

MARCH 2017

ON COURSE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
ONTARIO GOLF SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION

2017 OGCM CONFERENCE:

Forging New Traditions

ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Tale of Two Tournaments

The Student Experience at OGCMC and GIS

**Golf Architecture and Course Management:
Practicality Versus Extravagance**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



by Cory Janzen
OGSA President

It is a privilege to have been elected as your President for 2017. As I look at the list of those who have held this position prior to me, I see that I have an outstanding legacy to uphold, which I will attempt to do to the best of my abilities. Indeed, some of the best in this business have selflessly volunteered their time to make things better for all of us. I would like to thank Immediate Past President Mark Prieur and the rest of the Board for their service. I would also challenge any Class A Superintendents who are interested in Board service to put their name forward by emailing Sally or any of the existing Board members, even if it is just to ask questions. The strength of our association is our membership and I know there are many out there who would be excellent Board members. For me personally, it

has been very rewarding to serve on the Board and it has given me more perspective on my own job where I deal with volunteer Board members all the time. I've also interacted with some great people that I wouldn't have otherwise had the chance to meet.

Our recent Conference in Niagara Falls was the first we have held without a trade show. The comments were overwhelmingly positive and the value provided was excellent. Like any new endeavour we also learned some things we could improve upon to make your experience at the Conference even better. Thank you to all who provided feedback, which we are always interested in hearing. And a big thank you to Conference Chair Rod Speake, Executive Director Sally Ross, and her staff Natalie Andrusko and Laura Clayton, for their tireless efforts in organizing and executing a great show. There is a lot more work behind the scenes than one might think and we are lucky to have such wonderful support staff to rely upon to carry out the Board's strategies. Thank you also to all of our Associate Members who sponsored the Conference – we simply would not have been able to make it great without you.

While there are many important tasks that the Board must perform each year, this year I intend to put particular focus on government relations and advocacy. It is my belief that we need to be consistently in contact with the provincial government if we are to have any hope of influencing existing or newly proposed legislation. Results will likely not be realized quickly, but we need to have a presence with the right people. I will have more on this initiative as we move forward.

For now, please enjoy what's left of our off-season and I hope you have taken the time to take a break and recharge in preparation for a new season full of promise and opportunity. Let's make 2017 our greatest year yet. ■



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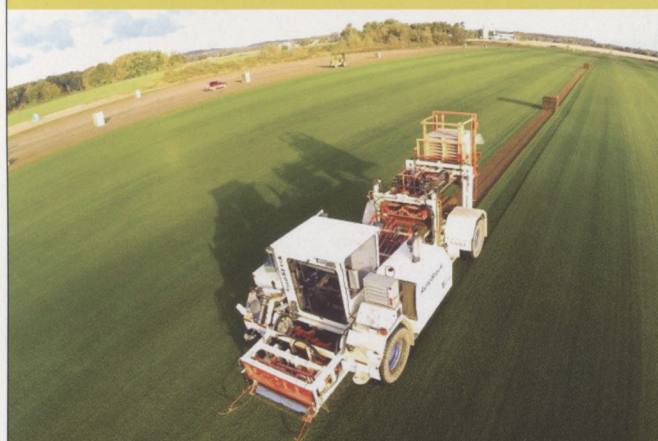
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2017 OGCM Conference Attendees
Photo Courtesy: Matt Booth

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EDITORIAL MESSAGE



by Justin Parsons,
Engage Agro Corp.

With conference season now in the books, most turf managers are prepared to forge ahead with a new golf season. For the OGSA and many of its associate members though, there is still some unpacking to do. An evaluation

of the last few months and the initiatives that were undertaken to help better the superintendent's winter season experience must take place.

Like most things in the world around us, the supply side of the turf industry has become increasingly competitive over the years. Manufacturers and distributors are constantly looking at new ways to add value to maintenance departments across the country. This is easier said than done though because as the industry evolves, so to do the needs of the superintendent.

There was a time years ago when a conference in the middle of winter truly was a pilgrimage of the industry. It was a necessary

journey for people who sought new information and for those who could provide it. Networking was also a big component of these annual events as people were a lot less connected.

Nowadays though, superintendents have the industry in their pocket, literally, and the information is free flowing. Usually all that is required to access it is a few taps on a smartphone. We also have several mini educational events put on throughout the year by associate member companies of the OGSA, which provide an additional outlet for education that did not exist before. At least not with the frequency they do now.

So the question then becomes, what is the best way to add value to a turf manager and their operation in terms of an annual conference in 2017 and beyond? In this issue of *ONCourse* you will read about the Ontario Golf Course Management Conference and the new format, which strayed from the traditional event with a tradeshow. While the design may still need some tweaking yet, it is important to remember that one cannot move in the right direction without taking a step. Now is the time to evaluate that step and make improvements for next year.

There is no denying that the need for an annual provincial conference remains crucial, considering no other organization can provide the advocacy required at a provincial level, as well as strengthening the network and representation of superintendents who share common issues that are both geographically and governmentally unique.

Also in this issue, Stephen Hicks interviews Tom Kinsman, a superintendent who has been involved in hosting both a PGA and LPGA event here in Ontario. You will find all this and more as you flip through the latest edition of *ONCourse*. ■

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University of Guelph

Joe Atkinson Class C
Wyldeewood Golf & Country Club

Nigel Bruneau Class F
Mill Run Golf Club

Jeff deSchiffert Class F
The Toronto Golf Club

Gil Edwards Class A
Crimson Ridge Golf Course

Caleb Evans Class S
University of Guelph

Jennifer Footer Class C
Idylwyld Golf & Country Club

James Fry Class C

Michael Grawey Class C
Grand Niagara Golf Club

Steve Hatch Class A
Seven Lakes Championship
Golf & Estates

Peter Henderson Class A
Crumlin Creek Golf Club

Ryan Kerr Class Supt
Taboo Muskoka

Adam Kimber Class F
Mississauga Golf & Country Club

Tony Kirov Class F
Royal Ontario Golf Course

Andy LaForge Class F
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University of Guelph

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Zack Stevens Class C
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Will Stoner Class C
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St. George's Golf & Country Club

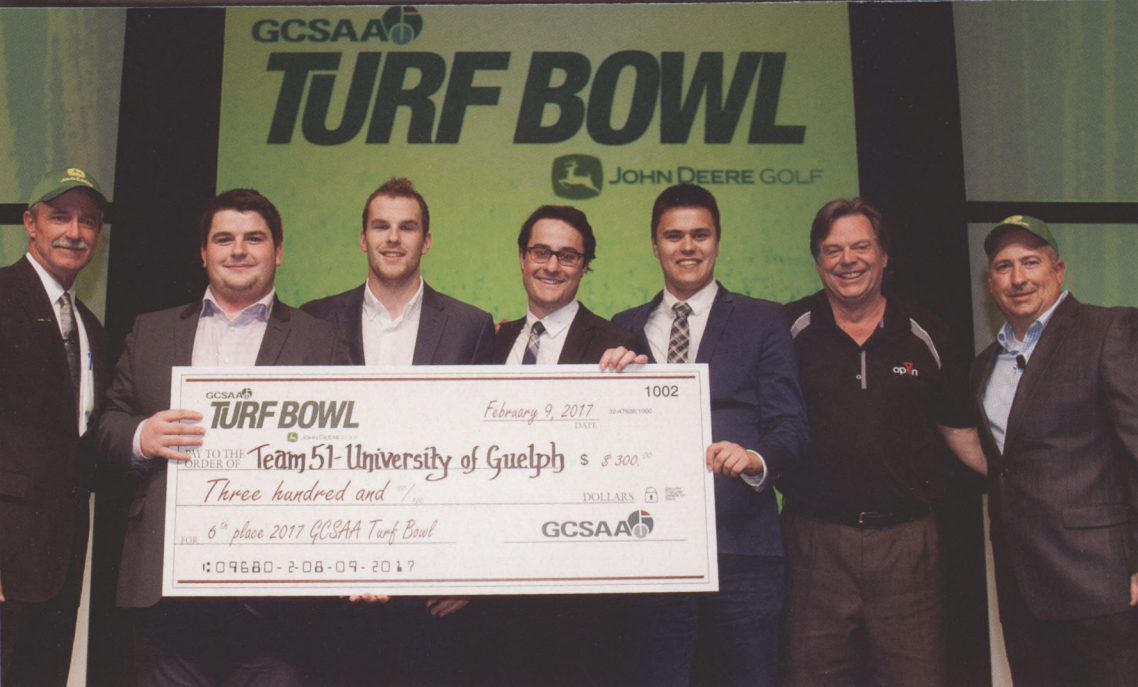
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University of Guelph

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Burlington Golf & Country Club

Adam Zimmer Class C
Cутten Fields

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L-R - Pete Grass (GCSAA Immediate Past President), Dalton Rowbotham, Alex Corken, Marco China, Andre Lens, Stephen Fleischauer (Director DTM Program UofG), and David Plaster, Sales and Marketing Manager for North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Latin America for John Deere Golf.

The Student Experience at OGCMC and GIS

*By Marco China & Andre Lens, Co-Presidents
The University of Guelph Turf Club*

Over the past few months the University of Guelph Turf Club has had the opportunity to attend the Ontario Golf Course Management Conference (OGCMC) and Golf Industry Show (GIS). They both were exceptional experiences that provided each student with lasting impressions regarding the importance of attending similar events in the future. As a student, these extracurricular events were great to experience before entering the industry post-graduation because they provided networking opportunities and enhanced education outside of the classroom setting.

While attending the OGCMC and GIS conferences, education was a big theme for students. Leading up to both events, the importance of attending these sessions was stressed by professors and mentors. Through conversations with the students that took advantage of these opportunities, two common themes emerged. First, each of the seminars offered an opportunity to expand on one's own areas of interest within the turf industry. Each seminar was a chance to build on knowledge and skills learned within the classroom, and the seminars help create a new perspective on various topics of

interest. The lessons learned at the seminars sparked the curiosity of the students, and opened up discussions on the day's lessons. The result of attending these sessions is personal growth as a student, and it encouraged students to become curious and intrigued by new and exciting ideas within the industry. As you looked around the room, it was hard to miss the fact that large ballrooms were filled with superintendents and assistant superintendents, also eager to learn and expand their knowledge base. Seeing such a large group engaged in these seminars left a lasting impression on all students that continuing education plays a large role in our quests to become successful turf managers.

The second major theme that came up amongst the students following these conferences was the various social networking events that they had the opportunity to attend. As a student, it is hard to deny the fact that a few moments of having a conversation with a superintendent creates a feeling of excitement. That feeling is rooted in the passion for the industry, the same spark that first sent us to the University of Guelph, which has only grown stronger throughout our time there. It is not every day that you have the opportunity to sit down for dinner with Mark Kuhns from Baltusrol Golf Club and Ken Kubik of Grass Roots Turf Products

to talk openly for hours about the industry. It is difficult at times to not be star-struck when you are meeting with individuals who care for some of the most esteemed golf courses in the world. The passion and enthusiasm at these events is contagious; it fuels your own passion and reaffirms your decision to enter this great industry. While chatting with these individuals, you are constantly learning how to listen, speak, dress, and ultimately how to be present in these moments. These are all skills that are hard to teach or convey in a classroom, and having the opportunity to attend these conferences gives students the ability to build these important life skills. Although these skills can be read easily in a book, putting them into practice and developing them is the only way to truly improve.

As Co-Presidents of the Turf Club, it has been exciting to gather other passionate students together and travel to each of these conferences. It is a chance to represent the University of Guelph within Ontario and internationally. Activities like Turf Bowl at the Golf Industry Show have allowed us students to match ourselves to students from other institutions across North America. The chance to meet fellow students from other universities is a unique experience that leads to an expanding network as we move forward. These have been memorable



The three Turf Bowl teams from the University of Guelph.

opportunities for all students involved, with each person taking away something different from the experience, and all coming away with a new respect and understanding for

the importance of continued education and the significance of networking.

The opportunity to be involved in these conferences has certainly left an impression

on all of us. They have allowed us to learn outside the classroom and have, in many cases, set us on a path for success. These opportunities would not be possible without the generous support from our industry partners; in particular, Brett Young's sponsorship of the Future Leaders at the OGCMC and Syngenta Canada's sponsorship of the Turf Bowl competitors. It is this support of students that helps to emphasize the importance of continued education, and all of the students involved cannot thank both companies enough for their commitment.

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."
— Benjamin Franklin ■

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Grow a better tomorrow.

Golf Architecture and Course Maintenance: Practicality Versus Extravagance

By Jeff Mingay,
Golf Course Architect

All that is practically required to play golf is adequate space, a club and ball, and a hole in the ground. Rumples, rolling terrain and a bit of elevation change adds to the fun. A flagstick helps, too, relative to identifying the location of the hole or holes, which don't necessarily need to total eighteen either.

At its root, golf is a pretty simple game. We sure tend to overcomplicate it though.

For example, I recently visited a course featuring seven heights of cut. Greens, tees, fairways and rough, a "step cut" between fairways and rough, and green collars mown at a different height than the so-called "green surrounds". That's complicated, and extravagant - relatively costly, too. Or at least not the most effective allocation of resources to golf course maintenance.

This is a 1920s era course, where two heights of cut effectively facilitated playing golf for decades prior. In fact, during the pre-World War II era, everything that could be mown with a gang unit pulled by horse or tractor was fairway. The greens were mown at a lower height, of course. Everything else was rough. That's simple, and practical - economic, too. In recent years, many historic clubs with vintage courses have reverted to doing the same as part of genuinely restoring a classic look and feel.

It wasn't long ago that Augusta National was mown in similar fashion. Before a "second cut" was introduced in 1998, Augusta featured two heights of cut. The greens were mown like greens, tees



Above left: Whether they realize it or not, a majority of golfers enjoy golf most in natural settings, Jeff Mingay incorporated native grasses and other plants as a key feature of the redesigned 3rd hole on the South nine at York Downs Golf & Country Club in Unionville, Ontario. Above right: A single well-placed bunker, like this hazard in the centre of the fairway at the par 5 3rd hole at Bandon Trails in Oregon, can be more effective at enhancing the interest and beauty of a hole than an abundance of bunkers on the margins of a fairway.



were cut at the same height as the fairways. Even as host of The Masters, you don't need to be extravagant.

Perhaps in emulation of Augusta, that same course with seven heights of cut also features heaving greens. In any event, those extravagantly contoured greens at Augusta work because that exclusive course gets very little play. The putting surfaces at Augusta are gigantic, too. Giant greens can accommodate both heaving contour and a variety of pin positions. Unlike Augusta, most golf properties don't have the space or maintenance budget to accommodate big, heaving greens. In turn, golf architects can't let overt acts of creativity get in the way of practicality when it comes to the necessity of providing an adequate number of pin positions to effectively spread wear.

That is not to say green surfaces less than 6,000 square feet can't simultaneously provide an adequate number of pin positions and still be interesting and adequately challenging. They can. In fact, some of my favourites greens at my favourite courses challenge golfers subtly in inches rather dramatically in feet.



Left: Essex Golf & Country Club, in Windsor, Ontario, features a collection of admired greens designed by legendary golf architect Donald Ross that have adequately challenged golfers "in inches rather than feet" since 1929.

When Augusta opened for play in 1933, the course had just 22 bunkers, too. These days, many private clubs feature four times as many, even though too many of those bunkers tend to add nothing to the interest, challenge or beauty of the course. Bunkers are important features, but they're overrated. Most golfers despise them, and superintendents lament the time, effort and money required to maintain bunkers up to an extravagant, practically unattainable standard demanded by those same golfers.

Oddly, bunkers have been used as a "design crutch" over the years. If a hole looks "boring", add a bunker. If a hole appears like it might be "too easy", add a bunker. Considering how costly bunkers can be to maintain, and how ridiculously expensive they are to renovate these days, that is not a practical trend. In the process of developing plans for golf course improvement, it is important to analyze the purpose and usefulness of every bunker. If a bunker doesn't have a definite purpose relative to enhancing the interest, challenge or beauty of the course, it should be eliminated rather than renovated. That is practical.

The same logic applies to trees. To paraphrase legendary golf architect Donald Ross, as beautiful as trees are, and as fond as you and I are of them, we must not lose sight of the fact that there is a limited place for them in golf. Indeed, trees typically cause more harm than good on golf courses. Both deciduous and coniferous trees litter courses with debris that is then cleaned up by maintenance staff who could be dedicated to more important tasks. Trees also have a tendency to impede play, frustrating golfers who would rather have a reasonable chance for recovery. And, considering every golfer covets fairways and greens in pristine condition, trees threaten turf health. If a tree does not have a definite purpose, it should probably be removed as well.

Instead of relying on trees to enhance the beauty of a course, and to frame views and separate holes, fescue and other indigenous plants should be considered. So-called "native areas" beautify golf courses in a natural fashion. And, whether they realize it or not, a majority of golfers most enjoy the game in genuinely natural settings. More importantly, native areas reduce the total area of maintained turf along with associated water, fertilizer, chemical, fuel use and related output.

Native areas are not intended to make the course more difficult. So, some investment and effort is required to properly establish native areas to ensure that golf balls can be found and shots can be played.

After all, there are no "out of play" areas on any course. Once they have matured, native areas are not really maintenance free, but they are typically low input compared to maintained turf.

It is a bit ironic, but understandable, that Augusta National is associated with extravagance these days. Sure, Bobby Jones' early investors and the current membership of the club are some of the wealthiest, most extravagant Americans, but the original concept behind the golf courses design is remarkably practical. Devised by Jones in collaboration with legendary golf architect, Alister Mackenzie, Augusta's routing is smart. Its greens are complex. But little else at Augusta was overcomplicated. The course is beautifully treed, but there is not an abundance of trees. In turn, the greens aren't shaded and the fairways are famously wide, catering to golfers of all abilities. There were half as many originally, but there are still only 44 bunkers at Augusta today.

Jones and Mackenzie were cognizant that at its root, golf is a pretty simple game. There is really no reason to overcomplicate it. Even for The Masters. ■

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.



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#3, Legacy Course
Credit: Bob Kopf

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Mike Pellerin

Superintendent, Saugeen Golf Club

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

The golf course management industry is extremely fortunate to be filled with so many remarkable people. Many of these are people willing to sacrifice personal time in an effort to help advance the industry. Mike Pellerin, husband, father, superintendent and amateur fisherman is a perfect example of the kind of quality individual one often meets in this profession.

The little town of Cartier, Ontario, is about 50 minutes north of Sudbury and has a population of just over 300. This community provided a wonderful, small-town lifestyle for Pellerin while growing up. He lived with his parents and younger brother Josh and recalls spending much of his youth fishing in the nearby creeks for Speckled Trout. "They're not the biggest fish but I had tons of fun back then trying to find them in those creeks," Pellerin reminisces.



*Mike Pellerin, Superintendent,
Saugeen Golf Club*

Similar to many, it was during his high school years that Pellerin caught the golf bug. He recalls the summers of his youth fishing and golfing. "I fell in love with the game early on in high school and instantly it became an addiction. My father would

About the Course

Saugeen Golf Club is located in the popular tourist area of Port Elgin and boasts a beautiful 27 hole layout placed near Lake Huron. Legacy, the original nine holes, was designed by Stanley Thompson and opened in 1925. The club later added the Sunset nine (1956) and Sunrise nine (1995).

Architect: Stanley Thompson (Legacy), Dave Moote (Sunrise), Fred Hulls (Sunset)

Type of Club: Semi-Private

Number of Holes: 27

Number of Rounds Annually: 46,000

Practice Facility:

Driving Range and Short Game Area

In the Hot Seat

Q: Favorite Major

A: The Masters

Q: Favourite piece of turf equipment?

A: It's a tie. Anything with spray nozzles and automatic grinding equipment.

Q: Favourite golf course?

A: Devil's Paintbrush

Q: Ultimate foursome?

A: Jay Sisko, Mark Kay, Jamie Camillucci. We have a ton of fun when we get out and play, although, I would throw Fred Couples in as a fifth.

Q: Favorite Golf Designer

A: Coore and Crenshaw

Q: Lowest round and where?

A: 68 at the Onaping Golf & Beach Club

Q: Favourite Movie:

A: *Star Wars*

Q: Favorite Meal

A: Steak

drop me off at the course even before the sun rose and then pick me up after dark. Any day that the weather decided not to co-operate I would spend fishing. It really was the perfect way to spend the summers."

Motivated by his love for golf and the great outdoors, Pellerin decided to accept a position at Idylwylde Golf and Country Club with Superintendent, Jeff Macey. Pellerin remembers how influential Macey was and feels grateful he was able to work with him, particularly in the beginning stages of his career. Pellerin advanced himself all the way into a lead hand role at Idylwylde.

"Jeff was very hands on and passionate about the importance of our department within the club. I was eager to learn and Jeff was always willing to spend time teaching me. It only took one season of working with Jeff for me to be convinced I wanted to become a golf course superintendent."

What You Need to Know

Predominant Grass Type: Annual Bluegrass, Perennial Rye, Creeping Bentgrass

Predominant Soil Type: Sandy loam

Type of Greens: Pushup old 18, 80:20 newer 9

Course Length: Sunset 9: 3,323 yds;
Sunrise 9: 3,199 yds; Legacy 9: 3,209 yds

Size of Greens: 4.4 acres

Size of Tees: 2.25 acres

Size of Fairways: 30 acres

Major Challenges

Maintaining turf density in unirrigated areas of the golf course. While the native soil is ideal for most areas, it does present challenges where there is no irrigation. Course gardens need attention to bring them back to their former glory.

During his time at Idylwylde, Pellerin was driving through Cartier and came across a young lady with her thumb out awaiting a ride. He stopped, and though he didn't realize it at the time, he welcomed his future wife, Nicole, into his car and life. "We still chuckle at it. The community is so small that everyone knows everyone. I had a chance to get to know her during that ride, and enjoyed her company so much that I asked some friends to set us up."

After a few years, Pellerin and Nicole decided it was time to move from the small town of Cartier so Nicole could enroll in a post-secondary institution in the Greater Toronto Area. Pellerin remembers the adjustment from Cartier to a large city was quite overwhelming. At that time, Rosedale Village, a 9 hole executive course, located in Brampton, Ontario, was looking for a superintendent. Pellerin felt it was a good opportunity for the short term, but after a few seasons at Rosedale Village he felt it was time to pursue a more challenging role.

Not far away, another club in Brampton was in need of an assistant superintendent. Lionhead Golf and Country Club was a chance to be more challenged and Pellerin

was thrilled when he was offered the opportunity to work with Superintendent Martin Kopp. Pellerin speaks very highly of the relationship and role at Lionhead and says it was a key transition point in his career. Kopp spent much time mentoring Pellerin, helping him to refine his abilities.

"Marty's focus was to raise my skill set to a superintendent's level. He fine tuned my strengths and helped me improve in the areas that I required (for) further development."

After two seasons working for Kopp, Pellerin's chance to take the next step came when fellow Kaneff club, Royal Ontario Golf Club, was looking for a superintendent. In in 2003 he accepted the position. After three seasons at Royal Ontario Golf Club, Pellerin was enjoying the challenges of running a notable course, but he and Nicole had to make the difficult decision to relocate for the best of their growing family.

The Pellerin family had just been blessed with their first child, Megan, now 11, and the couple felt that they needed to be closer to family who were still in the Sudbury area.

Continued on page 15...

"One of my greatest satisfactions as a superintendent has been the opportunity to work with and watch the growth of the many young individuals that have strong aspirations to succeed in life with tremendous work ethic, strong leadership skills, insightfulness and a driving motivation. Mike Pellerin was no exception. I've known Mike for 16 years and I value the great friendship we have built and I am extremely proud of his accomplishments personally and throughout his amazing career in turf management. Seeing Mike become a Director on the OGSA Board is a direct reflection of the passion he has for the golf industry and the mission statement of the OGSA."

— Martin Kopp, Golf Course Superintendent, Brampton Golf Club

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Continued from page 13...

Pellerin was fortunate to have been offered the Superintendent position at North Bay Golf and Country Club, which would allow the couple to move much closer to their families.

North Bay Golf and Country Club is where Pellerin truly got to utilize all the knowledge and experience he had gained in his early career. When speaking about his biggest career accomplishments, Pellerin recalls much of them to be during his many seasons at North Bay.

"During my time at North Bay we completed a course improvement plan. Two of the biggest projects being the bunkers and construction work involved with obtaining a Permit To Take Water (PTTW). We brought in Ian Andrew and Don Robb to help with the bunker renovations. Ian did a fantastic job with the plans and Don's shaping brought the project to life. The feedback from the membership was extremely positive, as the bunkers exceeded their expectations."

As for the work required to obtain a PTTW, this presented numerous challenges. "While it was a long couple of years, the project may have been the biggest learning experience of my career. In the end, we met all ministry requirements and the project was completed within budget."

Some of Pellerin's greatest challenges also occurred when he worked at North Bay. The short seasons, followed by the long cold harsh winters, often left much of the golf course susceptible to winter damage. Pellerin spent much of his off season attempting to battle the difficult environment and feels that his efforts sometimes may have caused negative outcomes as much as positive ones. Although Pellerin felt some tactics didn't work, he notes that with any failure comes valuable learning experience.

"As far as failures go I can admit that I've made my fair share of mistakes. Failure really is just part of the learning process and it's not something anyone should be afraid of. If you own it and learn from it, then your failure can result in many positives.



Aerial view of Saugeen Golf Club.

During my time at North Bay I did a lot of experimenting with ice and snow removal. Did I kill grass in doing so? You bet, but in the end, it helped me develop strategies to hopefully prevent future ice damage."

After 10 seasons at North Bay Golf and Country Club, Pellerin decided that it was time for a change. What appeared to be grand opportunity arose when a position at Cambrian College, a college where he had previously received a horticulturalist certificate, had an opening for Grounds Maintenance Supervisor. The position on paper seemed like the dream setup. It provided great benefits, plenty of vacation time, good pay and a pension plan; things that can be difficult to find in the golf course maintenance industry. Pellerin accepted the position, but fairly quickly began to feel a lack of stimulation and realized where his true passion was. Pellerin missed the golf course and wanted to get back to his true calling.

"I was doing my job and doing it well, but at the end of the day I had no passion for it. It was a "job" and not something that I loved doing."

In the winter of 2016 Saugeen Golf Club posted a position for Golf Course Superintendent. The Pellerins had much to consider. During their time in North Bay they had their second child, Nicholas, now eight, and making a move professionally would also mean having to move all aspects

of their lives. They researched the area and club and felt this would be a good move for all of them. He specifically mentions Nicole's support when discussing the change.

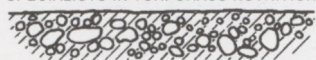
"Once we learned about Saugeen and the area it seemed like a perfect fit for our family and my career. Nicole completely supported the decision and we feel it was a great decision. All the people here have been incredibly welcoming to my entire family and we love that the area is so community oriented."

Along with all his on course experience, Pellerin has spent a tremendous amount of time in many classroom environments. A graduate from both the University of Guelph and Penn State World Campus in turfgrass management, he has also acquired certificates in small engines, horticulture, and business foundations. Pellerin is an Accredited Golf Course Superintendent and also has his Master Superintendent designation.

Now feeling settled in after his first full year at Saugeen, Pellerin has decided to join the group of many other great superintendent members that have been gracious enough to serve on the Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association Board of Directors. This is a role he feels very honoured to hold and the association is honoured to have you Mr. Pellerin. ■

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2017 OGCM CONFERENCE: Forging New Traditions

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

Conference Photos by Matt Booth, Assistant Superintendent, Oshawa Golf & Curling Club

The Ontario Golf Course Management Conference is a special event that our membership looks forward to each January. It is a time to get away, network, socialize, and discuss new innovations or discoveries in our high paced careers. It can also be a pivotal moment in one's operation by way of introducing fresh ideas or exciting changes which help to improve efficiencies and energize staff. In the last issue of *ONCourse*, editor Justin Parsons discussed the infamous quote "the only thing that is certain in the world is change". The relevance of this statement couldn't be more topical, as our association turns over a new leaf in 2017. The passing of a new year often honours the tradition of change, and this is what the OGSA is striving for when it rolled out the new format for the annual OGCM Conference. Change is never easy. It requires effort, patience, risk, an open mind, but most importantly, support and help from close colleagues. The OGSA is grateful to announce that we were blessed with all of the above and the end result was truly an incredible three days.

This year's destination was Niagara Falls, a favorite venue for our membership. Niagara's mix of ample facilities, entertainment opportunities and its relatively convenient location (for the majority of the membership), makes for a tremendous professional and social atmosphere. The biggest change this year came with the omission of the afternoon tradeshow floor. This was a bold move considering many members and vendors enjoyed this event in addition to it being a primary source of revenue for the OGSA. In place of the tradeshow, the OGSA conference committee and the board of directors decided to introduce a new supplier luncheon. As anticipated, the event was a success. The room filled quickly and many attendees were laughing, talking, shaking hands and sharing ideas. The luncheon format offered opportunities for members and vendors to network in a more relaxed, personal atmosphere where existing relationships were nourished, and new ones forged.

Based on recent feedback, this year's food and beverage was one of the best ever. Each day brought something new, delicious, and plentiful. The quality of food and beverage is crucial to any event's overall success, because it is the ingredient that brings people together and keeps spirits up. Our sponsors understand this, and we are lucky to have had their generous support on this detail because no expense was spared. From the almighty morning coffee to the gourmet luncheons and the opening night party at Brasa, our sponsors certainly made sure our appetites were more than satisfied. Seriously, who can forget that gourmet chocolate cake at the awards luncheon!?

Especially notable this year was the intriguing assortment of new discussion topics. The buzz surrounding many of the members was very positive regarding the larger focus on technology-



based communication and management software applications. This is a relatively new frontier for many in our industry and every discussion helps more of our members embrace new ideas, and operational efficiencies bringing their teams closer together. As many of you recall, there was also a lively and rambunctious discussion by Dr. Geunhwa Jung revisiting disease and thatch management through fairway rolling. The presentation was spirited, but also very informative and it became one of the highlights of the week. We all look forward to seeing more of Dr. Jung's research in this relatively new area.

In closing, the OGSA would like to recognize all of the sponsoring vendors who truly are the heart and soul of this conference. Their support, energy, donations and personal touches are what make this event. Without their involvement, members would not enjoy premium venues, enriched education sessions, quality food, morning coffee, or the impactful networking and social opportunities. In their absence, our annual gathering would cease to be all that we have come to enjoy. As a small request, our association asks that all members take the time to personally recognize their sales and vendor representatives who continue to support the OGSA. Whether it is through a handshake, a thank-you card, or simply a pat on the back, we ask that you take the time to invite them into your facility and offer them a heartfelt thank you for giving back to our association and profession. ■



1. Mark Prieur (L), Immediate Past President, and Cory Janzen (R), 2017 President, at the AGM. | 2. Amanda Frend and Aaron Lowe (Ladies GC of Toronto). | 3. Session attendees. | 4. Registration desk. | 5. OGSA Conference Chairman Rod Speake (L) with Kevin Doyle, Field Service Representative from GCSAA. | 6. David Kuypers brings greetings from Syngenta. | 7. Dinner at Brasa. | 8. Aldo Bortolon (L) (Lookout Point CC) and Mike Kehoe (R) (Nutrite). | 9. Supplier Luncheon. | 10. L-R OGSA Director Jason Boyce (Smuggler's Glen GC) and Reg Langen (Richmond Hill GC) at Brasa. | 11. Opening Night Dinner. | 12. Future Leaders.

Survey Says?

More than half of attendees responded to our surveys. Some key points:

- Overwhelming support for the facility and returning there was clear (more than 85%).
- Strong support for the new format from vendors.
- Comments reinforced the fact that networking is the key, combined with a solid education program and good food.
- Golf course personnel did not miss the trade show, and many said they had more opportunities to connect with suppliers than ever before.
- Positive comments reflected overall that, while further work needs to be done on the supplier event itself, the format engaged our membership to make creative suggestions for next years conference.

In summation, calls to renew sponsorships and new pledges of support for 2018 have been received and first timers have indicated that they were "blown away" by the value offered.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported OGCMC 2017.

OGSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



2017-18 Board of Directors – L-R Mark Prieur, Mike Pellerin, Rod Speake, Al Schwemler, Cory Janzen, Sally Ross, Jason Boyce, Andrew Lombardo, Tim Muys, and Ryan Scott

by Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Director

The OGSA's AGM took place on Thursday, January 19th, 2017.

The membership approved the slate as presented by the Nominating Committee and the Board welcomed two new Directors, Mike Pellerin from Saugeen Golf Club and Ryan Scott from the Club at North Halton.

Cory Janzen was elected President for 2017, with Rod Speake remaining as Vice President. Jason Boyce was elected Secretary/Treasurer, while Mark Prieur assumed the position of Immediate Past President. Andrew Lombardo, Tim Muys, and Al Schwemler were re-elected as Directors.

The new Board had an initial meeting on February 27th and 28th, which was structured as a hands-on planning session for the upcoming year. ■

OGSA Awards Presentation

Three OGSA members were honoured for reaching the 50 year mark at the Annual Awards event held recently in Niagara Falls. Pelino Scenna, Paul Dermott and Cecil-Roy French were the recipients. While Cecil-Roy could not attend the event, Pelino and Paul were in attendance to accept the watches presented to them by the OGSA Secretary/Treasurer Cory Janzen.



L-R Cory Janzen, Secretary/Treasurer and 50 year member Paul Dermott.



Cory Janzen and 50 year member, Pelino Scenna.



Richard Creed (L) receives the William Sansom Distinguished Service Award from Mark Prieur (R), OGSA President.

Five members were recognized for being members for over 30 years, some of whom were on hand to receive their awards, while others, due to various reasons, could not attend. Paul Brown, Sarnia G&CC (35 years); Scott Dodson, Park CC of Buffalo (36 years); John Gall, Cherry Hill GC (35 years); Garry Hall, Six Foot Bay Resort & GC (35 years) and Gord Thompson, Meadowbrook G&CC (32 years).

Three associate member companies also were recognized for being members for over 25 years; Braemar Building Systems (28 years), Douglas Wood Large Tree Services (35 years) and Hutcheson Sand and Mixes (27 years). Four members were recognized as 25 year members, but were unable to attend the awards; Kevin Broham, Merry-Hill GC; Mark Dawkins, Blue Springs GC; Joel Stevens, Sunningdale G&CC and Theo Versteegh, Mount Elgin GC.

Kristen Dlugokecki, first place recipient of the Heritage award, and daughter of Ray Dlugokecki (Springfield G&CC), was unable to attend the awards and Ray accepted on her behalf. Samuel Piccolo, second place recipient of the Heritage award accepted his award from Mark Prieur, 2016 OGSA President.

The Hugh Kirkpatrick Bursary was presented to Cam Shaw, Piper's Heath GC, John Ingham, Summit G&CC, and Steve Rabski, Bayview G&CC. The Turfgrass Education Award was presented to



L-R Paul Brown, John Gall, and Scott Dodson



L-R Rick Brenzil (Braemar Building Systems), Paul Hanousek (Douglas Wood Large Tree Services), and Angelo Capannelli (Hutcheson Sand and Mixes).



L-R – Cam Sharw (Piper's Heath GC), John Ingham (Summit G&CC), and Steve Rabski (Bayview G&CC).



L-R – Mark Prieur, OGSA President presents to first place recipient of the Turfgrass Education Award Marco China (UofG).



Nicholas Blaney (R) (Riverbend GC), recipient of the Short Course Award.



Ray Dlugokecki (R) (Springfield G&CC), accepts 1st Place Heritage Award plaque on behalf of his daughter Kristen.



Doug Breen (R) (Golf North/Brookfield GC), winner of the Barry Endicott Article of the Year award.



Matt Booth (R) (Oshawa G&CC), winner of the ONCourse Photo of the Year award.

Marco China, first place recipient, from the University of Guelph, while second place recipient Lacy Droste was unable to attend the event. Nicholas Blaney from RiverBend GC was presented with the Short Course Award, which included complimentary membership to the OGSA. The Barry Endicott Article of the Year Award was presented to Doug Breen, Golf North/Brookfield GC, for his article, "How Many Millennials Does it Take to Change a Light Bulb?" featured in the June 2016 issue. The ONCourse Photo of the Year was awarded to Matt Booth, from Oshawa G&CC for his photo, "A Fox at Oshawa Golf & Curling Club" also from the June 2016 issue.

A highlight of the awards luncheon was Richard Creed, retired superintendent, accepting the William Sansom Distinguished Service Award. This is a special award which is given periodically to an individual who has been nominated by his industry peers and that nomination must be supported by the Board of Directors. Richard is just the eighth recipient of the award in the history of the OGSA, which makes it a truly exceptional and remarkable achievement. Richard was nominated by his peers, and his nomination was strongly supported by the OGSA Board. ■



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Thoughts on the OGCM Conference 2017

Sally Ross,
OGSA Executive Director

With the Ontario Golf Course Management Conference over for another year, we look back on what worked, and what didn't, what we have achieved, and what we need to work on.

The association, Board and committees were diligent in their communications to member companies, but many still had no idea about the changes to the format, and so they were surprised when conference time rolled around. We knew this would happen despite our best efforts to communicate, and unfortunately this resulted in some folks being taken aback and even upset at the changes and their inability to do business 'as in the past'.

Despite all of this, we can say now that the conference did produce enough revenue to sustain the association for another year, and we have had some positive, constructive criticism, coupled with ideas from our members that can only help moving forward.

We will attempt to address concerns, re-evaluate pricing and packages for suppliers, ensure more exposure for table top displays, creatively try to 'keep customers in the room' and increase participation in the sponsorship program, all with the goal of not falling back on the old trade show model.

Here are some conference facts and figures to consider:

DID YOU KNOW...

If you purchase a certain amount of food and beverage, there is no cost for rental space.

Fact: *If you downgrade the food, you will pay to sit in a room and not eat.*

One AV screen with projector costs approximately \$3,000 per day, not including an operator.

Fact: *If you hold any concurrent sessions or have two rooms set up, costs increase exponentially.*

A keynote speaker typically costs between \$10,000 to \$20,000, plus travel and expenses, and sometimes even more.

Fact: *For those that wanted Barack Obama, or Bill Murray, sorry folks, were not in that ballpark.*

Our 2017 conference prices went down.

Fact: *Conference registration costs for super early bird this year were equivalent to 2011. The hotel was 50 per cent less than any other location (except in Niagara Falls) in the past 10 years and we have steadily increased the amount and quality of all facets of the event.*

So with these thoughts in mind, we will be moving forward with a goal to always improve and offer you more for your money, while delivering a first class, all inclusive event. ■



1. Bill Martel (Turf Care Products) at the supplier lunch with tabletops. | 2. Dan Brousseau (L) and Phil Scully (R), from Granite GC. | 3. Conference attendees. | 4. Dinner at Brasa. | 5. Future Leaders Program Sponsors Brett Young L-R Rob Field, Andrew Hardy, Chris Nelson, Everett Nieuwkoop, Travis Unger and Steve Hewgill. | 6. L-R Mark Prieur, Keynote Speaker Dick Pound, and Rod Speake.

A Tale of Two Tours

By Stephen Hicks, Assistant Superintendent, Dundas Valley Golf and Curling Club

As I parked my car on the wet asphalt and entered the lower level of the Whistle Bear clubhouse for volunteer orientation, I realized that this would be different than my last volunteer experience at a PGA Tour event. Access was easier and simpler, and upon being greeted by Tom Kinsman and other volunteers downstairs, I saw firsthand how enjoyable my week would be. A small, tight knit group of employees and volunteers sat through a short presentation, followed by marching orders for the rest of the week.

We fast forward to our current mild winter, and Tom Kinsman, Golf Course Superintendent in his third season at Whistle Bear Golf Club, opens up about hosting an LPGA Tour event. Previously, he was the Assistant Superintendent on St. George's maintenance team, which hosted the Canadian Open. Without hesitation, he proudly says that hosting the Manulife LPGA Classic was uniquely "special because of the tight knit crew and how we all had invested so much personally into its success. We wanted to highlight such a spectacular property." Rob Astley, is in his second season at the club as Assistant Superintendent, and also worked at St. George's during the championship. Last, but certainly not least, Phil Arrowsmith, the Equipment Manager in his fourth season, rounds out the management staff. He and he alone, had to deal with all equipment as well as loaned equipment from vendors.

Continued on page 22...

"I can't thank my team enough for all their hard work and sacrifice both preparing for and executing these events. Our crew took a personal interest in the success of the tournament and it was truly amazing to be apart of. Without their enthusiasm this would not have been possible."

— Tom Kinsman, Superintendent

*13 green looking across to 16 fairway.
Photo credit: Tom Kinsman*



Above left: 18 green with grandstands. Right: Night work on 3 green.

Continued from page 21...

In stark contrast to the history and unique topography that St. George's brings to hosting a national Open, Whistle Bear provides a more recent design with a more gently rolling property that creates separate and varied challenges to hosting an LPGA tournament. The first noticeable difference is their location. One is situated in a densely populated urban environment in Etobicoke, while the other club is a picturesque property on tumbling, rural lands where single lane roads are the norm. Having more open space at Whistle Bear means it is easier to accommodate the large footprint of a Tour event. However at St. George's, there were additional considerations as a result of the tight space. "There were numerous logistical challenges that had to be overcome at St. George's such as having the driving range offsite," says Kinsman. Luckily, Islington Golf Club was willing to be a part of Canadian Open history by allowing use of a section of their course as a driving range for the pros. To facilitate player movement, organizers closed a major city artery in Islington Ave from The Kingsway to Eglinton Ave. Kinsman says it was a different story for the LPGA event. "Here (at Whistle Bear) we don't face those same challenges (in practice facilities) or room for event amenities such as tents, grand stands and other spectator areas." Given limited space and large crowds, spectators had to be bused in, fairly common at Glen Abbey as well, while there was a large field used for most spectator parking in Cambridge.

Similar for both events was the constant interaction with the respective Tour's agronomists. However, there was a joyous interruption to the LPGA schedule in 2016, which came in the form of the Olympic Games. The tournament at Whistle Bear was

the first event after the Games and the LPGA made the necessary adjustments to their schedule so as to not limit players' desires to represent their home nation. For Kinsman and his crew, this meant that the Tour's agronomist was in France helping to prepare for the Evian Championship, a major on the LPGA Tour, and wasn't on site for the week of the tournament. From what I personally witnessed on site, this vote of confidence in Kinsman and his crew was founded in fact and mutual respect. Both the players and the media seem eager to return to Canada, and speak highly of course conditions and how the property presents itself on television.

While the "timely" rain, (far too much, far too late) certainly aided the course's presentation, Kinsman and his crew had bunkers to rearrange and little time to do it. He had experienced similar weather patterns during the Canadian Open and previous Manulife Classics, and in both instances extra oomph was required. In Etobicoke, the Canadian Open was well represented by industry volunteers whom were more than happy to play a role in the historic return to a Stanley Thompson's world renowned course. These veterans grinded out every minute detail with smiles on their faces. At Whistle Bear however, Kinsman was lucky to have a member with a large landscaping business send multiple crews of their staff to aid in reorganizing the sand hazards in 2015. Both years the course was closed to get bunkers into play just before the LPGA took over for the week. In 2016, due to shorter day lengths, evening tasks were pushed to their limits and greens mowing had to be finished with flood lights rented for the week. Luckily, weather throughout tournament week proved fortuitous and didn't cause any further delays.



*Behind 16 Green looking to the tee.
Photo credit: Rob Astley*

"Tournament golf is a very exciting experience. I believe it is very important to support peers during events. I am very grateful for the industry support I have received from local clubs and suppliers. It truly shows that we are in this together to highlight Canadian golf courses on the world stage."

— Tom Kinsman, Superintendent

The lack of rainfall prior to last year's event was felt throughout the province, and caused unnecessary pain and anguish for many. Timing of cultural practices becomes even more important during periods of stress, especially when combined with tournament preparations. Kinsman cautions that "timing is everything" with regards to striking the right balance in course maintenance, and that sometimes it is better not to do anything at all. With a busy golf schedule including a member shotgun the day before practice rounds started, he mentions that it is, "hard to condition a course with constant play until tournament week." Even during the week of the event, there is no slow periods given the charity tournaments, Pro-Ams, a local qualifier, and practice rounds. "Having them (2016 and 2017 events) six months apart is a challenge, but with having multiple years' experience, we are able to find efficiencies and improve." With great fall weather, his team was able to aerate with three-quarter inch solid tines on greens with heavy topdressing, verti-drain to a ten inch depth with three-quarter inch tines, as well as graden all tees and fairways for a total of 39 acres. They were also able to topdress fairways from 150 yards in to the front of the greens. While the mild winter has given Kinsman optimism, he remembers all too well his first year at the helm. "We had a cold

spring and were still healing during practice rounds (with an early June date). We had to be very patient waiting for soils to warm to get the golf course growing, which was very hard to do with the tournament creeping up very quickly."

When asked about unique issues with tournament setup and media on site, Kinsman is quick to point out that he has mellowed with each passing tournament. "I like consistency of message. [It is] very important to introduce yourself to all the trades and media on site, to set guidelines while on the property working together to make a successful event. At the end of the day, I need to know what is going on and nothing happens without my approval." Luckily, many of the tournament organizers are carryovers from hosting the Canadian Open, and those positive relationships continue to this day.

I greatly encourage all members of the OGSA to consider volunteering for this event. Kinsman's records show 20 volunteers and 20 staff for a total of 40 in his first year hosting the Manulife Classic, and 10 volunteers and 20 staff for a total of 30 for the event in 2016. These are peak numbers for evening shifts, but a majority of the event was run with fewer volunteers. ■

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GTI Update: Water Use in Turfgrasses

Water use is always a topic of discussion in highly managed turfgrass systems. Turfgrasses are often singled out in the urban landscapes as large users of the water supply. One research question that is under investigation at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute, is how turfgrass managers can alter their management practices to potentially decrease the amount of water used by their managed turfgrass swards.

We know that many factors affect turfgrass water use, although the most important factor appears to be the amount of available water. This means that turfgrass managers have a lot of control over water use of turfgrasses by altering their own behavior. In short, if water is not present, turfgrasses cannot use it. Craig Harnock is a graduate student at the University of Guelph, who is working on the Toronto Blue Jays Natural Turfgrass Project. Harnock made a surprising discovery about turfgrass water use; he showed that Kentucky Bluegrass and other species had significant increases in night time water loss if the turfgrass was over watered, when compared to being watered, and allowed to dry out over time. It is generally believed that plants conserve water overnight by closing their stomates. As Harnock's research demonstrated, this did not seem to be the case when water was in abundant supply. We suspect that this evolutionary response, an adaptation to wet soils, could have come about as the turfgrasses were attempting to dry out the soils quickly, hence, perhaps reducing competition from other species that prefer wetter conditions than the turfgrass.

The uniqueness of the Toronto Blue Jays project also allowed Harnock to ask questions regarding how the application of hormones such as abscisic acid (ABA) would affect evapotranspiration (ET). His research showed that the application of ABA could reduce ET by 20 per cent under well-watered conditions. While the application of ABA is not currently reasonable on a large scale, the results may lead to better breeding of turfgrasses that preserve water in the soil and can go longer between irrigation cycles.

A PhD Candidate at the University of Guelph associated with the GTI, Nancy Xiao, is also looking at how factors such as nutrient availability and mowing practices will affect the irrigation needs and water availability of turfgrasses. The research is funded with the support of the Canadian Turfgrass Research Foundation and is also part of a project that is funded by the Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance. The question of how nitrogen affects water use came about when Dr. Lyons was visiting German Greenkeepers and they commented on how they increased nitrogen fertility to aid in drought tolerance. This is different than what we are taught in North America, in that, the general belief is that increasing nitrogen rates increases lushness of the shoots, reduces root growth, results in greater irrigation needs, and causes a commensurate reduction in overall drought tolerance.

To test the water use of the turfgrass, Xiao has been using growth chambers to measure the water loss under different management regimes. Growth chambers create unique environments that can



Figure 1. Kentucky Bluegrass grown in bins that are sitting on scales under artificial lights in a growth chamber to measure real time water loss for the Toronto Blue Jays Natural Turfgrass Project.

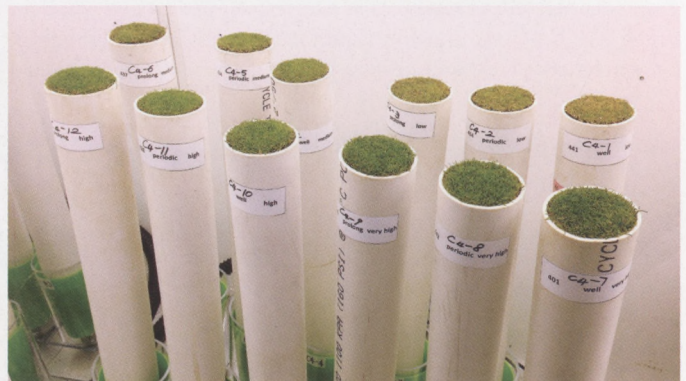


Figure 2. Bentgrass grown in a growth chamber to measure water use and photosynthesis to calculate water use efficiency, and the effects of nitrogen and other management strategies on water use of creeping bentgrass.

greatly overestimate the water use of turfgrasses. This may contribute to the belief that turfgrasses are heavy water users. In order to measure actual water use and calculated ET in the growth chambers, Dr. Michael Chang, a Postdoctoral researcher who specializes in micrometeorology and plant growth at the GTI, has developed novel scientific devices that can be used to answer Xiao's questions. While these instruments are currently being used primarily for research, they may very well someday find their way into your operations to better predict water needs and other factors affecting your water use on the golf course. ■



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MEMBER MOMENTS



1: For a good leg workout, strap on some snowshoes. **Robert Clark, Superintendent**, North Bay Golf & Country Club | **2:** Rhea. **Ashley Pierce, Superintendent**, Dundee Country Club | **3:** Looks like it's here to stay now. **Jeff Hewitt, Superintendent**, Mill Run Golf Club | **4:** Probably the best way to spend lunchtime. **Reg Langen, Assistant Superintendent**, Richmond Hill Golf Club | **5:** A great day for a snowshoe up to the lookout. **Andrew Nieder, Superintendent**, Deerhurst Resort.



The Value of Gardens on the Golf Course

I have certainly heard my fair share of opinions about gardens, in terms of whether or not they belong on the golf course aside from being around buildings and entrances. In my experience, the majority of the membership love seeing gardens, and, in fact, they wish there were more. I spend a great deal of time explaining that a bigger garden means more maintenance, which in return costs a course more money, but yet there is still a push to expand.

I would like to temporarily refrain from using the word “garden” and replace it with what it really is, a functional landscape. The truth is a golf course itself should be viewed as a functional landscape as well. An architect or designer had to design the golf course with many purposes in mind, including aesthetics. The same idea can be applied for any landscape that includes plant material. This brings up the question of what are some of the functions that a “garden” can provide on a golf course?

One purpose of a garden is that it can be used to hide infrastructure, like pump houses, wells, washrooms, or maintenance facilities, and along with concealing infrastructure, gardens can be beautiful. I am including tree and shrub planting in what I am calling a “garden”



10th tee, Muskoka Lakes G&CC

here as well. Many people think of gardens as something small, but would you call what's happening at Augusta National a garden? Perhaps not, due to the scale of it, and because it also includes large mature trees. We must consider that all those trees and Azaleas are designed to be there just like any other type of garden, however, many would probably consider it to be a beautiful landscape instead.

Let's consider what other types of functions that gardens can provide on a golf course. Another purpose of a garden could be to create privacy between a tee and a green or to create a sound barrier from public roads. You can also create focal points to direct or draw traffic as well, so that there is no confusion as to where the next hole is.

Furthermore, we can use gardens to help improve the public's perception of our game and how it impacts the environment in a positive way. We can plant material strategically to promote pollinator health or plant areas with locally indigenous tree, shrub and perennial species, which can help when lobbying to keep pesticide use at the levels required to successfully maintain turf. When approaching a tee deck or green site, gardens can be used to control walk on/walk off traffic to minimize damage due to compaction and wear. Gardens can also



Behind the 6th green, Muskoka Lakes G&CC

be used to frame vistas or separate one hole from another or they can be used as protection from errant shots.

The question of what value do you get from gardens on the golf course is important to consider. Evidently, there is value from how the garden can function at a course, but what other value is there? The attraction of wildlife is probably a good one. How many of our members get to be up close to hummingbirds in their offices in downtown Toronto everyday? I know for a fact that our membership loves being able to have that experience at the course. When a member approaches me to ask if what we have planted at the 7th tee will work at their place, I believe that is of value to the course because the member was able to learn something about improving their own garden at home, and were able to take something away that they enjoyed at the course, and mirror that experience at home. It's well known that stimulating the senses is good for your health. Gardens provide stimulation for all the senses through colour, smells, textures, and sounds. For example, wispy grasses blowing in the wind. Also, as previously mentioned, colours can create different atmospheres, whether it's cool and calm, or warm and excited, and this isn't new information to anyone in the advertising or graphic design industry. I believe that creating an atmosphere, even if it's a micro-atmosphere, like a small garden around a tee deck as you are walking onto the tee, or sitting on a bench waiting for the group ahead of you, provides really excellent value to the golf experience.

Most of the comments denouncing the value of gardens that I hear relate to their cost or the fact that they don't look good enough. Well both of these comments are usually a result of mismanagement at some level, and usually this is brought on by not investing enough resources into them. I am the first to say gardens require maintenance, just like everything, but there has to be an expectation and standard in place from the very beginning, and you must accept that they come with costs at all levels from high to low. If there are complaints, then something is wrong, and it's not the gardens fault. The plants didn't choose to be there, and it's not the customer's fault that they can recognize deficiency.

I'm not an advocate for gardens on the golf course, nor do I think that gardens are the only important form of landscaping. However, I do believe that the entire property is one big functioning landscape, which should bring value to people's golfing experience. ■



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Ten Years Ago Today

The Board of Directors in 2007 was: **Sean DeSilva**, President, Coppinwood, **Robert Burrows**, Past President, Banff Springs GC, **Jeff Stauffer**, Vice President, Credit Valley G&CC, **Jeff Alexander**, Secretary, Parry Sound G&CC, **Randy Booker**, Otter Creek GC, **Chris Andrejicka**, Essex G&CC, **Jarrold Barakett**, Deer Ridge GC, **Doug Breen**, Golf North, **Rob Gatto**, King's Forest GC, **Scott Heron**, Bigwin Island GC, **Jennifer Pendrith**, Kawartha G&CC, and **Randy Twyman**, Taboo Resort G&S. **Dorothy Hills** was the Executive Manager and **Pat Thomas** and **Deborah Badger** were the office staff..

IN MEMORY: We regret to announce the passing of **Graydon Goff**, formerly of Turf Care Products, **Ernie Amsler**, Angus Glen GC, **Jay Lavis**, Dol Turf Restoration Ltd., and **Frank Kuypers**, Shawneeki GC.

ON THE MOVE: **Keith Bartlett** moved to St. Georges G&CC and **Greg McFarlane** took over at Thornhill G&CC. **Nicholas Bell** moved to Muskoka Highlands GL, **Steven Holmes** to Rosedale GC, **Jay Weiss** to Maple Downs G&CC, **Jason Dowling** to Northern Dunes GC, **Gary Stadnek** to Westview GC, **Brian Taylor** to Knollwood GC, **Randy Booker** to Otter Creek GC, **Brian Carver** to Mystic Ridge GC, **Tyler Ruest** to Dalewood GC, **Anthony Frake** to Cranberry Golf Resort, **Michael McCarthy** to Glen Eagle GC and **Robert Burrows** to Banff Springs GC. **Chris Nelson** from Markland Wood GC left for Plant Science Inc. and was replaced by **Owen Russell**.

TOURNAMENTS: The Spring Field Day was held at Ariss GC hosted by **Rick Lane**. Low gross for 1st flight was **Chris Andrejicka**, Essex G&CC, and low gross 2nd flight winner was **Dave Schmelefski**, Ontario Seed Co.

The Can/Am Tournament was held at the Ambassador GC, hosted by **Dave Cours** and **Tom Brydon**. The low Canadian team was **Thom Charters**, Bayview G&CC and **Wayne Rath**, Magna GC with a 65.

The Pro/Super Tournament was held at Devil's Pulpit GA, hosted by **Ken Wright**. The winning team was from Credit Valley G&CC, **Jeff Stauffer** (68).

The 1st Annual Seniors Tournament was held at Mono Hills GC on July 17th, hosted by **Doug Suter** and **Alan Beeney**.

The President's Day Tournament was held at Coppinwood, hosted by **Sean DeSilva**. The winning team was from Weston G&CC, **Rob Ackermann**.

The Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament was held at Peterborough G&CC, hosted by **Greg O'Heron**. The low gross winner was **Gary Stadnek**, Westview GC, with a 79. The George Darou Trophy was won by **Bill Gilkes** with an 81.

EVENTS: The OGSA Conference & Trade Show was held in January at the Sheraton Centre chaired by **Jeff Stauffer**, Credit Valley G&CC.



L-R Spring Field Day attendees: **Kerry Whale**, **Judy Johnson**, **Jennifer Antoniak**, **Tracy Fowler**. (Photo by Jason Hanna).



L-R **Sean DeSilva**, President, OGSA and **Mike Jones**, Director, Greater Detroit GCSA.



L-R **Tom Brydon**, Assistant and **Dave Cours** Superintendent at Ambassador GC with **Chris Andrejicka**, OGSA Director.



Host Superintendent **Ken Wright** (L) and host Professional **Ray Lange** (R).



Chris Andrejicka (R) presents the trophy to the winning team of **Ian Webb** (L) and **Jeff Stauffer** (C).



Greg O'Heron Host Superintendent of the Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament.



OGSA Director, Jeff Alexander (L) presents the superintendent host plaque to Sean DeSilva (R).



1st place Weston Team with The William Sansom Trophy.



L-R Claus Zander, Vice President, Fred Zander, President, and Mike Zander, Manager of Bentgrass, in front of the Kettleby office.

The Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation was proud to announce that more than \$30,000 was raised for turf research, at the 2007 OTRF Fundraising Tournament on August 20th. The event was held at the Georgian Bay Club in Collingwood hosted by Bert McFadden. Thom Charters from Bayview G&CC was the low gross winner.

AWARDS: Congratulations to OGSA member Paul Dermott, who was named recipient of the John B. Steele Distinguished Service Award at the CGSA Fall Field Day in Whistler.

Congratulations to Blake McMaster, Royal

Montreal GC, on being named Canadian Superintendent of the Year for 2007, and also for hosting a very successful Presidents Cup.

Gordon Witteveen won the William Sansom Distinguished Service Award, and Allen (Whitey) Jones received his 50 year OGSA membership plaque. The following were presented with 25 year membership plaques: James Moore, Puslinch Lake GC, Gord Nimmo, Sawmill Creek GR&S, Bruce Burger, Lakeview GC, Rod Hermitage, Ag & Turf Power Service, Don Crymble, Markham Green GC and Sean Evelyn, Cedarhurst GC.

Congratulations to Andrew Hardy, Assistant Superintendent at Pheasant Run GC, this year's recipient of the Hugh Kirkpatrick Bursary and to Aaron Weinberg, winner of the 2007 OGSA Turfgrass Education Award.

MILESTONES: Zander Sod Company Ltd. celebrated its 50th anniversary. ■



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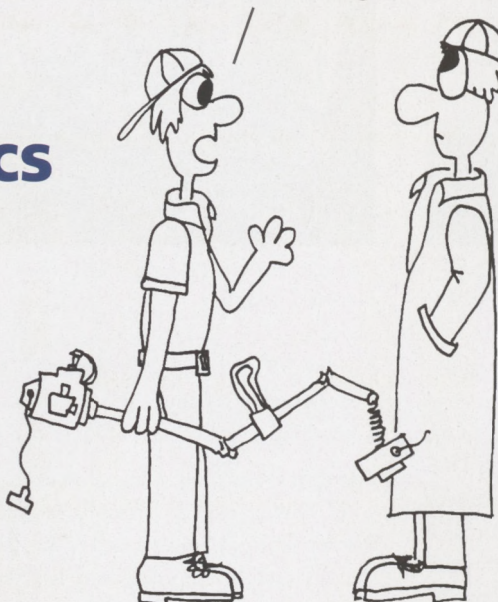
In Praise of Good Mechanics

by Doug Breen, Superintendent
GolfNorth Properties

Last week, my son Walker told me a story about an auto mechanic who tried to take advantage of his youth. The national chain (whose name shall not be spoken, but rhymes with "Grenadian Spire"), saw a student coming through the door, and assumed that he would be too ignorant (or too shy), to challenge the fact that they had managed to balloon a repair to ten times what it should have been. Fortunately, he's neither. He ran over a nail, in a parking lot next to a construction site, and took it to the closest garage (which again, I won't name, but it has a red triangular logo, with a green maple leaf on the top). What should have been less than a \$20 repair became nearly \$200 worth of windshield wipers, etc., etc., etc... Walker demanded that they "Take that crap off my car, or off my bill, or both." Nicely played.

I had a similar experience (with the same shop) as a student in the 1980's. I tried to buy a tire, and they told me that they couldn't safely let me leave without \$1200 in brake parts – the brakes had been rebuilt by my Dad's mechanic a month earlier. I once had a dealership tell me

We need a new weedeater,
this one doesn't work right.



that I had severely worn brake pads (they always try to scare you with the thought that your brakes might fail), when I had personally changed those brake pads myself – two days before! I can't tell you the story about my wife and the Mississauga tow truck driver – it was four years ago, and I'm still too angry to talk about it.

An honest mechanic is an absolute God-send. My dad had one where I grew up, and now I have one. He's rescued me a hundred times, and has never

once tried to take advantage of me. He's saved me a fortune, and I trust his judgement without question. He doesn't even try to sell unnecessary repairs to my wife!

I was mulling this over, and it occurred to me that I owe a similar debt to the many golf course mechanics, with whom I have had the privilege to work over the years. They are masters of improvisation, and have saved me thousands of dollars, while working their mechanical necromancy.

I've always been most impressed by their resourcefulness. There are literally volumes of automotive repair manuals, and dozens of Community College programs designed to prepare auto mechanics for their careers. Agricultural equipment companies have designed their own apprenticeship programs to prepare mechanics to repair tractors and combines and such. In fact, there is a University in Walla Walla, Washington, where one can obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering Technology, in cooperation with John Deere. But if someone is a master of reel grinding, or setting up the timing on an aerator – they most assuredly learned it from someone else, or more often, figured it out themselves.

Add to this, the fact that we expect them to make a 20 year old sprayer operate like a new one (without a parts manual, by the way), and demand that our mowers cut perfectly, in spite of the fact that we hire (and train) operators who seem unable to avoid potholes, bridge abutments, rocks, trees, and buildings.

The skill that I find most impressive is their ability to actually manufacture replacement parts. Sometimes out of necessity – the part is no longer available, or has to come from the Czech Republic on a slow boat and it won't be delivered until after Halloween – And sometimes to save money – "\$1500 for that? Screw it, I'll make my own!"

I had a truly gifted mechanic in the early 2000's, and he said many times, "I've done so much, with so little, for so long – that now I can do anything with nothing." He could easily build a go cart out of old National parts (I've seen him do it), and I'm pretty sure that he could have built a spacecraft out of old machinery in the equipment graveyard.

Mechanics truly are the unsung heroes of any maintenance team. The truth is, the better they are at their job, the less likely we are to notice them. Nothing protects your equipment asset, your repair budget, and your sanity; more completely than a truly great course mechanic. Plus, they're some of the most interesting folks you'll ever meet. Cheers lads, and thanks for all your help. ■

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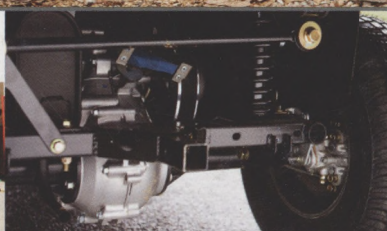
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