview with Eagles Nest Golf Club's Director of Turfgrass Operations, Brent Rogers. At the time Rogers was already well known for having built many incredible golf courses throughout Canada. Crawford was hired as a Field Assistant in August of 2002.

Crawford recalls his construction experience as being a pleasurable one, but also mentions the vast amount of work that was involved. Many long days and late nights with the crew were necessary to bring the vision of Eagles Nest to life. It was an incredible experience that Crawford feels very fortunate to have been a part of, and he would recommend it to any young turfgrass professional if they are ever given the opportunity to have a similar experience. Crawford remembers how instrumental his college education was throughout the construction project as he was able to apply many of the principles he was taught.

As time passed, Crawford continued to work diligently at Eagles Nest, and in August 2008, after Rossi left the province, he was fortunate to be promoted to Manager of Turfgrass Operations. Crawford considered himself to be extremely lucky and felt it was a great achievement to be promoted, considering the strong capabilities of the other applicants. Crawford remembers the prospective candidates as all being more than capable of holding the position.

What You Need to Know

Predominant Grass Type:

Velvet bentgrass greens and fescue tees, fairways and rough

Predominant Soil Type: Sand

Type of Greens: USGA / California Hybrid

Course Length: 7,476 yards

Size of Property: 235 acres

Size of Greens: 3.6 acres

Size of Tees: 3.7 acres

Size of Fairways: 34 acres

Maintenance Challenges

Managing fescue dunes, particularly in regards to weed infestation, as driving any piece of equipment on them is impossible. Ball mark recovery on velvet bentgrass is a large challenge as well.

Continued on page 15...



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18 Green, Eagles Nest Golf Club

When discussing his work, Crawford notes that Rogers has been a major career mentor to him throughout the years. Rogers' knowledge of turfgrass is second to none, and Crawford says he feels fortunate to have worked with him. Rogers helped him understand the many challenges he currently faces managing the Eagles Nest property, including the unique turfgrass species that were planted and the busy environment in which they grow.

Last year, Crawford and his wife Aja, who he met during Eagles Nest's construction, were expecting their first child. If that wasn't already exciting enough, Crawford's mentor Rogers was moving on to build another golf course, which gave him the opportunity to move into the Director position. Without a doubt, Crawford speaks of this as his biggest career move to date.

"So many things change. The biggest change, other than being the face of the operation, is being the decision maker. I can bounce ideas off of my management team and fellow industry members, but it's crucial to trust your instincts and believe that you can make the best possible decision in any given situation. I owe much of my success to the great team that surrounds me, and I have a tremendous amount of confidence in their ability to perform at an exceptional level."

Although the winter of 2015 did bring Crawford much positive advancement in his life and career, it also brought great misfortune to Eagles Nest Golf Club. On February 24th, just under two months after his promotion to Director, the maintenance facility burned to the ground. Fortunately

no one was injured, but with 60 days prior to the opening of the golf course, Crawford had no shop or equipment. It would be an uphill battle requiring him to utilize all the resources he could muster.

"It was unnerving to say the least. I had to buy an entirely new fleet and had truly never bought a single piece of equipment before. I sat down with our equipment manager, Brad Ciemins, and with the help of industry suppliers, we were able to get everything replaced just days before opening. We still didn't have a shop but we did what we could to make the best of an unfortunate situation."

Presently, the shop has been rebuilt, the new equipment has been parked inside, and the golf course operation is running smoothly. Crawford says he enjoys the freedom to be able to pick up his now 15 month old son Parker from daycare each day, and he truly loves being a dad and husband. He states that although his day to day role at the course has changed, he feels that it is his family and his team at the course that help keep him grounded. In retrospect, Crawford says that he has thoroughly enjoyed every step of his journey to date, and he is optimistically looking forward to the future. ■

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Disappearing

Ontario golf courses are under pressure from developers, but have we seen this before?

By Robert Thompson



Act

The headlines have become commonplace in Ontario papers. Faced with flat participation and rising land values, golf courses are being pressured from land developers who see potential big profits in lining fairways with homes or commercial real estate.

Everyone has seen the massive numbers tossed around—\$440 million for York Downs north of Toronto, hundreds of millions more for the potential development of Glen Abbey in Oakville. But other courses are disappearing as well, even if they aren't as high profile.

The list is lengthy—Glancaster, a mom-and-pop course outside of Ancaster, closed suddenly last year. Saw-Whet, which was run and operated by two generations of superintendents, demolished its clubhouse this spring to pave the way for the Oakville course to be developed after a contentious fight with the municipality. It was the most recent course in the area to close, following White Oaks Golf, Richview and the Family Golf Learning Center. Other courses in Windsor and Kingston have also disappeared, often becoming houses. Copper Creek, a noted public course in Kleinberg, and Mandarin, a private course in Markham, have both disclosed they will be developed in time.

Superintendents at several of the courses that have announced they'll be developed wouldn't talk with *Green is Beautiful*, citing management direction that they aren't to comment on the subject. That's not surprising. The sale of York Downs has generated a lot of attention, with other courses pondering the value of the land. There's likely to be a long fight over the development of the iconic Glen Abbey, the longtime home of the RBC Canadian Open. The battle will be between the town, citizens of Oakville, who both oppose development, and ClubLink Corp., the corporate golf giant that runs Glen Abbey and is owned by commercial real estate billionaire Rai Sahi. It is too early to say who will prevail.

Continued on page 18...





"For the residents who are getting up in age, it gives them an opportunity to play and get out on the course. And it is a whole bunch of green space in an area that is quickly losing it. It could be a catastrophe."

— Ian McIsaac, Superintendent, Deerfield Golf Club

Continued from page 17...

That said, sometimes a superintendent can make a difference in a course's future. That was the case with Ian McIsaac, superintendent at Deerfield Golf Club for the last quarter century. McIsaac battled for the modest course located along a stretch of the QEW Highway when it was announced the leased land Deerfield resides on would not be renewed in 2014. McIsaac saw the course—and others like it—as playing a bigger role in the game and the community.

"They are reasonably-priced, walkable golf courses," says McIsaac. "For the residents who are getting up in age, it gives them an opportunity to play and get out on the course. And it is a whole bunch of green space in an area that is quickly losing it. It could be a catastrophe."

Golf courses have historically taken a lot of heat for their environmental practices. But it turns out when they are about to disappear, a lot of people, many of whom have never set foot in a pro shop, rally to keep them operating. That's exactly what happened when it was announced Deerfield might close.

Residents echoed McIsaac's concerns, with more than 600 locals showing up to oppose any development in the area. Their concerns? That the proposed 785 homes destined for Saw-Whet, and commercial development on the Deerfield land, would disrupt

the local ecosystem, specifically the two creeks that run through the properties.

"There's the basements and the property and the lives of the people downstream," Oakville Mayor Rob Burton said at the meeting.

One thing that received little discussion was golf. The concerns of most in the area wasn't the disappearance of the courses and the impact it might have on the game, but the effect it would have on the environment. However, one thing both Saw-Whet and Deerfield have in common is they are reasonably affordable courses for newer golfers.

To some the development of golf courses appears to be a modern undertaking. Truthfully it isn't. It has happened time and again over the history of the game in Canada, with clubs starting in urban settings and moving farther out as land prices rose. Toronto has seen it before, as have most large and medium-size cities in Ontario. Great courses, places like St. Andrews, which held the Canadian Open twice, but became a victim of highway construction as Toronto grew, have vanished. As urban areas expand, putting pressure on land usage and pushing up prices, it becomes harder for golf course operations to make sense to their owners, who can struggle battling weather to make a small profit each year, or sell for millions to a developer.



*Above: Ian McIsaac;
Below: Deerfield Golf Club.
(Photo credit: Ian McIsaac)*



Development rumors have been swirling around Glen Abbey Golf Club, host site of the RBC Canadian Open. (Photo credit: Bernard Brault, Golf Canada)

That's what happened to York Downs almost five decades ago when a developer purchased the course and the club moved north to Markham. History is repeating itself, but this time the club won't survive.

And the offers to purchase developable clubs are showing up more frequently from developers dazzled by potential dollar signs. At the end of April, Brampton Golf Club outside of Toronto announced it received an unsolicited offer to sell its property to a developer. Citing mounting costs and struggles to find new members, the club hired an outside consultant to examine its options.

"The club is facing numerous headwinds going forward," the club's president, James Garvie, wrote in a note to members last year. The picture Garvie painted for his members shows the questions facing many courses and clubs: "There is no quick fix to the various problems facing Brampton Golf Club and most other private and public golf courses in North America."

One of the saving graces for clubs might be a tax deferral structure set up in the 1950s and 60s when courses were disappearing. In order to maintain green space, a deal was struck with many notable Ontario clubs that allowed them to defer their property taxes. Only 13 courses have the deal, according to reports, but the amount owed in deferred taxes in Toronto alone is in the tens of millions. If courses sold their land there would surely be a public battle, and they'd have to repay the taxes. York Downs was not one of the clubs with a deferred tax structure.

Superintendents are surely caught up in the mix of courses being sold and developed, and not all of them can help lead fights against development, like McIsaac did at Deerfield.

However, as pundits toss around the notion that every golf course could potentially be developed, they overlook the fact that municipal and provincial zoning regulations will limit a lot of development of courses. After all, ClubLink might be able to develop part of Glen Abbey—but only part of it. Many courses are situated in sensitive environmental areas that will prohibit any development.

One thing is clear—we'll see more pressure from developers on many courses. That's the history of the sport in Canada.

But another thing is also clear—many great courses and clubs were created by exactly this pressure, forced to move as land prices and usage rose. The game has its challenges. That's well understood. But history shows this situation isn't as dire as many would suggest. ■

Veteran golf journalist Robert Thompson is Senior Writer at SCOREGolf, a columnist with Global Golf Post, and television golf analyst for Global News.

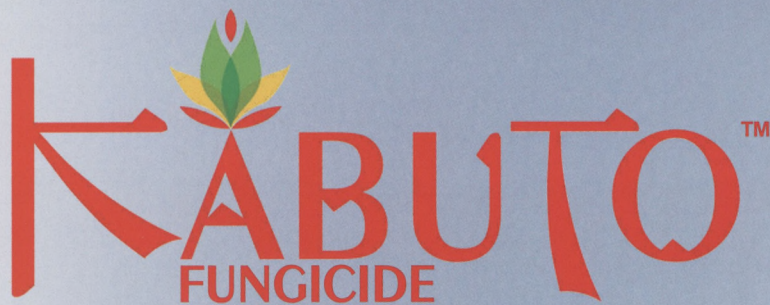
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The Best Inspire Success

by Jeff Mingay, *Golf Course Architect*

Since the economic downturn of 2008, I've heard a lot of sad stories about golf—i.e. more courses have since closed than opened, few new courses are being built these days, and golf's popularity is seemingly in decline.

It's ironic then that, over the same period of time, we've also seen some of the best courses ever created open with great success—more courses at Bandon Dunes Golf Resort on the coast of Oregon, for example, central Florida's relatively new Streamsong Resort, where a third course is currently in development, and, here in Canada, Cabot Links.

Golfers are flocking to those destinations.

WHAT MAKES THEM SO POPULAR WHILE MANY OTHER COURSES SIMULTANEOUSLY STRUGGLE?

Do any of the keys to the success of Bandon Dunes, Streamsong or Cabot Links provide examples for other golf course operations also attempting to attract golfers and, in turn, improve the bottom line?

I think so.

First, whether they realize it or not, a majority of golfers most enjoy playing in beautiful natural settings. That's why so many people take the time and spend the money to travel to the Oregon coast, central

Florida, and Cape Breton, Nova Scotia for golf. Granted, not every course can be built adjacent to the sea or set in sand dunes, but more courses can certainly be made more naturally beautiful simply by sorting out the tree situation for example.

It's been said that if you're driving down a street and suddenly the trees change from native varieties to non-indigenous and ornamental species, you're either approaching a cemetery or a golf course. That's a sad commentary on too many courses.

Golf is a game intended for open spaces, too. There's no substitute for lateral forgiveness—particularly off the tees. Like most of the great courses of the world, the courses at Bandon, Streamsong and Cabot feature ultra-wide fairways. Interest and challenge increases as golfers get closer to the hole. Ironically, too many courses are set-up in opposite fashion, presenting comparatively narrow, tree-lined corridors and not much interest at the greens.

Bunkers are aggravating, too, not just to golfers, but course superintendents as well. The same golfers who excitedly drive over rugged blowouts that have never been raked in the dunes at Bandon, Streamsong, and Cabot, return to their home courses and complain about the condition of the bunkers. Golf course superintendents everywhere lament the time and money spent in a futile attempt to maintain bunkers up to unrealistic standards, but have no choice. Bunker renovation is popular as a result.

Continued on page 22...



*Looking back over the 4th green at
Goat Hill Park in Oceanside, California.*



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Continued from page 21...

I preempt every conversation about potential bunker renovation with an important question: does each and every bunker on your course serve a definite purpose? At Bandon, Streamsong and Cabot Links, the bunkers genuinely add to the interest and challenge of the course and/or enhance the look and feel of a particular hole. In some cases they prevent balls from reaching a worse fate. Those are definite purposes for bunkers. If a bunker doesn't have a definite purpose, it probably shouldn't exist and it definitely shouldn't be renovated.

When Augusta National initially opened for play during the early 1930s, the course featured just 22 meaningful bunkers for 18 holes. Its designers, Alister Mackenzie and Bobby Jones, purposefully refused to use a single superfluous hazard, which significantly enhanced Augusta's distinctiveness.

After all, distinctiveness is the only common characteristic shared by the world's great courses. When you're at Augusta National, Bandon, Streamsong and Cabot Links, you know you can't be anywhere else. Distinctiveness is a main ingredient of the most appealing courses.

Looking beyond the distinctive beauty of individual properties and course architecture, unique logos, flags, tee markers, benches, ball washers and other course accessories also go a long way toward presenting a distinctively appealing golfing experience. Take the old City Center Municipal Golf Course in Oceanside, California, for example. City Center was about to close and disappear altogether until golf clothing magnate John Ashworth and a group of local investor friends recently came to the rescue, remaking and rebranding the 4,454-yard par 66 course as Goat Hill Park in distinctive style.

"The Goat", as it's now affectionately called, will never compare architecturally to the great courses of the world, but it's become intriguingly more appealing thanks to a cool new logo that golfers proudly wear on stylish shirts and hats made by Ashworth's new Linksoul apparel brand. As well you'll find unique hole and tee markers, and a massive tree removal project that included recycling timber to make unique benches from indigenous trees.

Golfers are flocking to "The Goat" again.

I actually expect the current rate of attrition to benefit golf and course architecture in the long run. Those unsustainable courses that are closing today will make room for new, more sensible golf course developments tomorrow. But in the meantime, we should be properly focused on improving existing courses in emulation of those places that have defied contemporary odds. ■

Based in Toronto, Jeff Mingay is one of Canada's best-known restoration architects. He's worked on a number of new projects in Canada alongside designer Rod Whitman, including Sagebrush, Blackhawk, and Cabot Links.



Goat Hill Park's redesigned logo and unique tee markers.



*Elderberry black lace with
Hydrangea paniculata, Muskoka
Lakes G & CC clubhouse.*

Timing And Shrubs

Key to Maximum Aesthetic Value During High Traffic Times

Happy spring everyone! I imagine most of you are excited to see what the 2016 season will bring and what you can bring to the 2016 season. At this very moment, I am watching the Masters and there is still unfortunately snow on the ground outside. The Masters is the only golf tournament I will make an effort to sit and watch all of the competition.

I enjoy playing golf and respect the game at the professional level, but I am not a golf purist. However, I do have a strong appreciation for golf course design.

To me, Augusta National Golf Club is the perfect golf property; now remember this is just my opinion, and, as you know, I just admitted to not being a golf purist. As a horticulturist/landscape tech, I find Augusta National Golf Club to be the perfect world - mature trees, beautiful flowers from shrubs to annuals, green grass, nice crisp lines and a totally weed free property. One of the challenges of the Master's Tournament, which I have a deep respect for, is timing the condition of the entire property for one week. I am not just referring to cleanliness, turf health, overseeding, edging and line defining, although those are all important tasks that contribute to the standard achieved. I mean for the horticulturists involved in selecting species for the flowering shrubs and trees, and the other measures taken to get the flowering to peak for one specific week. One thing

The peak season for play on the golf course in my neck of the woods is July to August, so when it comes to flowering shrub selection or anything flowering for that matter, we select material that peaks in flowering for those two months.

to remember about a place like Augusta National Golf Club is that everything is intentional and, as such, plant material and location has been chosen for a reason. All the azaleas, and flowering Dogwoods, as beautiful as they are and as natural as it all appears to be, have been given the best possible care, and have been selected by flowering time and colour and were pruned at the proper times to maximize their appearance for one specific week.

The peak season for play on the golf course in my neck of the woods is July to August, so when it comes to flowering shrub selection or anything flowering for that matter, we select material that peaks in flowering for those two months. We do select things to bloom in the spring and fall as well to ensure the property looks good from the beginning of the season to the end, but the course looks its best in July and August. Members often approach me to suggest that we "plant Azaleas like they do at the Masters". My response is always I would absolutely love to, but nobody is here in the early spring when they flower to enjoy them. It is difficult to justify the installation costs and maintenance of something the majority of the membership will not have the chance to see or appreciate. Usually the members say, "Oh, they don't flower all year long?", and that is when the educational part of the job comes into play.

Continued on page 25...

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Continued from page 23...

Understanding the traffic patterns and usage of your property is important to strategically plan your plantings so there is always something with aesthetic value during high traffic times of the season. One of the biggest challenges is the fact that very few things, especially in the tree and shrub world, really bloom for any longer than two weeks. Although thanks to breeding programs and the development of new cultivars in nearly every species of flowering shrubs, there are so many amazing options now to help you achieve almost anything you can imagine. However, having a deep understanding of bloom times is important so you can plant shrubs that bloom shortly after another is coming out of bloom.

When it comes to shrubs with flower staying power the Butterfly bush begins to bloom from midsummer into autumn. Removing spent and nearly spent flowers promotes flower development. The variety 'White Profusion' is the latest to begin blooming approximately one to two weeks later than the other varieties. 'White Profusion' and 'Pink Delight' bear the largest blooms of the Butterfly bush family. The genus *Hydrangea* contains many species and cultivars that are all very long blooming. *Hydrangea Arborescens* blooms from summer into fall and *Hydrangea paniculata*'s bloom from the end of summer to the end of fall. *Potentilla* is another long blooming summer flowering shrub which begins in June and goes until the end of summer. Here is a list of other shrubs and when they bloom:

SPRING BLOOMING SHRUBS | Mid-April to early June

Forsythia, Magnolia, Azalea, Rhododendron, Pieris, witch hazel, flowering Quince, Viburnum, Serviceberry, Mock orange, Caragana, Flowering Dogwood.

LATE SPRING BLOOMING SHRUBS | Mid-May to mid-June

Lilac, Ninebark, *Spiraea vanhouttei*, additional *spirea* varieties.

EARLY SUMMER BLOOMING SHRUBS | Mid-June to August

Multiple *spirea* varieties, Summersweet varieties, *Potentilla*, weigela, false *spirea*.

LATE SUMMER BLOOMING SHRUBS | August into autumn

Roses of Sharon, *Hydrangea paniculata*, Butterfly bush, and caryopteris.

Not only have breeding programs produced vast options in flowering time, flower colour, heights, and growth rates, we also have incredible options in foliage colour. A few examples of shrub varieties with multiple foliage colours are Ninebark ('Diabolo' and 'Dart's Gold'), *Spiraea* ('Limemound', 'Flaming Mound', 'Goldflame' and 'Gold Mound'), Elderberry, and Weigela, Willows, Dogwoods and Barberry species.

The best shrub species to use for manicured hedges are Boxwood, White Cedar, Flowering Quince, *Spiraea Vanhouttei*, Yew species, Euonymus, Forsythia, and Burning Bush.

Thorny shrubs such as Russian Olive, Barberry, and Rugosa Rose make excellent security barriers. They are great for keeping unwanted visitors out of an area.

Whether you want Augusta backdrops or line defining hedges, there are many shrub species available to meet any of your landscape needs, for whenever your peak may be. ■



Chris Cumming CLP, Horticulturist
Muskoka Lakes Golf and Country Club
Port Carling, Ontario
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Above: *Spirea Vanhouttei* back of the 10th tee, Muskoka Lakes.

Below: *Hydrangea Arborescens* and *spirea goldflame*, Muskoka Lakes clubhouse.



MEMBER MOMENTS



1: Rainbow over the 16th green at Trafalgar Golf & Country Club. **Ken Tilt, Assistant Superintendent,** Trafalgar Golf & Country Club | **2:** A fox at Oshawa Golf & Curling Club **Matt Booth, Assistant Superintendent,** Oshawa Golf & Curling Club | **3:** Young deer at Richmond Hill Golf Club. **Peter Barnett, Superintendent,** Richmond Hill Golf Club | **4:** The 17th green at Burlington Golf & Country Club. **Cam Shaw, Assistant Superintendent,** Piper's Heath Golf Club.



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Board of Directors in 2006.

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Bob Burrows, President and Paul Scenna, Past President at the AGM.

ON THE MOVE: **Bob Heron** retired from Beacon Hall GC, **Paul Scenna** moved from Donalda Club to Beacon Hall GC and **Scott White** took over from **Paul Scenna** at Donalda Club. **Frank Guthro** to Forest GC, **Greig Barker** to Copetown Woods GC, **Jeff Allen** to Lake Joseph GC, **Greame Hughes** to Maples of Ballantrae GC, **Scott Jamieson** to Saugeen GC, **Jamie Camilucci** to Timberwolf GC, **Gary McBeath** to Royal Ontario GC, **Mark Pickering** to Bushwood GC, **Steve Phillips** to Ingersoll G&CC, **Wray Barrett** to Willow Valley GC, **Chelsea Stroud** to Muskoka Highland GL, **Dan Lavis** to Tarandowah GC, **Allen Couroux** to Bear Creek GC and **Jordan Stanev** to Barry's Bay GC.



Chelsea Stroud

Plant Products was pleased to announce the addition of **Gary Tate** as their new sales representative and **Jason Ireton** was promoted to turf sales manager.

Jason Harris left Plant Products to be the owner/superintendent of Orr Lake GC north of Barrie. Maple Turf Supply welcomed **Mark Schneider** and Hutcheson Sand and Gravel announced **Ian Bowen** and **Alex McDonald** were joining their team. **Colin White** was now the territory manager for Bayer Environmental Science and **Brad Chisholm** started at Masters Turf Supply. **Vanden Bussche Irrigation**

announced that **Jason Becket** was promoted to golf manager and **Kory Kopko** would be the new golf territory manager for Western, Ontario.



Colin White

ACHIEVEMENTS: **Cindy Charters**, who had been the Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation Executive Administrator for the past 15 years, retired.

CGSA History of Greenskeeping, a book written by **Gordon Witteveen**, was available for their 40th anniversary celebrations.

AWARDS: There were many 25 year members recognized at the Ontario Golf Course Management Conference and Trade Show: **Tim Clarridge**, Spring Lakes GC, **John Cunningham**, Mandarin G&CC, **Ed Farnsworth**, Deerhurst Resort, **Ted and Carmen DeCorso**, Victoria Park Valley GC, **Greg Aljoe**, Oviinbyrd GC, **Sid Witteveen**, Loch March G&CC and **Randy Hooper**, Beach Grove G&CC.

Congratulations went to **David Gourlay Sr.** who was this years recipient of the William Sansom Distinguished Service Award.



David Gourlay accepting the William Sansom DSA from James Wyllie.



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Ted and Carmen DeCorso awarded 25 year membership award plaques.

TOURNAMENTS: The Pro/Super Tournament was held at Weston G&CC hosted by **Rob Ackermann**. The winning team was from Parry Sound G&CC, **Jeff Alexander**, 2nd Cedar Brae G&CC, **Darren Little**, 3rd Trafalgar G&CC, **Mark Prieur**, and 4th Deer Creek G&CC, **Neil Acton**.

The Spring Field Day was held at St. Thomas G&CC hosted by **Wade Beaudoin**. **Scott Gardner**, Echo Valley GC, was low gross with 73.



Tim Clarridge, John Cunningham and Ed Farnsworth accepting 25 year membership award plaques.

The 38th Annual President's Day Tournament was held at Rosedale GC hosted by **Bob Burrows**. Winners were as follows: 1st **Peter Kinch**, Lambton G&CC, 2nd **Jarrold Barakett**, Deer Ridge GC and 3rd **Steve Muys**, Twenty Valley GC.

The Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament was held at The Club at Bond Head hosted by **Ian McQueen**. **Ron Craig** of Turf Care presented **Bill Fach**, Black Bear Ridge GC, with the George Darou trophy for the low superintendent over 50 years old.

EVENTS: Mississauga G&CC, Galt CC, and Oshawa G&CC celebrated their centennial years, and Westmount G&CC had their 75th anniversary.

The GCSAA Golf Industry Show scheduled for February in New Orleans LA, was moved to Atlanta, GA due to hurricane Katrina.

IN MEMORIAM: We regret to inform members of the passing of life member **Bruce Summers** of the Winchester GC, **Jeremy Thompson**, Superintendent of the Dominion G&CC and **Tom Yates**, former superintendent at Castlemore G&CC. ■



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How Many Millennials Does it Take to Change a Light Bulb?

by Doug Breen, Superintendent
GolfNorth Properties

A large percentage of the young people who we're presently employing in the golf industry, are Millennials. By most Sociologists definition, those are children born from 1980-2000. That means that they are 16 – 36 years old this summer, so "a large percentage" is actually quite an understatement. I spend a lot of time with them at work, I have two Millennials who sprang from my loins, and I coach High School Football. As an angry Generation X'er, you might expect me to launch into a diatribe about how useless they all are; but no, I actually quite like them. I certainly like them a lot more than their self-important Baby Boomer parents (tell me again about how you solved all the world's problems and had the best music/movies/TV/sports/everything). Contrary to what you might expect, I think that they're terrific employees – they're just radically different than what we're used to.

When I entered the workforce, I was expected to show up early, stay late, and do whatever I was told to do in between. I took jobs without even knowing what they would pay. It was lunchtime, when the Supervisor said it was, and lunch was over when he stood up and put his hat back on. Nobody told me if I was doing a good job – I just assumed that I was, because nobody was yelling at me. I never offered my opinion on anything, because nobody cared what I thought (and said so). You never made plans for at least two hours after work, in case you had to stay late. It didn't seem odd to me, because my parents (everybody's parents) treated us the same way.

By contrast, the Millennials were raised by Hippie Baby Boomers – who constantly reassured them of their importance, involved them in every family discussion, and gave them trophies just for showing up. The kid that you hired this spring – got to pick the family vacation spot, what was for dinner, and what kind of car they rode around in. When they tell you how you should run your golf course at the end of their first shift, they aren't being rude – they got to pick their parents vacations! Once I suggested that we ought to have hot dogs more often – my mom cried and my dad hit me. My point, is that the Millennials have come to look at the world in a remarkably different way, than those of us who have found ourselves in charge of it.

As a result, they'll want to see a full job description before they accept a job. They'll want to know when all their breaks will be, and when they can go home. They'll expect your salary on the first day, and your job after a year. They'll be suspicious that you aren't willing to tell them all of the company secrets. They'll ask how much money their co-workers make, and don't lie to them, because they've already exchanged that information on their phones while you were getting a coffee. But none of these things are inherently a barrier to performance in the workplace. I actually find that after spending a little time explaining why something needs doing, following up with constructive criticism, and praising success – that they work extremely hard, will constantly try to make things better, and take far more pride in the golf course, than we did. How could we, when we were slogging along with our heads down? It's not bad – it's just different.

So how many Millennials does it take to change a light bulb? Just one – but they'll need a clear understanding of why the bulb needs changing, the old bulb will need to be recycled, the new bulb will need to be more efficient and produced in a responsible/sustainable manner, they will share pictures of themselves changing the light bulb on social media while they're doing it, they will have consulted with ten friends and the internet on the best way to change light bulbs, they will do it on their schedule not yours, and quite frankly, they'd prefer to do it in a group. After the fact, they will expect you to notice that they changed the light bulb, give them feedback on their work, and expect public recognition of their efforts. Then they will tell you why you should have different light fixtures. ■



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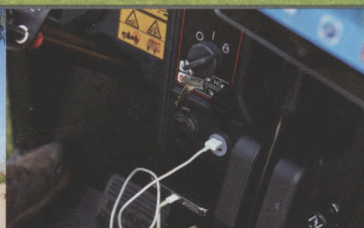
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