

AUGUST 2017

# ONCOURSE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

ONTARIO GOLF SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## Work-Life Balance

It **IS** achievable!



### ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

When the final green is cut:  
Life after golf

Pro/Super Challenge Recap

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Cory Janzen  
OGSA President

I am saddened to write this, but on behalf of the Board, our thoughts and prayers go out to the family, friends, and co-workers of Paul Brown of Sarnia Golf & Curling Club. This tragic occurrence has deeply affected many of our members. To honour Paul, the OGSA Board has decided to name the trophy for the Assistants Tournament after him, henceforth it will be known as the Paul Brown Memorial Trophy. Paul's son and OGSA member Greg Brown, helped organize the tournament for several years, and Paul has mentored many assistants over the years, so we feel this to be a fitting tribute.

The summer is once again flying by and I hope you are taking the time to enjoy it not only at the golf course but with friends and family as well. Most courses have been in great shape despite the cool, wet conditions. Drainage, dollar spot and weed control have been ongoing challenges this year. Just prior to the Canada Day long weekend, several properties along the central and lower Grand River experienced catastrophic flooding after a massive rainfall event in the northern part of the watershed. The cleanup is ongoing and the wet year hasn't helped.

The conference is always on our mind and several sponsorships have been sold. There are definitely more available and I encourage all associate members to contact Sally to discuss the possibilities. Remember that we are all in this together, and every dollar donated goes into making the show better.

A big thanks to Justin Parsons who retired from the ONCourse Committee as Editor. Justin spent many years elevating the quality of the magazine and the submitted material. Sally and her very capable staff have taken on these duties in the interim, while we assess our needs going forward.

Thank you to all who participated in the salary survey. Results are currently being compiled and the full report will be available soon. Hopefully, you find the results useful as you start preparing budgets for next season. ■



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## EDITORIAL MESSAGE



By Sally Ross  
OGSA Executive  
Manager

Our theme for this issue is Work, Life and Balance. As we head into the dog days of summer, there is no better time to consider this subject.

Cory Janzen gets right to the point, as he reflects on his journey to find a better balance, by sharing his experiences and speaking to others to find out how they balance managing the course, family life and outside interests simultaneously.

The subject is also intertwined in other articles and pictures included in this issue of *ONCourse*.

We garner more insight about long time member and Past President, Rhod Trainor, who was faced with work-life decisions early in his career, both with his June wedding, and then with the birth of his child, which coincided with a scheduled job interview at Hamilton Golf & Country Club. There is no better way to display what we all know, that there is no stopping Mother Nature.

So whether it is sailing, fishing, coaching

or motorcycle riding, it's important to get away from the course, spend time with family and friends and recharge, to ensure you can make it through the season.

'Life after Golf' for a few of our retired members is examined by Robert Thompson, who enlightens us on how some of our retirees dealt with change in their lives, whether it was voluntary, or thrust upon them earlier than they expected.

The Annual Plant Products Slo-Pitch Tournament took place this past July, and it's great to see many of our members off the course and on the baseball diamond.

Our member moments page is self explanatory. Many courses setting up Canada Day displays to celebrate our country's sesquicentennial, these pictures clearly display how our members consistently go above and beyond, despite the many demands of their position.

Barry Endicott examines 50 years ago in 'Looking Back'. A tribute to Robert Moote, who passed away in June of this year, 50 years after having served as President of the OGSA. Robert became a member of the OGSA in 1960. ■



*Remember to take some time off!*

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## SUPERINTENDENT RECOGNITION



Jason Andress, Superintendent at Elmira GC, accepts the plaque with his wife Alison, and children Delaney and Torin for hosting the Ontario Junior (U19) Girls Championship.



OGSA Past President, Mark Prieur (L), presents to Duncan Kirk, Assistant Superintendent at Tangle Creek G&CC, and the grounds and maintenance crew for hosting the Canadian University/College Championship.



Tom Kinsman (L), Superintendent at Whistle Bear GC, and host of the LPGA Manulife Classic, receives a plaque from OGSA President, Cory Janzen.



OGSA Secretary Treasurer, Jason Boyce (L) presents a plaque to Ryan Sloan, Superintendent, Brockville CC, for hosting Future Links Ontario Championship.



Andrew Nieder (L), Superintendent at Deerhurst Resort, and host of the Investors Group Ontario Mid-Amateur, receives a plaque from OGSA Past President, Thom Charters.



Past OGSA Director and 45 year member, Lamont Anderson (L), presents a plaque to Dave Girard, Superintendent, Ambassador GC, for hosting the Investors Group Ontario Men's Amateur Championship.

## CONFERENCE 2018

We are hard at work on the details of the event and by the time this issue goes to print, registration will be open. Once again, we have a super early bird rate for golf course personnel for the month of August. Please refer to "Clippings" for the latest updates on registration dates and all other news related to the conference.

### WELCOME to Our New Members

**Delky Dozzi**..... Class C  
Nobleton Lakes Golf Club

**Ryan Judd**..... Class F  
Springfield Golf & Country Club

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS UPCOMING 2017 OGSA Tournament & Events

**OGSA Seniors Tournament**  
Mono Hills CC, Orangeville, ON  
Thursday, August 10, 2017

**Assistants Tournament**  
Springfield G&CC, Guelph, ON  
Thursday, September 21, 2017

**GBGSA Year End Finale / OGSA Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament**  
Rocky Crest GC, MacTier, ON  
Tuesday, September 26, 2017



## 24TH ANNUAL PLANT PRODUCTS SLO-PITCH TOURNAMENT

### TURNER FIELDS, HAMILTON, ONTARIO

*By Trevor Morvay, Turf Sales, Plant Products*

If you listen to any sport radio stations, or watch any TV telecast, you will hear sportscasters state that dynasties no longer exist in sports. Obviously they have never attended the Plant Products Annual Slo-Pitch Tournament. On Saturday, July 29th, golf courses from across Ontario took to the diamonds at Turner Field in Hamilton to try and knock off RattleSnake Point, the tournament Champions of the past four events. After some very strong efforts from perennial entrants such as SouthBrook, Beacon Hall, and Deer Creek, and new comers Dundas Valley, our final still consisted of powerhouses Cardinal Golf and RattleSnake Point. In usual fashion the final was played with a very high level of skill and after four years of these teams playing each other in the final, a level of respect and familiarity was displayed as well. In the end RattleSnake Point came out on top for the fifth straight year.

We hope that everyone enjoyed the day at the diamonds, and we look forward to seeing everyone again next year for the 24th year. Plant Products would like to give a big thank you to the Ancaster Optimist Club for providing lunch to all participants and to the teams themselves. This tournament does not happen without you and we appreciated your support and effort to make it happen year after year. See you next year! ■



*2017 Slow Pitch game action.*



*Rattlesnake Point GC wins for the 5th straight year.*



*Cardinal GC – second place team.*



*Burlington G&CC plays against Dundas Valley G&CC.*

## In Memory of Robert Moote

*By Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager*

- 1948 Graduate from University of Guelph OAC in Ornamental Horticulture.
- Member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects
- Certified Golf Course Superintendent with the GCSAA
- 1967 OGSA President
- 2008 Honorary Director Emeritus with the Stanley Thompson Association.

Mr. Moote, Bob to his friends worked with Stanley Thompson at the Cutten Club and travelled with him throughout Canada and the United States and Jamaica. In 1952 he worked for Central Mortgage and Housing



*Mark Prieur, OGSA Board Member (L), presents Robert (Bob) Moote, OGSA Past President, with his commemorative 50 year member gift.*

Corporation (CMHC) in Ottawa and Montreal. He worked with Robbie Robinson designing golf courses, as well as landscaping for Alexander Graham Bell Museum, in Beddeck.

He went to Oakdale Golf Course to build nine holes and stayed there for 20 years from 1957 – 1977. During this time Bob started the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium and it was held at Oakdale for a number of years before it moved to the University of Guelph. He also worked with the RCGA while at Oakdale for 5 years looking after national conferences.

He formed his own company Moote & Associates, working with his brother David and then later formed R.F. Moote & Associates, and continued to work with his son and brother in the business. ■



## Hamilton Golf & Country Club

232 Golf Links Road,  
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4 South

Courtesy: Brent Long, Communications Coordinator

Member Since 1983

## Rhod Trainor

Superintendent, Hamilton Golf & Country Club

*By Jordan Kitchen, Assistant Superintendent  
Hamilton Golf and Country Club*

### About the Course

Hamilton Golf & Country Club is a 27-hole parkland style course nestled in the heart of Ancaster. Its West-South layout was designed by renowned English golf course architect Harry S. Colt, a nationally and internationally ranked course.

**Architect:** Harry S. Colt

**Type of Club:** Private

**Number of Holes:** 27 holes plus a 9-hole short course

**Number of Rounds Annually:** 30,000

**Practice Facility:** Driving range, chipping green and full length practice hole

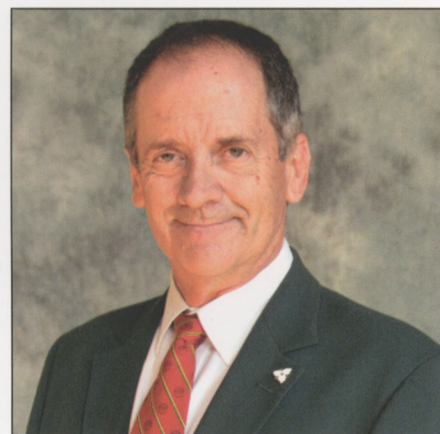
### Major Challenges

Finding staff that want to work outside has been increasingly challenging, as well as managing greens with no drainage, the new weather pattern of extremes.

For 27 years, the name Rhod Trainor has been synonymous with Hamilton Golf and Country Club. However, very few are aware that the partnership almost didn't happen.

"I had applied for the superintendent's job at Hamilton and was scheduled for an interview," says Rhod. "But the day of the interview (wife) Sue went into labour, and I had to call from the hospital and cancel the interview."

Luckily for all involved, the interview was re-scheduled for the next day and so began the long-term relationship between Rhod Trainor and Hamilton Golf and Country Club. Even with three Canadian Opens ('03,'06,'12), The duMaurier Seniors ('96) and the Canadian Amateur ('94), under his belt, Rhod remains humble about his accomplishments at Hamilton and admits, looking back, that a turf career had originally not been his number one career choice. While attending University of Guelph, Rhod became involved in competitive



*Rhod Trainor, Golf Course Superintendent,  
Hamilton Golf & Country Club.*

diving, and even after graduating in 1976 continued to coach and dive at the Etobicoke Diving Club, his reason for staying in Ontario.

Even though diving had become a passion, golf had been a part of Rhod's life for a very long time. He and his siblings were air force kids and their dad's career as a Captain in the Canadian Armed Forces took them all across Canada.

"We never spent more than 4 years in a



## In the Hot Seat

**Q:** Favourite golf tournament?

**A:** Masters

**Q:** Favourite piece of turf equipment?

**A:** My fast-electric golf cart

**Q:** Favourite golf course?

**A:** Top 5: Hamilton G&CC, St. Thomas, Essex, Devil's Paintbrush, Glen Abbey

**Q:** Ultimate foursome?

**A:** Any of the three buddies I currently play golf with

**Q:** Favourite Movie:

**A:** True Lies

**Q:** Lowest round and where?

**A:** I don't keep score

single place," remembers Rhod.

Sports became a way for the Trainor children to make new friends during their many moves. Rhod's mother, a great athlete in her own right, passed on her love of baseball, golf, and curling to her son. She became his first golf instructor, and Rhod grew to love golf as much as his mother did.

In the mid 1970s, living in Nova Scotia, Rhod played golf daily at a local golf course, before his shift working at a grocery store. It was a mutual friend of Rhod's dad, local golf course superintendent, Joe Bartkow, who first offered Rhod a job on the Greenwood Golf Course.

"Joe said, 'Trainor - you're here all the time anyway, why don't you come work here?'," remembers Rhod.

It wasn't long after this that Joe started asking Rhod if he had ever considered a career in Turf Management and told him about a turf course at the University of Guelph in Ontario.

"I mostly applied so people would stop bugging me about it," says Rhod. "I never imagined I'd get in!"

But much to his surprise a letter arrived, accepting Rhod into Guelph's turf program. In that moment he decided, "I'm going to Guelph." He traded in his motorcycle for

his dad's Volkswagen Beetle and set off for Guelph.

After graduation and realizing a diving career was not in his future, Rhod took an assistant's position at Wyldewood Golf & Country Club in Oakville. This move worked out for Rhod in more than ways than one. It was there that he met his future wife, Sue. By 1979, Rhod had moved on to be Superintendent at Chippewa Country Estates, in Southampton. During his first year in Southampton, Rhod got married on June 21st, and subsequently took a week off for his honeymoon.

"I had great and understanding owners," notes Rhod.

In the fall of 1982 Rhod took over the Superintendent's role at St. Thomas Golf and Country Club, a golf course that continues to hold a special place in his heart. It was here where Rhod was able to hone his craft and develop as a superintendent.

As much as his career at Hamilton Golf and Country Club remains a passion, Rhod has always worked hard at balancing his personal and professional lives. Now a proud grandpa to Elizabeth, Rhod had three young children at home, Katie, Michael and Kurtis, when he first took the job in Hamilton in 1990.

"Living close to the golf course is how you make the balance work," says Rhod. When the kids were younger, he enjoyed the flexibility of being able to pop home for lunchtime or after school visits. "On

weekends I'd be up, at the course for several hours, and by the time I'd get home, the kids would be barely up having breakfast."

To this day, Rhod often joins Sue at home for breakfast - a welcome break after particularly hectic mornings.

Those who know Rhod only through the turf industry, maybe unaware that away from the course, Rhod is an accomplished curler who can be found many evenings through the fall and winter at the Dundas Granite Club. It's the same qualities that make Rhod an exemplary superintendent, that hold him well on the curling ice. Rhod's even keeled temperament is a constant, no matter if it's a sizable win or a disastrous 4-end walk-off-the-ice loss. Curling with long-time friends and enjoying an after-game drink is what the game is all about for Rhod. But don't mistake his calm demeanour for a lack of competitive edge or skill. In addition to winning major bonspiels, over the years Rhod won the 2015 Men's Provincial Masters and travelled to Whitehorse for the national Master's competition.

You can't be at one golf course for 27 years and not realize that both the turf



*Rhod has enjoyed riding motorcycles as a pastime since he was 14.*

## What You Need to Know

**Predominant Grass Type:** Poa annua

**Predominant Soil Type:** Sandy loam

**Type of Greens:** Native pushup

**Course Length:** 6,000 yds

**Size of Property:** 300 acres

**Size of Greens:** 3.5 acres

**Size of Tees:** 3.5 acres

**Size of Fairways:** 40 acres

industry in general, and Hamilton Golf and Country Club, in particular, have undergone much change over the years. Upon arrival, he noted that the pump station needed immediate replacement, while water supply issues continued to plague the course until the construction of the new reservoir in

Continued on page 12 ...



Continued from page 11...

2010. In 1990, Hamilton's turf department was significantly underfunded, especially when it came to maintaining and purchasing equipment. Today, Rhod houses a barn of up-to-date and sophisticated turf equipment that is well maintained by his two mechanics.

There are other issues that haven't changed all that much.

"One of the things I noticed right away was the sheer number of trees around the greens," says Rhod. "Hamilton had a reputation of losing turf year after year mostly because the greens were shaded by so many trees."

And thus, began Rhod's efforts to educate the membership on the merits of good tree management.

"I really had to change attitudes and teach members that trees are a detriment to good turf," says Rhod.

The tree conversation is still ongoing as Hamilton enters into its most current challenge. The severe winter damage of 2014 that was suffered by many courses in Southern Ontario, began internal discussions about what the future of Hamilton Golf and Country Club will look like. Rhod has been integral in facilitating the conversation on the club's new master plan put together by golf course architect, Martin Ebert of Mackenzie & Ebert. If approved, the new master plan could see Hamilton undergo an exciting construction project that would create new greens, bunkers and irrigation system.

"Our infrastructure here is aging and has many deficiencies," says Rhod. "There are 5 different types of greens here at Hamilton – some original pushup greens to a handful

of USGA greens. The irrigation system and bunkers are also aging and under stress."

Today, as Rhod reflects on the lessons from his golf journey from Chippewa to Hamilton he says, "It's all about learning to manage people. The sheer size of the operation precludes you from being able to do everything yourself, so learning to delegate is important."

Rhod's 23-year assistant Tracy Fowler, has been a constant during Rhod's tenure at Hamilton. Tracy's unique ability to manage

the day to day workings of job lists and staff needs, gives Rhod the time needs to focus on larger visionary tasks, committee work and budgets. There have been many other assistants over the years who have moved on to have successful careers in the industry.

Rhod has made a profound impact on Hamilton Golf & Country Club and on the turf industry in general, all impressive accomplishments for a career that almost didn't happen. ■

**"My success and longevity as a superintendent can be linked directly back to Rhod.**

**As a young assistant mentoring under Rhod, I learned many solid foundations to build upon in my own career. He taught me that a well-rounded Super needs to excel in areas beyond agronomy. These include: confidently making tough decisions, taking personal responsibility for those decisions, member relations, communication and politics.**

**In a business where Mother Nature calls the shots, Rhod sees opportunity where others see disaster.**

**While Rhod and HG&CC are synonymous, I feel his true legacy is in developing the many individuals who have gone on to successful careers in the industry."**

*Paul Evenden  
Superintendent  
Brantford Golf and Country Club*

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Science in the Department  
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at Pinehurst Resort

Technology Session

**J. Paul Robertson**  
Superintendent and Project  
Manager at Victoria  
Golf Club





# Pro/Super Challenge Recap



Scott Brook (L), Host Superintendent from Osprey Valley Golf, receives a plaque from Mark Prieur, OGSA Past President.



Sean Gunn (R), Superintendent at The Country Club, accepts a cheque for winning the 50/50 draw.



1st Place Team - Superintendent, Richard Butler (L) and Golf Professional, Brent Goodman of St. Andrew's East Golf Club.



Trevor Hay (L), host Golf Professional from Osprey Valley Golf, receives a plaque.

By Sally Ross,  
OGSA Executive Manager

The OGSA's Annual Pro/Super Challenge took place on Monday June 5, 2017, at Osprey Valley Golf – Heathlands, hosted by Superintendent Scott Brook and Golf Professional Trevor Hay.

54 Golfers took part in the event and OGSA Past President

Mark Prieur acted as Emcee.

Superintendent Richard Butler and Golf Professional Brent Goodman, from St. Andrew's East GC, won first place with a net best ball score of 62. Following with a score of 64, was Superintendent Mike Powers and Golf Professional Kevin Bailie, from National Pines GC. In a close third place, with a score of 65 was the team from Eagles Nest GC,

Superintendent Jason Crawford and Golf Professional Joey Pavone.

Mike Giblin from Willow Valley GC, had the longest drive for the Superintendents, and Padraig Kelly from Ladies GC of Toronto, had the longest drive for the Golf Professionals. Closest to the pin winners were Richard Butler and Brent Goodman, both from St. Andrew's East GC.

There were no skins, so a random team draw was done, and the \$500.00 prize was split by five teams

The prize for the 50/50 draw was just over \$200.00, with Sean Gunn, Superintendent at The Country Club, as the lucky winner.

Despite cloudy, cool and damp conditions, the rain held off and a great time was had everyone in attendance. ■



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# Work-Life Balance

## It IS achievable!

By Cory Janzen, Superintendent, Westmount Golf & Country Club

**W**ork-life balance. What does it mean, and how does one achieve it? There are many perspectives on this topic, and a lot of information readily available. The truth is that it means different things to different people, depending on what stage they are at in their career, as well as other factors like their family situation and commitments. One thing is certain, we work in an industry that has the potential to adversely affect our family life, particularly in the summer.

In writing this article, I have considered my own experiences, and have also spoken to some other superintendents. While these stories may not align directly with your own experiences, it is my intention to get you thinking about work-life balance, why it is important, and how you can work towards achieving it.

In my case, the only job I have ever had, is working outside on a golf course. I started working when I was 17, which means that I

have had 30 years' experience in the golf industry. There are many fantastic aspects about our profession, such as working outside, making capital improvements, interacting with colleagues, playing golf on great courses, and so forth, but there is also a dark side. Those who are considered to be the most successful in our profession tend to be detail oriented, perfectionists. This can lead to problems with attaining work-life balance.

Much of my golf industry experience has been comprised of working for several 'old school' superintendents, who equated time spent at work with success. Let me be the first to say that I am not judging anyone, and we all make decisions that we may later come to regret. My experience over the years has been overwhelmingly positive, but to deny the negative aspects, would not be realistic.

I can remember early in my career feeling unable to ask for a day off, for any reason. You were expected to be at work, unless you were in the hospital. For example, someone I worked with scheduled their own marriage to coincide with their weekend off, and they





*Ray Duke (Dlugokecki) and his wife Annette, biking in Mount Tremblant, Quebec.*

didn't take a honeymoon until the winter, not taking even one day off! The idea was that even one solitary day off, was a luxury that could not be afforded. The same mindset applied to leaving work on time; we would never plan anything for two hours (or more) after the regular end of the 8-hour work day. Leaving on time was seen as weak, and sometimes resulted in passive aggressive ridicule - there was always one more thing to do before leaving for the day. Of course, that is true in almost any profession, work will expand to fill the time you allow it to, but at what cost? At the time, I was young, unmarried, and I had lots of spare time after work. But, working 60 or more hours per week does not make anyone better at their job. In fact, it probably makes them worse. There is no way you can be sharp when working that many hours, and doing so could possibly compromise safety. The culture at the time was that everyone must go through the same experiences as the prior generation, this was considered 'paying your dues', and there were no exceptions. It was, and to some extent still is, seen as a badge of honour to work really long hours.

We now are heading into an era where work-life balance is important across all professions. We can't tell ourselves that our jobs are different for whatever the reason, because this is not the case. Most of us work year-round, so the excuse of getting the winter off to balance things out doesn't fly. The 'old school' type of thinking is slowly coming to an end, but we still need to ask ourselves how we can improve. Earlier in my career, I tended to emulate the superintendents I had worked for previously in many ways. After all, they were successful and their reputations had stood the test of time, so why not act similarly? This meant no in-season holidays for any staff, including myself. But what slowly happened over time was that good employees

would have really good reasons for needing a day or two off and I started begrudgingly, to allow them to take the time.

What stood out after several of these episodes, was that all my fears about the golf course suffering in some way were unfounded. Staffing has to be managed so there are not multiple people off at the same time but that is

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Those who are considered to be the most successful in our profession tend to be detail oriented, perfectionists. This can lead to problems with attaining work-life balance.

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entirely possible. Does it mean that I, or one of my assistants might have to do a job that ordinarily we wouldn't do to fill in? Absolutely, but there are positives that can come out of that too. I know from the number of returning staff we have that these changes in management strategy are appreciated. I think earlier in my career, I lost some good people by being too rigid. We now have built an excellent staff base which in turn allows me to be even more confident when taking time off. The small steps taken over time to make things better for my employees, have actually made it better

for me as well. How great is that?

Getting to the point where I first took time off in the summer was difficult for me, however, I was determined that I would make time for my family. A situation arose where my family were at a cottage



*Daughter of Jennifer Pendrith; Brooklyn, and family pet Clover, visiting the course.*

Continued on page 18 ...





*Cory Janzen coaching his son's hockey team.*



in Muskoka for a week, and my kids kept asking me if I could come, and I kept telling them maybe, and then feeling guilty about it. In the end, I (anxiously) went and was really glad I did. There was a certain amount of guilt and trepidation initially because of all my past experiences. But I am here to tell you that my fears were unfounded, and whenever I take 2 or 3 days off, the course looks exactly the same as it did when I left, and sometimes better. I am now a much different manager, and a happier person in general. Are there days and weeks where we work more than normal to complete an important task or host a big event? Of course, but the scales of work and family are much closer to being balanced for me and that helps to alleviate the pressure both at work and at home.

It is unfortunate it's taken me this far along in my career to realize it, but it is empowering for me and is also important training for those left in charge during my absence.

Taking a few days off leaves you refreshed and ready to attack the job with a new perspective. It goes without saying that you do have to be responsible and ensure that the people you leave in charge when you are away are capable. If you don't have people you can rely on, it should be a priority to get them trained and able to handle things for a few days on their own. Try it and I am confident you will agree with me.

**I spoke to a few other superintendents to try and gauge where the industry is currently at:**

#### **KEITH BARTLETT**

Keith Bartlett (now with Bayer Environmental Science) realized that he had allowed work to define who he was and it became all encompassing. He now works for Bayer and they truly believe that work/life balance is critical and endorse that through their mission statement to be sure team members understand what is truly important. Bartlett says, "I now see how it should have been and like other things I have recently learned, I wish I had understood this sooner. Fortunately, I have a second chance with my family and working for a great company like Bayer. I hope superintendents

learn this and take the time to recharge through the summer and be mindful that balance is important. Family time and personal time is fleeting."

#### **ROB BELL**

Rob Bell from Copper Creek Golf Club says, "We had a high turnover year, and we met as a management group to see what we could offer our staff. Time off was huge for students and semi-retired staff, so we hired more staff and introduced more part time hours. The extra bodies allowed us to accommodate time off requests. Turnover is far less, and summer burnout isn't as big an issue. It's hard to keep staff if you aren't a little flexible with time off, we are dealing with a different work force now." Bell, who admittedly would like to find a little more work-life balance himself, goes on to say, "I've become better at it, but there is still room for improvement."

#### **JENNIFER PENDRITH**

Jennifer Pendrith from Kawartha Golf & Country Club, has a unique perspective: she started her career at a golf club where time off was frowned upon during the golf season, and working 12-hour days was expected. Ten years into her role as superintendent, she had a baby on the way and maternity leave to plan for. Pendrith says, "The idea of taking an entire year off seemed completely unmanageable to me. I tried to develop a modified leave plan where I would be back part-time and involved in managing the course after 3 months, and then back full-time after 6 months. The club insisted I take the full year to spend with my daughter. I'm so thankful it worked out that way and I wouldn't trade that year for anything." Pendrith admits that during the busy summer months, it can be challenging to find the right balance between commitments to the golf course and spending time with family, but making the effort to keep that balance ends up helping you do a better job at both. She's adopted that same philosophy with her staff by being flexible with time off during the season. It has made for a happier, more motivated team that doesn't suffer from that typical August burnout.





#### RAY DLUGOKECKI

Ray Dlugokecki from Springfield Golf & Country Club states that, "I make sure I have enough staff and that they are cross trained to do multiple jobs." His philosophy is that family comes first, and he is trying to instill that idea into his staff as well. He has no problem taking short periods of time off during the season, and allows his staff to do so as well, as long as it's one person at a time. Ray says, "I firmly believe you need to work hard to have a good life, but you do not always have to sacrifice family life because of it. The old days are gone as far as I'm concerned. No one asks you how many hours you put in as long as the course is good and no one thanks you for putting in 8, 10, or 12 hours anyway!"

#### AL SCHWEMLER

Al Schwemler from Toronto Golf Club, says that like many of us, he started out working for superintendents who allowed minimal time off while the golf course was open. Looking back to when he was promoted to a superintendent position of his own, he now realizes that, "We depended too much on ourselves, and didn't give enough responsibility to our assistants. Now assistants are basically superintendents who are well qualified to run the course operations for a few days." Unless there are big events on, Al will allow himself and his staff 3-day weekends over the summer providing its one person at a time. Al doesn't have children but values time away from the course with his wife and friends, usually with a fishing rod somewhere nearby.

Still think you can't take any time off during the season? Health Canada commissioned a study to look into work-life balance entitled, "Reducing Work-Life Conflict: What works? What doesn't?" Google that title if you really want to learn more about this topic. Be warned that it is a massive review, but there are some great points made. Hopefully, you can give it a scan while having a coffee on a dock at a cottage sometime this summer. You'll be glad you did. ■



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# When the final green is cut: Life after golf



By Robert Thompson

Paul Dermott didn't intend to finish his golf career in 2005. Dermott thought he was doing well at York Downs Golf and Country Club, the private club located north of Toronto. Sure, he was aware there were issues; he had disputes over budgets and spending with then General Manager, Leonardo De La Fuente. Dermott had concerns about how some of the club's financial operations were being undertaken, but says that didn't affect how he conducted his job. He soon recognized De La Fuente, who would later admit to defrauding the club of \$600,000, wasn't his biggest supporter. Yet, he says he brought his best to work and York Downs was recognized for what it was—a golf course in exceptional condition.

Then, quite suddenly in 2005, Dermott found himself out of a job. He was 60 years old, and had no idea what his next move would be. After all, Dermott was used to spending a long stretch at a club; he'd run agronomy at Oakdale, for example, for nearly 30 years before making the move to York Downs. He also recognized the business was trending younger, and the chances of a veteran superintendent finding a new gig after unceremoniously losing his previous high-profile job was unlikely. Without any planning, Dermott faced the prospect his career was over. He'd have to figure out what life after golf would entail.

"I'd had enough at that point," he explains on a call from his home. "I lived in Etobicoke at the time, and wanted to make a change. I played golf at Brampton for a year after York Downs finished, and then it was time to make a real change."

Dermott faced the same situation many veteran superintendents must address—what do you do when you leave the golf business, whether or not it is on your own terms? Can you still enjoy the game? Do you have other interests to keep you engaged? Do you interact

with the golf business or make a clean cut and walk away? After the last green is cut, and the course is put to bed for the fall, what is the next step in your life?

Not surprisingly, the answers are never singular.

"I spent most of my life at the golf course—I'd been doing it for decades," says Barry Endicott, who worked at Nobleton Lakes outside of Toronto, helping lead the renovation of the course with Carrick Design. "You take ownership of the course, and you have a hard time walking away from that."

Endicott left Nobleton Lakes in 2003, and though he didn't return to working as a course superintendent, he wasn't prepared to leave the golf industry either. Finding a job at 55 as a superintendent was an obstacle.

"No one was looking to hire someone at that age," he says. "A lot of clubs are looking to hire someone younger and pay a little less. Saving money is just part of the business now."

But Endicott did apply his skills in other ways, joining Evans Golf Group to help on the construction side of the business during the final wave of new course construction that ended with the economic slowdown of 2008. Endicott worked on Dragons Fire near Burlington, Ont., before finally shutting down his career in 2012. He admits moving on from golf was a challenge.

"For four or five years after I left, I really missed [working as a superintendent], which I think is the case with many of us," he explains. "But when I see what superintendents are working with now in terms of staff and budgets, I'm glad I'm not doing it every day."

Bob Heron, who spent 16 years at Beacon Hall in Aurora, Ont. before retiring in 2006, says distancing himself from the course and his co-workers took time.

"There's a lot of self-satisfaction that you get out of growing grass and maintaining a course," he says. "And after I left, I really missed the





*Barry Endicott and his daughter.*



*Bob Heron and wife Carolyn, relaxing in Florida for the winter.*



*Paul Dermott getting ready to build another house on property.*

staff. I had a great staff at Beacon. And you miss the good members, the ones who are supportive and helpful.”

Finding something to replace the connection most superintendents have with their job, the course, and their staff is a challenge. The superintendents interviewed for this story talked about working long hours seven days a week in the summer. While the job was their passion, they often envied friends who had time to sneak away for a long weekend at the cottage in the heat of July, or sneak out on an

early Friday to go fishing.

“You have to be incredibly committed,” says Pelino Scenna, 77, who spent 22 years as superintendent at Burlington Golf and Country Club before retiring a decade ago. “I never took a day off. It is an attitude.”

But Heron says he always looked at his friends who could spend

Continued on page 22...

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*Pelino Scenna enjoys a quiet moment in the garden.*



*Paul Dermott, ready to go to Cruise Night.*

days in the summer on holiday and wondered what it would be like.

"I really envied those people, the ones who could go to cottages," he says. That led him to move to a cottage in Georgian Bay after his retirement.

Interestingly, the affection retired superintendents have for golf seems to vary. Several still remain very connected with the game, playing a handful of times a week during Ontario's summers, and often escaping to the U.S. during Canada's cold months. But distancing themselves from their jobs and the connections to the course, the clubs and the members, is often an issue. It is also hard to not return to their previous mindset and start looking at the agronomy of the course, and the maintenance practices of the club's superintendent.

"I go out and have fun, but I'll admit I notice everything—is there garbage out, how the turf is doing, all of that," says Dermott. That's true for Heron as well: "Some people play golf and remember the holes, I remember the conditioning and whether there were rocks in the bunkers."

Scenna, who received a lifetime membership at Burlington Golf and Country Club, plays the course three days a week. There have been two supers at the club since he retired (Dean Baker is the current superintendent), and while Scenna says he still worries about how Burlington will recover from the winter, he's learned to simply enjoy the experience of playing the course.

"I've never really quit going to the golf course, though I don't get there at 5:30 am anymore," Scenna says. "And when there's a problem at the club, I always say to Dean, 'Good it is your problem and not mine.' The members will ask what I think and my answer is the same—no comment. I'm a swinger of a club now, not a cutter of grass."

Some can break the connection to golf altogether. Dermott says he only plays a handful of times a year, and that's enough; he doesn't really miss it given how much of his life he dedicated to the game.

That said, perhaps it is part of their personalities, but few supers retire and sit by the beach. Those retiring in their fifties or sixties, as is the case with much of the Canadian population, still have a number

of productive years ahead. Most aren't content simply reflecting on the past—they are finding ways to keep themselves engaged for the future.

Endicott spends his winters working with disabled skiers, a challenge that's replaced growing grass for the turf veteran. It allows him to combine his passion for skiing with his desire to give back to the community, and he can be found assisting disabled skiers a couple of days a week in the winter. Heron winterized his cottage and moved permanently to Georgian Bay, with his finances on solid footing thanks to his wife, a financial planner.

"I don't get up nearly as early as I used to, but there's a lot of chores to do around the property—it keeps me busy," Heron says.

Dermott bought a small farm with 45 acres and works maintaining the property. "I have four to five acres of grass to cut, so that keeps me occupied," he says. More recently he's been working on the farm's barn and shop, restoring both.

But once a superintendent, always a superintendent. The industry veterans may not have to think about the challenges of an Ontario winter, or the issues with budgets and environmental issues on a daily basis, but they all still ponder the nuances of the job and the hurdles current superintendents face.

"You have to have a lot of patience to do the job and you constantly have to recognize the course isn't yours—it belongs to the members," says Scenna. "You're always working for someone."

Dermott understands why some younger superintendents have made the switch into sales or other parts of the golf industry.

"I admire them," he says. "I see these guys leaving to get involved in sales and you know they are making that change to have what might be called a regular life. But I was a greenskeeper—and it gets in your blood."

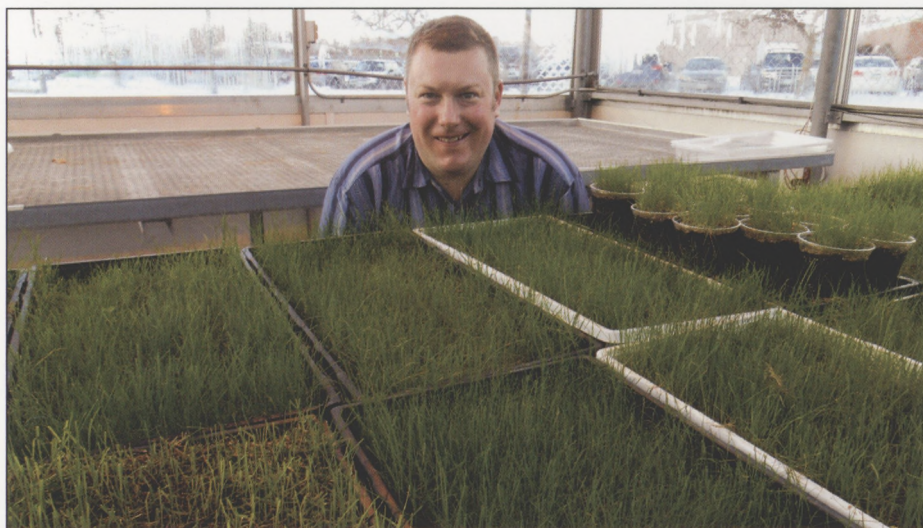
And for most of those who have retired and left the business, it will always be there. ■

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



# Technical Support Renewed



*John Watson in the Greenhouse.*

*By the Guelph Turfgrass Institute*

The University of Guelph is please to welcome a new technician in turfgrass science and management. John Watson enters this role with over 10 years of practical experience in the golf course industry, most recently at the Victoria Park Valley Golf Club in Puslinch. From 2008-2015 he held the position of Assistant Golf Course Superintendent and learned invaluable skills from turfgrass industry colleagues David DeCorso and Jason Sewell. Watson has been an OGSA member since 2006 and is also active in many other turfgrass industry organizations.

Watson will work with Dr. Eric Lyons, Professor and Director of the GTI and Dr. Katerina Jordan, Associate Professor to assist them with the day-to-day operations

of their research programs. The two researchers have significant programs with graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and research associates in addition to other technical support and undergraduate technicians.

"I am very excited about my new role with the turfgrass research program at the University of Guelph," says Watson, "I know that my practical experience from the golf industry, combined with my research background will allow me to excel in this new role."

Prior to this role, Watson was employed in the capacity of GTI communications coordinator where he disseminated current turfgrass information to industry. He was a key liaison and point person for GTI relations and the relocation project, managed GTI social media accounts,

and also implemented a strategy for turf related digital media to promote turfgrass and education at the University of Guelph. Watson also has served as an instructor in the Diploma in Turfgrass Management program teaching an applied case studies course.

"The GTI and the Department of Plant Agriculture recognize the importance of investing in technical support for research programs and we are very pleased to have John joining our team in this capacity," states Eric Lyons.

Watson has both a B.Sc. in Agriculture and a M.Sc. in Plant Agriculture from the University of Guelph. His M.Sc. research focused on nitrogen fertility of different species of putting green turf. "I am very excited about the future of turfgrass research at the University of Guelph and it is truly an honor to be a member of this niche research program" says Watson. "As we embark on a new era with the construction of a new state-of-the-art research facility, we must reflect on our past, look to the future and how we can best serve the turfgrass industry over the decades to come."

In his short time as Research Technician, Watson has initiated five industry service research projects and is currently assisting with two graduate student projects in the Jordan/Lyons lab group. "I have always had a passion for turf and I believe it is essential not only for recreational playing surfaces, but also has many important functions in our urban landscapes that are often overlooked. One way we can communicate these benefits is through education, training of graduate students, and conducting innovative research projects here at the University of Guelph." ■

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# PLANTING FOR SUCCESS



**D**ig a hole, place the plant in the hole, brush some soil around it, give your hands a wipe, and walk away. That sounds fairly easy, almost as if anyone with hands could do it. It is true that anyone can move some soil and throw a plant in a hole and walk away, but the results may not be quite what was expected. Unfortunately, nothing in life is as easy as it seems, especially for those who attempt to do something that they have no previous education or experience in doing themselves. For example, I used to attempt to do my own taxes, but I discovered that it was money and time which could be better spent on getting a professional to do it properly. For those who are interested a bit of information which will help guarantee that planting projects not just survive, but thrive, these are some practices the professionals use on their plants.

The principles for planting are pretty similar for small annual to a 10' tree. The first step is to identify the conditions of the site, which ensures that the correct species has been selected for the area. Next, consider several factors, such as the amount of full sun or shade (6+ hours is considered full sun), soil conditions, wind exposure, surrounding plant species, etc.

Once these factors have been considered and the right plant has been selected for the area, planning on how to water the new transplant is important, because depending on the size and type of plant, and the weather conditions, watering may be done often, even up to twice a week if it is hot. Also, the timing of when transplanting

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### The principles for planting are pretty similar for small annual to a 10' tree.

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needs to occur should be considered. Trees, shrubs and perennials should be planted early spring to mid spring, and/or early fall. Planting in the early spring will establish and create a decent root mass before the heat of summer arrives and causes stress on the plant.

Watering more in hotter temperatures is necessary to ensure that the plant moves forward with root production. Planting in early fall after the summer heat will give

the plant an opportunity to set root, which will help it survive winter. Also, being lazy when it comes to watering new transplants is not an option; even if it rains, that will not provide enough water. Typically, after a transplant, the root mass is limited to the canopy of the plant, which means that the rainfall won't even travel through the plant to be absorbed by the roots. Watering slowly and deeply, and putting the water right where the roots are located is important to ensure water absorption. To make sure that the plant is being watered directly into the root area, build a well around your new transplant just outside the canopy. Next, water within the well to the point of pooling but not breaching the well, then let the water soak into the soil, and do this repeatedly to help the water get deep, and soak around the root mass. Watering immediately after transplanting will help settle the soil around the roots which creates good root/soil contact. Mulching new transplants helps keep the soil cool and retain moisture; I like to leave the well open however, to allow any heavy rains to gather within the well and penetrate the soil.

Now you know what to do when you're ready to water, but before watering, there





are a couple of important steps to take. One step is being able to identify whether there is any pruning needed, for example, maybe some branches were damaged in shipping, or the plant is stretched from growing in tight quarters at the nursery, or perhaps the lower branches are hindering your ability to work comfortably around the base of the plant. Once any necessary pruning has been completed, it's time to remove the plant from its pot. This next step is pretty important; the solid mass of roots that have been coiling around within the pot will need to be loosened. Please do not be afraid to use a shard knife to slice through these roots to loosen the root ball up. This action will not kill the plant, but will save the plant.

If the plant, especially if it is a tree or shrub, is planted without loosening the rootball, it could be detrimental to the longevity of the plant. Firstly, it will not show signs of healthy growth, the growth that does exist will be slow, and eventually the plant will choke itself. The roots will continue to grow in a circle and will remain in the same area that they started growing, instead of growing out away from itself in search of water and nutrients. If the roots are really dense or extremely pot bound, use a tool to cut them; if the plant is not overly root bound, use your hands to massage the root ball loose and break up the circling of the roots. Sometimes the roots become

very dense at the bottom of the root ball, and can be an inch or two thick; try using a knife, handsaw or shovel to cut this entire mass off.

When it comes to trees that are in wire baskets, make sure to dig a big enough hole that will allow you to get in and around the ball with a pair of wire cutters, because you will want to remove as much of the wire and burlap as possible. For backfilling trees, the best practice is to mix some of the native soil with planting soil; a compost mix is most suitable, but always research the soil types desired by the tree. Remember large trees that came in a wire basket have had a substantial amount of roots that were removed to be primed for sale. You should water larger transplanted trees once a week through their first month, and then through times of high heat. Welling around trees is a good practice as well.

I hope this information saves a few dollars, plants and hours. Happy planting and good luck to you all. ■



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# Fifty Years Ago Today



## 1967 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 1967 the Directors of the OGSA were: Robert (Bob) Moote, President, Oakdale G&CC, David Gourlay, Vice President, Thornhill G&CC, William (Bill) Hynd, Secretary, St. George's G&CC, David Moote, Rosedale GC, Gord Witteveen, Northwood GC, Ian Williamson, Grandview GC, John Grightmire, Dundas Valley G&CC, Whitey Jones, Aurora Highlands GC, Jim (James) Wyllie, Bayview G&CC, Alec Chisholm, Niagara Brand Chemicals, and Herb Creed, Westmount G&CC.

### NEW MEMBERS:

Carl Disney, Whitby GC, Ross Haines, Humber Valley GC, Paul Dermott, Chinguacousy CC, Fred Klomp, Dentonia Park GC, Ed Ortlieb, Bayview GC, Mike Donahue, Don Valley GC, Louis Formosa, Lakeview GC, and Jerry Rietveld, Pleasant Valley G&CC.

### ON THE MOVE:

Rene Muylaert, who for 5 years was the superintendent at Chinguacousy CC, became a golf course architect working alongside his brother Charlie. Paul Dermott took over as superintendent at Chinguacousy CC.

### IN MEMORY:

Jim Wylie, former superintendent at Bayview G&CC, passed away at the age of 57 on January 17th, after a short illness.

Alex McClumpha passed away. Alex was farming the old York Downs course, when it was purchased for a GC. He then worked for the architect as the course was built and stayed on as the superintendent. Alex later moved to the Elms GC in Weston, and later to Thornhill G&CC. He retired in 1963.



## TOURNAMENTS:

Meetings were held at Credit Valley G&CC, hosted by **Doug Suter**. First low gross was **Bill Hynd** with an 83, and the guest speaker was **George Clifton**, Golf Professional, at Pine Valley GC.

On June 12th, there was a meeting held at St. George's G&CC hosted by **Bill Hynd**. St. George's would be the 1968 host of the Canadian Open and the course was lengthened to 7,000 yards by building 4 new greens and some new tees.

The Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament was held at Aurora Highlands GC, hosted by **Whitey Jones**. **Bill Bowen**, Superintendent at Peterborough G&CC, won the tournament with a 76.

**Bill Hynd** was the winner of the CGSA tournament held at Carling Lake GC.

Bill also won the WOGSA Taylor Barnes Tournament at the Port Colborne CC hosted by **Bill Robertson**.

## EVENTS:

The Western/OGSA joint meeting was held at Dundas Valley G&CC on February 15th. **Fred Grighmire**, Superintendent, was absent because of a car accident, but his son **John**, Beverley G&CC, acted as host on his father's behalf. There was a meeting at Westmount G&CC hosted by **Herb Creed** in August. On September 19th, the first turf conference organized by the OGSA, was held at the Oakdale G&CC, hosted by **Bob Moote**. On November 14th, there was a meeting held at Markland Wood GC hosted by **Bruce Woolley**.

The GCSAA Conference was held in Washington on February 5th and **Keith Nisbet**, Aurora Highlands GC, was

submitted as a candidate for director of the GCSAA.

The RCGA Turf Conference was held at the Skyline Hotel on March 15th. The CGSA annual dinner was held at the Northwood G&CC on March 31st, hosted by **Gord Witteveen**. GreenMaster, formerly belonging to the OGSA, was sold to the CGSA for the sum of \$1.00 and became the official publication of the CGSA.

Editor's note: **Bob Moote** passed away on May 29, 2017. ■



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## MEMBER MOMENTS



**1:** Looking at the golf courses from Mt. Kidd on Canada Day. **Mike Gentry, Assistant Superintendent**, Kananaskis Country Golf Club | **2:** Happy Canada Day. **Greig Barker, Superintendent**, Highland Country Club | **3:** Happy 150 Canada. **Dennis Piccolo, Superintendent**, St Catharines Golf & Country Club | **4:** Celebrating Canada Day weekend at CC with some art on the back of the 18's. **Sean Gunn, Superintendent**, The Country Club | **5:** Happy 150 Canada. **Peter Asma, Superintendent**, Greensmere Golf & Country Club.



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# Weather Machines and Witches

By Doug Breen, Superintendent, Golf North Properties

It's raining again today. It seems like it's rained every second day, since it stopped snowing. Environment Canada has confirmed, that this has been the wettest spring since 1942. I heard about the spring of 1942 many times while growing up – it was one of my Dad's favorite stories. It was so wet, that Canadian farmers were convinced that the Nazis had a 'weather machine', and that they were using it to cause crop failure in North America, in hopes of crippling the Allied war effort.

He also told the story about the summer of 1949, when there was a killing frost in each of the 12 months of the year. That time, it was suspected that the Soviets had a 'weather machine'. It seems that they spent a lot of time worrying about 'weather machines' in those days.

Our ancient ancestors blamed poor weather on angry gods, or sin, or insufficient sacrifices. By the time we were settling North America, we'd entered the age of science – and knew that poor weather was caused by witches. Today, it's common knowledge, that unusual weather is caused by Syrian Refugees, and people who don't recycle.

I saw a golf course's facebook post, which said: "The sun came out today, and work on the Ark has been temporarily suspended. Book a tee time, and come and see us." There's no doubt that this spring has been unusually wet. Water levels in the great lakes are much higher than they've been in years. Olympic Island, where I often go to see concerts in the summertime, is a ring of trees in Lake Ontario at the moment. On a positive note; however, there have been very few days, where it has rained all day, and a golfer couldn't get in 18 holes. Yet, golfers have been staying away from Ontario's golf courses in droves.

I blame weather forecasts. More specifically, I blame the fact that people tune into weather forecasts that they don't really understand.

Let me explain. If a forecast says that there's "a 40% chance of 5mm of rain" – that means that there's a 60% chance that it won't rain at all. Furthermore, there's a 40% chance that it will rain someplace around the course, but not necessarily on the course. As if that wasn't enough, it means that there's a 40% chance that it will rain at some point during

that 24-hour period – not all day. I would take those odds in a Casino, 100% of the time. Lastly, 5mm is the equivalent of having someone throw a cup of water on you, and like my Dad used to say, "You're not made of salt!"

In 35 years of playing golf, there have been less than a couple days per year, where there was absolutely no chance of getting 18 holes in. Sometimes I've had to sit in the bar for an hour or two, watching a football game while a storm blew over (torture, I know), but if one simply goes to the course, golf will happen, nearly every time.

But it's not just that the average Ontarian's understanding of probability and odds is abysmal – it's that most folks don't even read the probability of precipitation. They just look at the pictures. There's always a grey cloud, often with a cartoon frowny face on it, and that's enough to get 150 people to cancel their Saturday morning tee times. If the smiling sun (ironically wearing sunglasses) is the graphic for the day, the pro shop phone will be ringing off the hook. If the weather forecast said, 99% chance of battery acid falling from the sky, followed by 99% chance of fire and brimstone bursting out of the depths of the earth; but the daily graphic was smiling sunglass wearing sun-dude – the parking lot is going to be full.

So, come on people! Play golf anyway. We're Canadians, and we deal with weather that can kill us for half of the year. This weather will pass, as soon as we can get the witchcraft and weather machines under control. In a few months, we'll be shovelling our driveways, and begging for a 20 degree day with 40% chance of showers – don't squander the summer of 2017. ■

## TODAY'S WEATHER



25/13

**Feels like:** The temperature above.

**Tomorrow:** Look, we have no idea. We've tried Ouija boards, dice, tea leaves – everything that we can think of. Just book a tee time and go to the course. We don't know what we're doing.

**POP:** If you feel raindrops, then it's probably raining.



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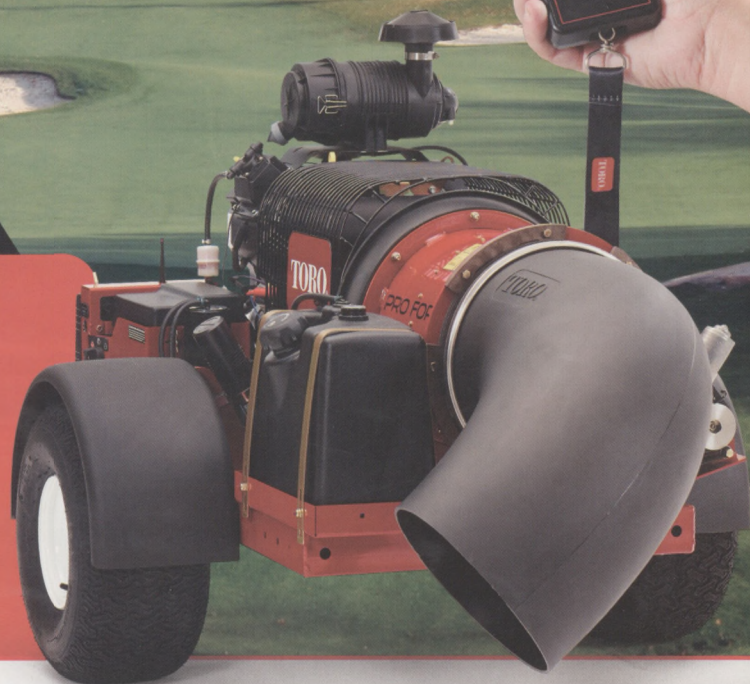
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