

November 2019

ON COURSE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

ONTARIO GOLF SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION

20 19
PGA
BETHPAGE BLACK
17 GREEN VIEWING

When the Ropes Come Down

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

PGRs and Winter Hardiness

Small Fish in a Big Pond

CANADA POST PUBLICATIONS MAIL
PUBLICATIONS AGREEMENT No. 40027105
Postmaster: Please return undeliverable copies to
The OGSA, 328 Victoria Rd. S., Guelph, ON N1L 0H2

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Jason Boyce,
OGSA President.

Where has the time gone? It seems like yesterday that I was planning my first message to the membership as president and here I am, writing my last. It's been seven years since I joined the OGSA board and although I have said this before, I can't stress enough how thankful I am for the chance to network with so many members from across Ontario, and with local and international industry leaders. Each interaction has provided me with more learning opportunities than I can count. Serving on the OGSA board is an opportunity I would recommend to anyone who wants to become more involved in the association.

I have had the chance to work with a lot of great people on the board and in the office over my tenure here, and I would like to thank each of them for taking the time to give back to this association and industry. I'd like to extend a special thank you to Sally Ross, our executive director and the association's anchor, who keeps all of us on track and moving forward. Her experience and value to the association, can only be appreciated by those that have worked with her.

As this message reaches you, many are still in the process of putting Ontario's courses to bed for the winter, hoping that Mother Nature will be kind to the turf this winter. It was a difficult start to the season for many because of winter damage and almost all of us were affected by the record setting wet and cool spring. It seems like every year we are faced with a variety of a challenges, however we always rise to the task to meet and overcome whatever obstacles are thrown our way to pull off yet another successful golf season.

All of you should be proud of what you have accomplished this year and after months of what might feel like all-consuming work, it's almost time to take some time for yourself and recharge. For some of us that might mean enjoying quite time alone, investing time in a favorite hobby or spending time with family and friends over the upcoming holiday season. Whatever you do, remember that it is important to rest; you've earned it.

After what I hope is a relaxing end of the year, let's kick off the conference season by attending the 2020 Ontario Golf Course Management Conference taking place on January 14 to the 16th. This year the conference is at the Sheraton on the Falls, in beautiful Niagara Falls. Our conference chairs, Al Schwemler, Tim Muys along with executive director Sally Ross have put together a great educational and social calendar for this three-day event. Each year we do our best to make sure delegates bring value back to their clubs through a variety of content rich educational seminars and quality time with suppliers and fellow delegates. This year is no exception and I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Thank you to all who continue to support the OGSA through your membership, sponsorship and by attending your annual conference. Thank you to those who participate on the ONCourse committee and volunteer their time at the conference and other events throughout the year. Your contributions do not go unnoticed.

I've enjoyed my time as president and as I move forward, I know that each year will continue to bring challenges, each year we'll work together as an industry to find solutions and bring alive the gorgeous courses Ontario is known for. I leave you all in good hands.

See you in 2020! ■



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ONCourse is published four times a year
(November / March / June / August)
by Blenheim INK for:



Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

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Published by Blenheim INK

Administration Office:
503-5340 Lakeshore Road
Burlington, ON L7L 7A8

www.blenheim.ca

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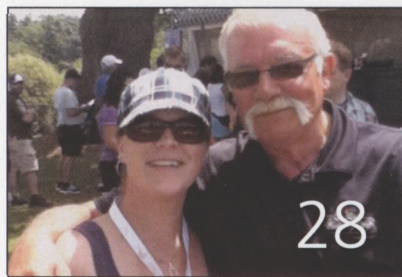
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#17 Bethpage State Park, post 2019 PGA Championship. Photo credit, Andrew Wilson.

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EDITORIAL MESSAGE



By Courtney White,
OGSA.

That's a wrap! It's November and this is the last issue of ONCourse for 2019. To echo the sentiments of our president, it's time to take a break so I will make this short and sweet!

I must admit that I wrote this long before this issue came to be. I've been off work recovering from a non-threatening surgery (no cause for concern) and in my absence, Sally Ross and Al Schwemler have taken up the editing reins for this issue. I did get a chance to read the articles and our volunteer writers have delivered a great issue! Inside you will find some interesting findings about PGRs and their impact on winter hardiness, a great article that delves into the fallout of hosting a high profile golf tournament; and Lisa Roseman's heartfelt perspective about what kind of impact working for a small course can have on one's career. This month

we highlight Greig Barker from Highland Golf Course, and Chris Cummings flirts with the idea of planting a vegetable garden on the golf course to increase employee engagement.

This magazine is one of my favourite projects and I'd like to thank the ONCourse committee for their time and dedication to this publication. It has been a pleasure working with you throughout the year and your contributions are so appreciated. I hope you're as proud of the 2019 issues as I am.

I wish all of you a wonderful restful break while the courses are quiet and we move into the holiday season. Conference season will soon be upon us and to steal from Doug Breen's Turf or Consequences, "For thousands of years humans have known how important it was to get together regularly to ensure our emotional well-being." I look forward to seeing you all at the OGCMC in Niagara Falls for education and conversation.

See you soon! ■

MARK YOUR CALENDARS UPCOMING OGSA EVENTS

OGSA Holiday Hours

The office will close
December 23, 2019 and
reopen January 2, 2020

Ontario Golf Course Management Conference

Sheraton on the Falls Conference
Centre, Niagara Falls
January 14-16, 2020

OGSA AGM

Sheraton on the Falls
Conference Centre
Fallsview Studio
January 16, 2020

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WHAT'S NEW

By Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Director.



GLAGS McClumpha Year end Event (L-R) Chris Andrejicka, Essex G&CC, wins the George Darou Trophy; presented by OGSA Past President, Mark Prieur.

Membership Dues

Dues were payable and due on October 1st, 2019. To avoid service interruption please pay your dues as soon as possible. Thank you for your continued support.

News From The Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP)

Proposed changes to the Pesticide act and O. Reg. 63/09 on the Environmental Bill of Rights website for public comment. Please follow the link to read about the proposed changes. We encourage all of you to submit a positive comment promoting these changes at <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-0601>.

The MECP is also **proposing** to eliminate the annual public meeting requirement to present the Annual Report – Class 9 Pesticide use.

It should be noted that you are still required to hold your meeting to present the 2018 report by November 30.

Supporting Turf Research

This past August, OGSA president Jason Boyce, presented a cheque for \$20,000.00 to the OTRF president, Alex Dickie, at the OTRF fundraising tournament which was held at Carrying Place Golf & Country Club.

Conference Early Bird Deadline

The Early Bird registration deadline is November 30, 2019. Please register as soon as possible to save on your costs to attend and to facilitate our planning process. It is good to note, that both parking (self) and wi-fi are included in your room charges. It is important that you book within our room block to acquire these concessions that we have negotiated with the facility. Please feel free to contact anyone in the office if you need assistance with either registration or booking your accommodation.

WELCOME to Our New Members

Matt Breznikar Granite Golf Club	Class F
Stuart Sheridan Capilano Golf & Country Club	Class B
Jonah De Caro The Country Club	Class C
Stuart Pole Glen Abbey Golf Course	Class C
Ken Malcolmson University of Guelph	Class S
Patrick Goodman University of Guelph	Class S
Tommy Wang University of Guelph	Class S
Matthew Kerr-Taylor University of Guelph	Class S
Joshua Carr University of Guelph	Class S
Devyn Pohar University of Guelph	Class S
Brooks Primo University of Guelph	Class S
Josh Harrop University of Guelph	Class S
Evan Rodgers Islington Golf Club	Class C
Ian Hunter Angus Glen Golf Club	Class C

Notice Of Annual General Meeting

The OGSA Annual General Meeting will be held in Niagara Falls, Ontario at the Sheraton on the Falls Conference Centre, in the Fallsview Studio, on Thursday, January 16th at 8:00 AM. Annual reports and financial statements will be available at the meeting and posted online shortly thereafter. Official notice of meeting and agenda will be posted on the OGSA website in accordance with our by-laws. ■

Superintendent Recognition



(L-R) Darren Little, Cedar Brae GC, accepts recognition plaque for hosting the Canadian Men's Senior Championship; presented by OGSA Director, Ian McQueen.



(L-R) Gregory McFarlane, The Thornhill Club, accepts recognition plaque for hosting the U.S Amateur Qualifier; presented by OGSA Director, Ian McQueen.



(L-R) John McLinden, Ladies Golf Club of Toronto, accepts recognition plaque for hosting the Canadian Ontario Women's Four-ball Championship; presented by OGSA Director, Ian McQueen.



(L-R) Matt Hewitt and grounds crew, Deer Creek GC, accepts recognition plaque for hosting the Ontario Bantam (U15) Boys' & Girls' Championships; presented by OGSA Secretary/Treasurer, Al Schwemler.

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GC HIGHLIGHT & MEMBER PROFILE



Highland Country Club

10th Hole

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Member since 1999

Greig Barker

Golf Course Superintendent, Highland Country Club

*By Ryan Marangoni, Assistant Superintendent,
Burlington G&CC.
Photos provided by Greig Barker.*

About the Course

Vintage 1922 Stanley Thompson design with original push-up greens, nestled in the heart of London Ontario.

Private, semi-private, public, municipal, resort? Private

Architect: Stanley Thompson

Number of holes: 18 Holes

Number rounds annually: 26,000

Practice Facility: Range + short game

Number of staff year round, seasonal:
20 year round, 3 over winter

How many mechanics, assistants:
Asst. Paul Snelgrove & Mech. Allan Wood

The inception of Greig Barker's career probably started out very similar to most in the turfgrass industry. A soon to be graduate from Guelph University with a Science and Horticulture Associate Degree, and experience working for Parks and Recreation in a nursery - he decided to apply to Lakewood Golf Course in Windsor Ontario, because it had "landscaping" in the job description. Not long after, Barker met and inquired about working for young Dean Baker who was the Superintendent at Glen Abbey. Mr. Baker spoke at one of Barker's Turf Club meetings and Barker became intrigued by the prospect of working at a televised event such as the Canadian Open. Landing a position on the crew at Glen Abbey was short-lived, lasting just one season but that season just happened to be the year 2000, and a defining year for Barker. Not only was Y2K the iconic year that technology didn't fail us, Tiger Woods decided to play in the Canadian Open (and won), and most notably Barker married his



*Greig Barker, Golf Course Superintendent,
Highland Country Club.*

wife, Renee, just one and a half weeks after the tournament. After valuable time spent at Glen Abbey, Barker suspected he could become a Golf Course Superintendent one day. "Once I got to the Abbey, I knew I wanted to do this forever."

Barker's next move was to join some familiar faces where he proved himself as a skilled greenskeeper and eventually received a promotion to become Dean Baker's assistant at The Club at North Halton. Here,

In the Hot Seat

Q: Favourite Major?

A: US Open

Q: Best piece of turf equipment?

A: Vertidrain & Topdresser

Q: Favourite meal?

A: Steak tacos from Highland CC

Q: Ultimate foursome: You and which three?

A: Dean Baker, Nolan Barker & John Grant Jr. (Professional Lacrosse player)

Q: Lowest round ever and where?

A: 88 at Roseland Golf Club

Q: Favourite movie?

A: Usual Suspects

Q: Favourite golf course?

A: Shinnecock Hills

Q: Favourite course designer?

A: Stanley Thompson

Q: Favourite Band?

A: Dave Matthews Band & The Strumbellas

he gained treasured experience working closely with Baker, who not only has a great work ethic, but also knows how to have fun. Baker instilled the importance of developing and cultivating a strong team into Barker; a lesson Barker carries with him to this day, "I believe, at least the same amount of time and effort needs to go into people management as turf management; focus on the human side even more than the turf side." Barker often recalls Baker's upbeat personality and his favorite saying, which is "procrastination is the silent killer." For Barker this means, "You cannot physically do everything all at once. It is about time management, delegation and doing the big things first. Give way to the most important priorities and the rest will fall in line. Complacency did not help anybody. If you are always doing something or trying new things, then you cannot be accused of not applying yourself."

Prized messages like this helped Barker through his journey to becoming Highland Country Club's Golf Course Superintendent. He is extremely proud of the evolution of the golf course during this time. Greig endured the initial challenges of re-locating his young family from Dundas to London, Ontario; his



Greig coaching his son Nolan during a rep lacrosse game.

wife Renee, two-year-old Ali and one-year-old Nolan. A move is difficult for any family, but Barker had the additional challenge of taking over for a superintendent who had been at the club for 36 years.

Needless to say, he knew there would be some growing pains. "It is hard to implement change or a different way of thinking when colleagues and staff have gotten used to doing certain things a certain way for as long as they had, but successful change is about building trust and proving yourself."

Adapting to whatever is thrown at you is very familiar to golf course superintendents



Greig Barker and his wife, Renee.

and that is no different for Barker. Barker has learned to roll with the punches and alter his philosophies since arriving at Highland Country Club. In the beginning, he thought it was customary to have an elaborate succession plan for the greens department. Employees would arrive, stay for only a few years, gain knowledge and experience and then leave for their next opportunity. Albeit great for that employee and their career, it constantly left Barker in a tough spot trying to fill these positions. That is in the past now. Currently, his core group of full-time employees are tight and have a copious amount of work

What You Need to Know

Predominant grass type: Poa/ Bent

Predominant soil type: Clay

Types of greens: Original push-up

Course length: 6584

Size of greens: 3 acres

Size of tees: 2 acres

Size of fairways: 22 acres

Major Challenges: Soil type – Clay! Very slow to dry, when its wet it stays wet for a long time.

"Greig has all the qualities of a great superintendent. The ability to grow strong, healthy turfgrass; the HR skill in managing a dedicated team; the ability to handle his toughest critics (customer service 101) and while doing all of this, he keeps his family close and he never loses his sense of humor!"

– Dean Baker, Superintendent, Burlington Golf & Country Club.



Maggie the dog.



Highland Country Club, #12 overlooking #2.

experience under their belts. His assistant, Paul Snelgrove, and mechanic, Allan Wood, have been at the club for 20 years. The next group of team members are the semi-retired casual folks and even they have been at the club for 15 plus years. The greenkeeping team is rounded out by two young “turf minds” who have aspirations to achieve a post-secondary turfgrass education and lastly, are the students looking for summer work who are recruited from two nearby universities. In a day and age where some golf courses have a difficult time finding personnel, Barker and his team are lucky that they are located close to highly populated educational institutions and Barker takes full advantage of the influx of new students every year.

With human resources under control, another area of the golf course that Barker had to adjust his practices for, was clay. Not the type of clay you spin on a potter’s wheel in hopes of creating a bowl, but the type of clay that does not drain, that gets compacted easily, and is not the most ideal growing medium for turfgrasses. The golf course is a vintage, 1922 Stanley Thompson design, with push up greens and sits on a bed of clay. When asked about the soil type Barker states, “When it rains, we get wet... and we stay wet.”

Over the years, Barker has overseen kilometres and kilometres of drain tile getting installed across the property. Herringbone,

laterals and parallel lines can all be found at in the majority of fairways and rough. Barker has definitely learned to deal with it and has altered the watering practices due to the clay as well as revised the turf nutrition program. All seems to be going well considering that Barker, his team and the golf course just

“Enjoying quality time with loved ones and working hard are Barker’s prerogatives.

Nevertheless, he feels much of the credit in his journey to becoming a superintendent is owed to staying in touch with colleagues and building his vast network from such a young age.”

hosted the Mackenzie Tour Canada Life Championship, for the fifth straight year; an honoured accomplishment that keeps Barker very busy throughout the season preparing for the event.

Summer is notably busy for all golf course superintendents, especially for Barker who lives on the property. If there is one thing

Barker values more than the golf course, it is his family. However, living on the golf course makes it difficult to “leave the office” when he goes home. Barker is highly involved with extracurricular activities to keep his mind off the course including being a volunteer on the executive board of the London Minor League Lacrosse Association and he is the coach of Nolan’s lacrosse team. In addition to lacrosse, Barker and his family spend as much time as they can at the cottage playing with Maggie, their six month old border collie, and relaxing on the shores of Lake Huron in Bayfield, Ontario. Most of the cottage time happens in the fall and winter, so a mild autumn is high on the family’s wish list so that they can spend as much time as possible at the lake, before the weather turns. The Barker family is really looking forward to their Christmas vacation when they return to the Mayan Riviera, a family favourite destination.

Enjoying quality time with loved ones and working hard are Barker’s prerogatives. Nevertheless, he feels much of the credit in his journey to becoming a superintendent is owed to staying in touch with colleagues and building his vast network from such a young age. Barker recognizes it is through relationships with teachers, mentors, other superintendents and suppliers that can help you achieve your goals. Sound advice from the once nursery laborer turned golf course superintendent, Greig Barker. ■



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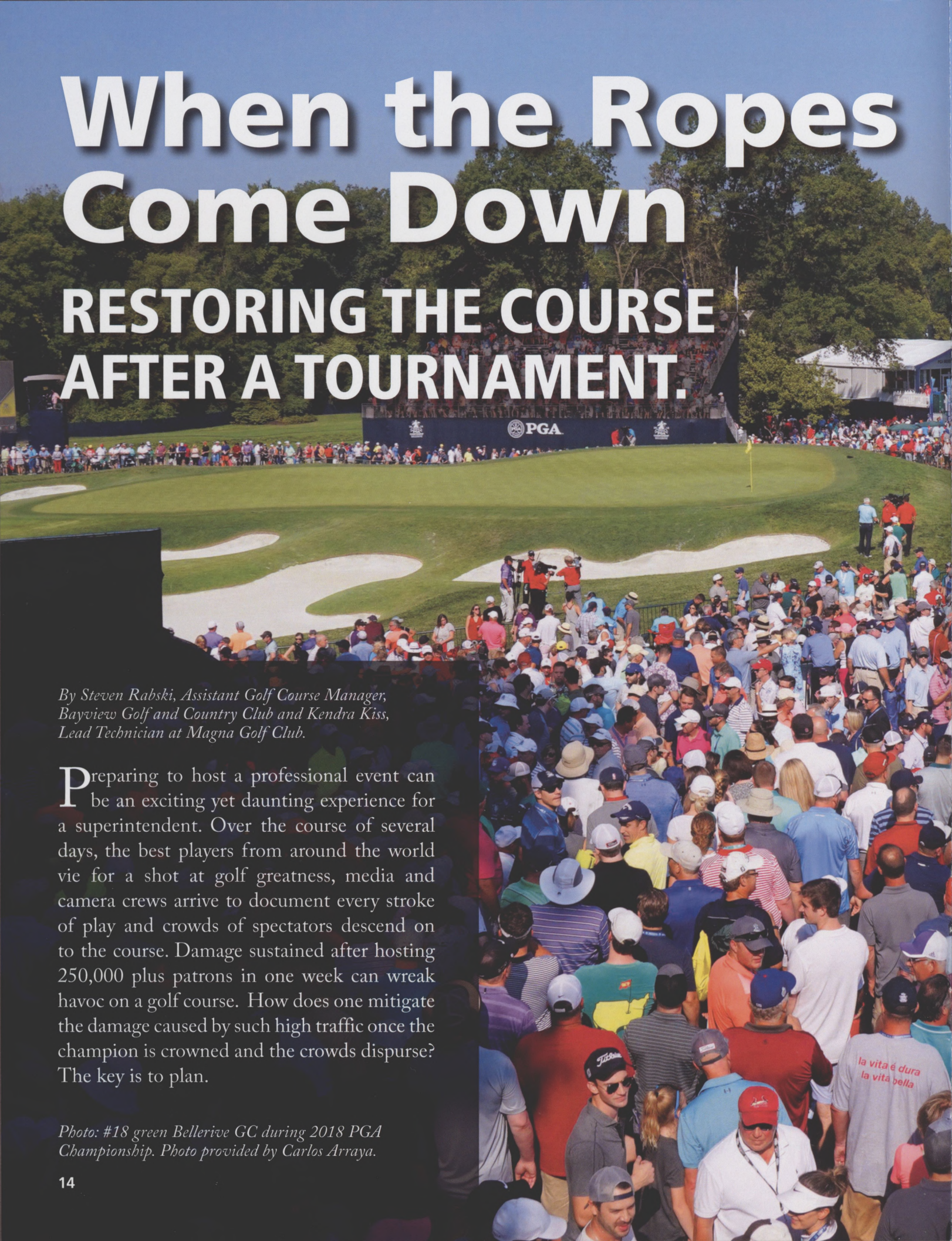
When the Ropes Come Down

RESTORING THE COURSE AFTER A TOURNAMENT.

*By Steven Rabski, Assistant Golf Course Manager,
Bayview Golf and Country Club and Kendra Kiss,
Lead Technician at Magna Golf Club.*

Preparing to host a professional event can be an exciting yet daunting experience for a superintendent. Over the course of several days, the best players from around the world vie for a shot at golf greatness, media and camera crews arrive to document every stroke of play and crowds of spectators descend on to the course. Damage sustained after hosting 250,000 plus patrons in one week can wreak havoc on a golf course. How does one mitigate the damage caused by such high traffic once the champion is crowned and the crowds disperse? The key is to plan.

*Photo: #18 green Bellerive GC during 2018 PGA
Championship. Photo provided by Carlos Arraya.*





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#17 Bethpage State Park, post 2019 PGA Championship. Photo credit, Andrew Wilson.

For Carlos Arraya, CGCS, Director of Grounds and Agronomy at Bellerive Golf Club and host of the 2018 PGA Championship, this meant assembling small teams within his larger team of assistants and interns. He assigned an assistant and two interns to prepare for the grandstands and infrastructure builds, and he appointed a team member to lead the restoration efforts. Arraya says, "Not only should you prepare an executable restoration plan for your team, but also prepare yourself, your club and its members for the psychological challenges in dealing with a not so perfect golf course during restoration." Arraya used the expected influx of wear and tear on the golf course from the tournament activity as an opportunity to plan for future improvements. During the planning phase, he communicated to the membership ways to improve the golf course once the tournament was over. Feedback was collected and incorporated into the recovery plan.

Jon Jennings, CGCS, Golf Course Superintendent at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club and host of the 2018 U.S. Open explains that building strong relationships with contractors and

suppliers is essential to executing an efficient recovery. Jennings kept contractors and suppliers up to speed on the approximate footprint of disruption. He also stressed the importance of having cost agreed upon prior to the commencement of the restoration

When the glitz and glam of
hosting a major tournament
diminishes, and the ropes
come down the golf course
might feel like a beaten down
ghost town.

work, which is helpful when it comes to updating and communicating with board members.

Taking the time to visit sites currently hosting a major event or connecting with fellow superintendents who have hosted significant tournaments in the past is also time well spent. Andrew Wilson, Director of Agronomy at Bethpage State Park and host of the 2019 PGA Championship, traveled to Baltusrol, Bellerive, Hazeltine, TPC Potomac and Shinnecock Hills to have a firsthand look at how they organized their crews and prepared for playing conditions. "This gave me great perspective. I knew tournament prep would not be easy, however, I also knew that it was

within our team's skill set to do a great job."

To aid in a successful restoration, data can be collected well in advance of any infrastructure builds. The use of videos, pictures and



#18 right side of fairway, TPC Scottsdale, post Waste Management Phoenix Open. Photo credit, Blake Meentemeyer.

drone footage was utilized at Bellerive to create a hole by hole catalog of the golf course. This not only enabled Arraya and his team to take an “inventory” of their property, but it also helped maintain the integrity of the golf course during restoration. Obtaining GPS documentation of all sprinkler heads, drainage lines, catch basins and other key parts of the golf course ahead of time, made for a quick locate after the structures were removed. This helped the contractors when it came to identifying important facets of the golf course to avoid potential disaster.

For Blake Meentemeyer, Director of Golf Course Maintenance Operations and his team at TPC Scottsdale, infrastructure was the main focus of his tournament preparation. Due to the overwhelming size of the spectator areas during the Waste Management Phoenix Open (the buildout takes four and a half months, two months to tear down), Meentemeyer took preventative measures to guarantee that the damage to his irrigation system would be minimized. Marking heads that were near high traffic areas with rebar made for quick identification for the contracting teams during buildout and take-down.

For Wilson and his team, it was clear that the golf course needed thriving turf for the 2019 PGA Championship in early May. This is no easy feat for courses in the northeast. Wilson’s biggest concern going into the tournament was the rough. Growing conditions in the month of May are usually ideal, however, the rough is generally just starting to “wake up” which posed a major

challenge. Applying higher than normal rates of fertilizer early in the spring helped the rough perform during the tournament and sustain itself well after the crowds had left the property. Wilson stated, “We did not want just green, we needed vigorous dense turf and the extra fertilizer definitely provided the playing conditions we were looking for. In fact, the surrounds have stood up to traffic the rest of the year better than in years past.” Successful planning combined with some fortunate dry, warm weather helped Wilson achieve the results he was looking for and in doing so, accelerated the recovery process.

For Chris Tritabaugh, Golf Course Superintendent at Hazeltine National Golf Club, the rough also seemed to be a focus during the 2016 Ryder Cup. Chris applied two granular applications to his rough instead of his usual one. The hope was that the extra fertilizer would provide all of the nutrients needed to sustain the turf for the entire week of traffic it was about to receive during the Ryder Cup.

Pretournament planning is half the battle, and with luck will aid in post tournament activity. Arraya had the largest buildout in PGA of America’s history with the build starting 12 months prior to the tournament, and a tear down time of three and a half months. As the structures come down and the cleanup begins, revisiting the information gathered during the planning stage is critical at this time. Bellerive had a six step process that defined, highlighted and tracked the restoration work.



Behind #10 green, TPC Scottsdale. post Waste Management Phoenix Open. Photo credit, Blake Meentemeyer.

Bellerive's 6 Step Process

- Step 1 Rebuild areas to their original look and feel.
- Step 2 Restore infrastructure at the area (drains, irrigation heads).
- Step 3 Plant landscape (if applicable).
- Step 4 Seed or sod area.
- Step 5 Follow grow in procedures for selected plant and turf species.
- Step 6 Communicate each set to the membership via digital platforms.

Despite the detailed planning, setbacks happen. For Arraya, it was the amount of compaction that the spectators created. He did not expect the damage to the golf course trees and landscape areas to be as significant as it was. Since the championship, several trees have died or suffered significant health problems due to compaction.

The native rough and non-play areas at Shinnecock Hills also took a hit because of compaction. Jennings' solution was to rototill in order to blend damaged grass with underlying soil and spray hydromulch. A four way blend of seed was used and the application rate varied upon location. Closer to play areas, seeding was lighter so play would not be encumbered.

The timing of a tournament can also contribute to the rate of recovery. With the 2019 PGA Championship date changing to May, the turf at Bethpage was approaching its best natural growing conditions. The greens were dryjected the Wednesday following the championship and all courses were open for Memorial Day weekend. Wilson gives credit to Mother Nature for not giving them any extreme heat/cold or wet/dry cycles for two weeks on either side of the tournament, which he feels probably did more for recovery than anything he and his crew could have done.

The opposite can be said for Arraya who had to deal with flash floods and steady rains which forced them to change their focus



Hazeltine after Ryder Cup, rope line. Photo credit, Chris Tritabaugh.

daily. Although the rain may have slowed their recovery efforts, Arraya focuses on the positive. The inclement weather allowed his team to revisit their objectives leading to more improvements in their restoration goals. At their current pace, he expects the course to be fully restored by the 2020 season.

When the glitz and glam of hosting a major tournament diminishes, and the ropes come down the golf course might feel like a beaten down ghost town. Laying the foundation for a successful resurrection begins... well, at the beginning. Planning and strategy is key but the main sentiments echoed among the host superintendents is patience and trust. Tritabaugh states, "You have to be willing to trust your staff and know they are going to take just as much pride in the event as you are. You'll get pulled in directions you'd never imagine and you need to be confident that the work is going on just the way you'd want it to go on when you're not able to be in the mix." Wilson adds, "Some of your turf will get damaged either through ignorance or accident. You may work very hard to maintain high standards, but areas of the property will become an afterthought and you will just have to accept that and get on with it. There is a point you really just get caught in the flow and some things will be out of your control, so be willing to accept that too." ■



Shinnecock Hills, tilling fescue areas post 2018 U.S. Open. Photo, John Jennings.

Exploring PGRs and Winter Hardiness



By Cam Shaw, Communications & Outreach Coordinator, Guelph Turfgrass Institute.

Winter can be tough on turf; and spring even tougher. In 2017, Dr. Eric Lyons and grad student Corey Flude began exploring late fall applications of plant growth regulators (PGRs) and how they may play a role in winter survival or greens height turf.

Of all the stresses that grass is put through, none is more rigorous and unpredictable than those of a harsh winter and fluctuating spring. Cold acclimation is an essential ingredient in the winter survival process, and one that has been studied in depth. Turf managers invest a tremendous amount of time and energy in the fall (ensuring ideal fall fertility and timing, promoting good drainage and environmental conditions, heavy topdressing, managing appropriate soil moisture etc...) to ensure a smooth cold acclimation process and establish good winter hardiness. Yet, attaining ideal cold acclimation has no correlation on

the de-acclimation process come spring. De-acclimation represents the reverse physical changes the grass plant undergoes as it “wakes up” to the warmer seasonal temperatures. Those who have suffered

Those who have suffered winter's wrath are likely to agree that most winter damage tends to occur during the fragile spring de-acclimation process.

winter's wrath are likely to agree that most winter damage tends to occur during the fragile spring de-acclimation process. Freeze-thaw cycles can wreak havoc on the plant's physical anatomy, metabolic

activity, health and overall tolerance of stresses. This is a particularly challenging notion because little can be done at this time, outside of hoping and praying, to influence a favourable outcome; you are essentially at the mercy of Mother Nature. That is where the inspiration for this research project came from. Dr. Eric Lyons and graduate student Corey Flude wanted to explore fall management strategies that could help influence more favourable spring de-acclimation outcomes for various grass species. Previous research done at Michigan State by Kevin Laskowski et. al. suggested that PGRs may be able to play a role in the cold acclimation and de-acclimation process of turfgrass.

The research project looked at manipulating the in-plant content, or ratio, of two basic plant hormones - abscisic acid and gibberellic acid. In general terms, abscisic acid is associated with seed dormancy, cold acclimation and implicated increases in overall cold tolerance. In other words, this hormone induces



Grad student Corey Flude harvesting CB and Poa plugs at the GTI's USGA green. Photo credit, Cam Shaw.



trinexapac-ethyl (TE) would affect the in-plant ratios of these two hormones, and in turn, how that would influence the cold acclimation and de-acclimation processes, in addition to overall winter hardiness.

METHOD:

In order to assess the effect PGRs play in the cold acclimation and de-acclimation process, creeping bentgrass (CB) and annual bluegrass (poa) plugs were harvested from the GTI's USGA green in the fall. Three different PGRs were applied prior to dormancy, after which the plugs were returned to the field to complete a normal cold-acclimation cycle. Throughout the winter season, data was collected regularly on the success of cold acclimation using a variety of benchmarks such as measuring respiration levels, photosynthesis levels, hormone production and other metrics. At this point the project diverged into two different sub-sets; a portion of the plugs were left in the field to ride out the winter and undergo normal field de-acclimation in late winter/early spring, while the remaining plugs were brought inside and put into a refrigerated growth chamber where they underwent a lab-based, controlled de-acclimation process over five days. For the purpose of this article, we are focussing on the observations and data collected from the plugs that remained in the field – as they would be most representative of how a golf green, tee or fairway would de-acclimate.

Throughout the de-acclimation process, sets of plugs were continuously harvested and individual tillers were extracted, planted and observed for growth. If after seven days, the plant produced new tissue (roots and shoots) it was considered alive. This was how Flude monitored which PGR treatments had an effect (positive or negative) on how well the turf successfully de-acclimated and resumed healthy and normal spring function.

List of Tested PGRs and Rates Used

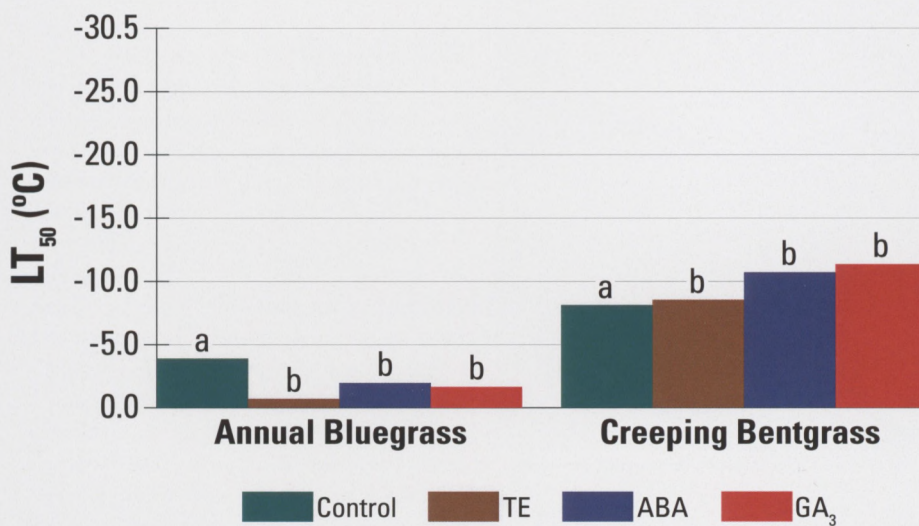
TREATMENT	RATE
ABSCISIC ACID (ABA)	11.1 MG/M ² (0.01 G/100 M ²)
TRINEXPAC-ETHYL (TE)	3.8 ML/100 M ²
GIBBERELIC ACID (GA3)	2.0 MG/M ² (0.002 G/100 M ²)
CONTROL	UNTREATED

physical changes that promote stress tolerance, or in this case, winter hardiness. Gibberellic acid is more closely associated with seed germination, stem elongation, meristematic tissue development and floral development. Essentially, gibberellic acid

induces physical changes that focus on growth rather than stress tolerance. As a result, it is an essential ingredient to the de-acclimation process and inducing metabolic activity come spring. Flude and Lyons both wanted to explore how



After cold acclimation, simulated freezing, and de-acclimation, individual tillers were removed from plugs and planted in trays. Data was collected based on the regrowth of these tillers to quantify success of cold acclimation, lethal temperatures and success of de-acclimation. Photo credit, Cam Shaw, GTI.



Assessment of acclimation status on April 22nd by lethal temperature of 50% survival (LT₅₀) for annual bluegrass and creeping bentgrass to a minimum temperature of -24°C. NOTE: The letter above the bars denote statistical differences in the values. Letters that are the same in each treatment denote no significant statistical difference.

CONCLUSIONS:

Based on the results of this study, PGR applications in the fall were observed to be detrimental to the survival of poa populations – particularly the application of TE. Clearly, this is not ideal if you have high populations of annual bluegrass on your surfaces and need to preserve them through winter. Therefore, those who manage poa surfaces and apply TE throughout the season should re-evaluate their program leading into the fall. In the turf industry, it is common knowledge that poa has reduced winter tolerance when compared to CB, but data collected from this project suggests that PGR applications in the fall may further reduce its tolerance and increase susceptibility of sustaining winter injury.

Conversely, the results for CB proved more favourable but still need more studying. Based

on data collected in this project, there is some evidence that supports PGR use in the fall could help to maintain the cold-acclimation status of CB. This is especially important in the spring as temperatures rise and grass becomes more likely to de-acclimate creating increased susceptibility to various late-winter/early-spring injuries.

You may be quick to notice that the survival results of CB treated with TE are not dramatically different from the control, however when compared to poa's reduced survival, this data could be of substantial value. For those with predominantly CB surfaces who are exploring strategies to reduce existing poa populations or keep poa from encroaching into newly established CB greens, TE applications in the fall could be worth looking into. ■



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Pro/Super Challenge Recap



(L-R) Ian McQueen presents the winning team, Brad Bell and Martin Mitchell, Lakeview GC, with the Bill Bowen Trophy.



(L-R) Host Superintendent, Dave Paterson is presented with a recognition plaque by Ian McQueen, OGSA Director.

By Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Director.

The rescheduled date of September 16, 2019 dawned cool and clear, as golfers arrived at Summit Golf & Country Club, enjoyed breakfast and prepared to tee off at 9AM.

The golfers from Summit had a speedy round, finishing well over an hour ahead of the other groups, and finally when everyone was in the club house, OGSA Director Ian McQueen introduced some special guests who had been invited, courtesy of the association.

Rhod Trainor and Rob McDannold, Dennis Piccolo and Randy Taylor were introduced as both Rhod and Dennis are retiring or have retired this year. Ian also introduced Mark Prieur and his guest Donovan Tay. Mark was invited to acknowledge his long-time commitment to the OGSA Board of Directors.

Following lunch, the prizes were awarded, and the big winners of the day were the pair from Lakeview GC; Brad Bell and Martin Mitchell who came in first with a 62 followed closely by Dave Paterson and Ian Leggat from Summit GC with a 64. The third place team was Sean Brillinger and Mark Napier from Heron Point Golf Links with a 65. Also with a 65 was Paul Scenna and Drew Smythe from Beacon Hall GC, however retrogression calculated on the back nine, awarded 3rd place to the Heron Point team.

Golf Professional Randy Taylor (St. Catharines G & CC) won the closest to the pin and Michael Horsley (The Donalda Club) had the longest drive.

Superintendents Stephen Hicks (Brantford G & CC) was closest to the pin and Brad Bell (Lakeview GC) had the longest drive.

All 60 golfers entered the skins competition, and there were four pairs who each received \$150.00 Lakeview GC, Riverbend GC, Oslerbrook G&CC, and The Country Club.

Ian went on to thank all the clubhouse staff at Summit GC, the kitchen staff and the pro shop staff including the Head Golf Professional, Sarah Boyce.

Plaques were awarded to both Dave Paterson and Ian Leggat from Summit GC for an outstanding day and a course that was in exceptional condition. ■

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As budgets get tighter and staffing remains a challenge, leaders must become creative to overcome obstacles in order to retain staff. The labour market is competitive; Statistics Canada's unemployment numbers are amongst the lowest in recent history, job opportunities are plentiful and wages in the service industry range between \$14-20 per hour. People are willing to move around for a dollar more an hour, or choose a job that aligns with their value system but pays less.

Planting a vegetable garden on the course and sending staff home with a basket full of organic veggies that they helped to grow, can create a unique work culture, and be perceived as an excellent employee benefit. Not to mention your club's chef might love to add homegrown seasonal ingredients to their menu. Consumers are becoming finicky about what they eat and where. Offering meals made from local produce can be a key selling feature for members and the public.

Due to the increase in minimum wage, places like Tim Hortons, Macdonald's, the general landscape/horticulture industry, and the new player in town, the Cannabis cultivation industry, are competing for labour with golf courses.

The one thing that golf courses have over other businesses competing in the same wage range is space; something most individuals also lack. Implementing a project like a vegetable garden isn't easy, but golf courses are often a community within itself. We work to feed our families and you may find that family members and club volunteers want to help as well. There's really nothing more

rewarding than growing your own vegetables and if you don't have the space to do an in-ground garden you can plant in pots.

Take stock of your equipment. Golf courses typically have access to specialized equipment to create vegetable gardens like, tractors, rototillers, material moving, and

There's really nothing more rewarding than growing your own vegetables and if you don't have the space to do an in-ground garden you can also plant in pots.

handling equipment. And, if the equipment is not readily available, the golf course industry is a tight knit community where borrowing equipment is commonplace. So those kinds of resources might not be in short supply.

Open up dialogue with your staff to establish whether there is an interest, and if there is, then locate a community garden to research how they organize personnel to complete the gardening tasks and overcome challenges.

The size of your staff and access to equipment will determine the size of the garden. So what can you grow to maximize your space and provide big yields?

One of my all-time favourites is butternut squash, which is a winter squash. Although it takes up more space, it gives high yields and keeps for a long time. Harvested in late September early October, squash will safely store for three to six months if kept in a cool dry place. There are many varieties of squash that fall into this category of high yields and long shelf lives.

Zucchini, also known as summer squash, is a high yield crop but doesn't store for prolonged periods of time.

Potatoes are another high yielding crop, easy to grow, and don't necessarily take up a lot of space. Since the maturation process of different varieties of potatoes varies, you can have harvest potatoes at different times of the growing season. These also have a fairly decent storage life, stretching into the winter months.

Beets are easy to grow and store well. While they are a root vegetable, their leafy tops are super nutritious and can be used in salads or sautéed, they can be picked and consumed throughout the growing season. There are varieties of beets that can be picked earlier than others, so you can really stretch out their harvest.

For those who like Kale, it's easy to grow, produces lots of leaves per plant, and is consumable from the beginning of the growing season right until the end of its life cycle.

We certainly can't forget tomatoes. There are hundreds of tomato varieties for all sorts of uses: sauces, sliced on a sandwich or used as garnishes. There are many ripening times for tomato varieties, so the tomato availability can be stretched for as long as your garden design allows.

Staffing a great golf course maintenance team can be a huge challenge. Hiring, training, retaining, motivating, and creating a positive culture can be very difficult. It's an ongoing challenge and has been for a long time. There is no perfect solution. I'm not saying getting your staff to grow their own produce will solve every challenge, nor will it be easy. But nothing of any value, rarely is. It's just an idea I thought I would throw out there. ■



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KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020

Jack Armstrong



Best known as the colorful and entertaining voice of the of the 2019 NBA Championship winning Toronto Raptors, Jack Armstrong has spent more than two decades covering the NBA and College basketball for TSN and NBA TV.

Before becoming a broadcaster, Jack spent ten years as the head basketball coach at Niagara University where he was named Division I New York State and MAAC Coach of the year for the 1992/93 season. Jack served four years as an assistant coach at his Alma Mater, Fordham University (Bronx, NY) where he also earned his BA in History and an MA in Public Communications.

An avid marathon runner, Jack believes that anything is possible and brings his energy, coaching philosophy and kind heart to everything he does.

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SPEAKER LINEUP

Assistants' Symposium

- Bobby Cook, Andrew Krek, Ken Tilt - Moderated by Scott White (Syngenta)

Agronomic Testing on Golf Courses: Soil, Water, Tissue, Physical

- Brian Mavis, Mavis Consulting Agronomist

Golf Course Superintendents Can Influence Design

- Christine Fraser, Golf Course Architect

Basic Tactics for In House Drainage

- Steve Ami, Kelly Ami Drainage

The Process: Renovating Greens at North Shore CC

- Dan Dinelli, Superintendent North Shore Country Club, Glenview Illinois

Managing Problematic Earthworms / Managing Severe Insect Pests

- Ben McGraw, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Turfgrass Science, Penn. State University

Winterkill: Causes, Prevention & Reestablishment

- Kevin Frank, Ph.D., Professor, State Turf Extension Specialist, MSU



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Twenty Years Ago Today

THE 1999 OGSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



1999 Board of Directors: (Back row L-R): David Cours, Jeff Burgess, Rob Ackermann, Keith Bartlett, Mark Piccolo, Simon George, Lamont Anderson (1998 director), John Gravett, Jim Flett. (Front row L-R): Dean Baker, Ian Bowen. (Bob Heron and Paul Scenna not available for photo).

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 1999, the Board of Directors of the OGSA were Ian Bowen (President), Oshawa GC, Simon George (Past President), Oakville GC, Keith Bartlett (Vice President), Thornhill CC, John Gravett, Granite GC, Jim Flett, Muskoka Lakes G & CC, Rob Ackermann, Markland Wood GC, Dean Baker, Glen Abbey GC, Jeff Burgess, Weston G & CC, Dave Cours, Erie Shores G & CC, Bob Heron, Beacon Hall GC, Mark Piccolo, Galt CC and Paul Scenna, Donalda Club.

ON THE MOVE

Bob Brewster, from The Toronto GC, went to Mississauga and Al Schwemler, Assistant, took over. John Gravett moved to the new Granite GC from Credit Valley G & CC and his assistant Jeff Stauffer took over. Paul White left Mississauga G & CC and went to the Briars Golf Club. North Granite Ridge GC hired a new superintendent Dan Weichers. Gordon Witteveen retired from The Board of Trade CC. Mark Scenna started working for Plant Products as Technical Sales Representative.

MILESTONES

The OGSA celebrated their 75th Anniversary and held a 75th Anniversary Golf Tournament at Twenty Valley GC hosted by John Taylor.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Greens keeping in Ontario and the History of the Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association was being written beginning in 1875 through to and including the 75th anniversary year 1999. The editorial committee consisted of Ian Bowen, Keith Bartlett, Robert Heron, Mark Piccolo, Paul Dermott, Mark Schneider, Gordon Witteveen and James Wyllie (chairman).

Gordon Witteveen was awarded the John B. Steel Award presented by the CGSA.

David Kuypers won the Merit Scholarship from the GCSAA.

OTEC announced that it had sold the Jacobsen Turf Equipment portion of its business to G. C. Duke.

EVENTS

The OGSA curling event was held at The Club at North Halton hosted by Al Beeney. The winning team consisted of Bruce Burger, Lakeview, Ray Murray, Maple Farm Supply, Leo Daigle, Caledon CC and Mike McClelland, Glen Eagle GC.

A fundraiser tournament, sponsored by McCracken Golf Supplies, was held at Burford Golf Links for Mark and Danielle McClure on the arrival of triplets.

The Ontario Turfgrass Symposium was held at the Regal Constellation Conference Centre chaired by Rhod Trainor. Keynote speaker was Brian Williams. The President's Reception was a huge success and plaques were presented to new AA Life and 25 year members. Congratulations went to, Bob Brewster, Richard Creed, Barry Endicott, Roy French, Bill Glashen, Blake McMaster, Bruce Summers and Ken Wright. Recipient of the Heritage Scholarship was Melissa White and the Turfgrass Scholarship went to Lindsay Preston.



Alex McClumpha Memorial Golf Tournament (L-R): Hugh Kirkpatrick accepts the George Darou Trophy from Dean Baker.



75th Anniversary Event, Winners of the day!



1999 OGSA Curling Event winning team (L-R): Ray Murray, Al Beeney, Bruce Burger; Leo Daigle, Mike McClelland.



Barry Endicott
Retired Golf Course
Superintendent
Brampton, Ontario
Tel: 905-846-1440
barry.endicott@gmail.com

IN MEMORIAM

Fred Grightmire passed away at the age of 95. Fred was the first superintendent at the Dundas Valley GC from 1929 until 1969 and a past president of the Western Ontario Greenskeepers Association.

TOURNAMENTS

The Border Cities Golf Challenge was hosted by Chris Andrejicka at Essex GC. The Canadians brought the trophy home with the best foursome gross: Scott Gardner, Echo Valley GC, 77, Kelly Barnett, Point West GC, 79, Pat Hebert, Roseland G&CC, 80 and Scott Dyker, Beverley G&CC, with an 80.

The Pro/Superintendent Tournament was held at the National Pines GC hosted by Chris Goodman. The low team was from The National, Norm Hitzroth and

Chris Dew with a 68 and second place from Tyandaga GC was Jim Black and Gavin Kellogg also with a 68, decided by retrogression.

The President, Green Chairman, Superintendent and Directors Golf Tournament was held at The Toronto Golf Club hosted by Al Schwemler. The winning team was from Glendale, Mike Cote and runner-up team was from The Granite Club, John Gravett.

The Alex McClumpha Golf Tournament was held at Markland Wood hosted by Rob Ackermann. Hugh Kirkpatrick was the winner of the George Darou Trophy for superintendents over 50. Bob Heron, Beacon Hall, was 1st low gross with a 76 and Paul Scenna, Donalds, was 2nd low gross with a 79. ■

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Small Fish in a Big Pond



Manitoulin Golf (formerly Manitoulin Island Country Club) Gore Bay, Ontario.

By Lise Roseman, Assistant Superintendent,
The Oaks of St. George Golf Course.
Photos courtesy of Lisa Roseman.

The foundation for any successful assistant superintendent comes from many different things. Education, work experience, being in the right place at the right time, and the list goes on. Landing an opportunity to work for one of the best, most dedicated superintendents in the province might just be the best way to achieve that success...and I'm not talking about working for someone from a high profile club.

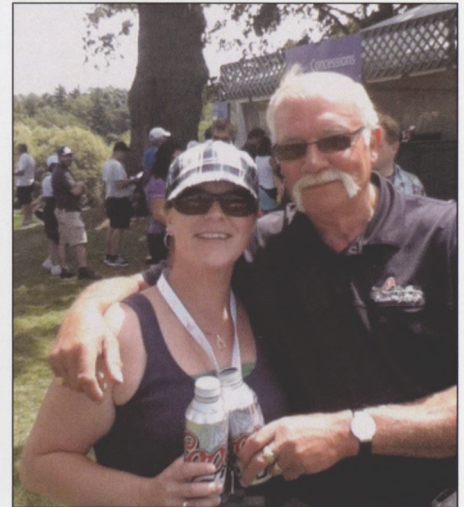
For a lot of assistants in the turf industry, they knew they wanted to be a part of the turf industry from a very young age. I however, was a "late bloomer" - as my mom would say. My turf journey didn't begin until I was 25. I had already graduated with a Correctional Worker Diploma in the Law and Justice field, worked in young offender facilities, travelled to China to teach English (which didn't go as planned), and was forced to fly home with my tail between my legs and no job prospects for my future. I come from a line of hardworking family members so taking time to "find myself" wasn't an option. My mother, Jane Pummell, was the clubhouse manager at Manitoulin Island Country Club and my father, Arthur Pummell, was the superintendent. So, with my pride shattered and my wallet empty I approached them about working on the turf crew under the watchful eye of my dad. My brother, Jason Pummell had worked for my dad in seasons past and this is where he started in the turf

industry also. The idea had to be brought to the board members for approval because I was a family member. After my parents were given approval to hire me, my folks laid out the ground rules and "read me the riot act" so to speak. Working for your parents has to be one of the hardest things to do, so much more is expected of you when your parents are in charge. There was no "take it easy on her, she's my daughter". Instead, it was "work her harder than the rest of the crew every day".

I approached that season thinking there's no way I will live up to my dad's standards, but I showed up, put my head down and

It's important for all of us in the turf industry to remember the "small fish." Those who mentored and taught, those who worked the long hours and laid the groundwork for how the profession is highly regarded today.

prepared for whatever my old man could throw at me. And to my surprise I loved it! Working on a golf course alongside someone who takes so much pride in what he does, changes the way you look at things. It's not just grass anymore, it becomes so much more than that. You are not just cutting grass, you are mowing grass. It's not just sand in a hole, it's a bunker and there's a certain way to make it playable and pleasing to the eye. It's not just a place you tee up the ball and hit it, it's a tee deck and it needs to be mowed a certain way,



Lise Roseman and her father, Arthur Pummell.

top-dressed, and seeded. It's not just a green, it's a putting surface that requires so much care and the golfers expect it to be perfect all the time.

My dad taught me so much in such a short time, I can't thank him enough. He didn't graduate from any turf programs or attend any university or college. Prior to taking on his role as a superintendent on Manitoulin Island he worked for a construction firm, Taylor Woodrow, based out of England and was working as a foreman on a project in Nigeria, West Africa. My mother was teaching in a Nigerian school. Once my parents moved to Manitoulin Island to raise my brother and me, they were approached about taking over the golf course from the couple who were ready to retire, simply because we were new to the island and my parents needed work. Islanders take care of one another no matter what, and welcome new faces in the community.

My dad had to learn on the fly, make mistakes and learn from them, read magazines published by the turf industry, and do his homework. Each year superintendents get their budget for the upcoming year and they know approximately how much they have to spend in order to improve their product way before the season begins. My dad didn't have that luxury! Once the season was over and all the employees and bills were paid, what was left was what he had to work with, and that wasn't very much. My folks purchased a lot of equipment for the course with their own money because they wanted to produce the



Manitoulin Golf (formerly Manitoulin Island Country Club) Gore Bay, Ontario.

best playing conditions possible. My dad organized a group of members and volunteers to put in the irrigation system in order to save money. Members were required to volunteer their time for at least one tournament held at the course each season; whether they were a starter, cooked hot dogs at the beer tent on #4, or cleaned tables in the clubhouse, it was an “all hands on deck” situation. When we were young, my brother and I planted trees around the course in an effort to improve the golf course without it being a costly undertaking for the membership. My dad would spend 10+ hours a day working at the course and then go back at night to water. He took so much pride in what he was doing and constantly tried to improve the course and himself as a turf manager. The time I spent working along side my dad, training and learning as much as he could possibly teach me is the reason I love what I do to this day. Being given the opportunity to work with a superintendent who lived and breathed turf and was willing to spend the hours with me to improve my skills was an amazing experience. It goes to show that someone doesn't have to go to a prestigious university to be good at what they do. It takes heart, long hours, and blood, sweat and tears.

I knew I had earned my dad's approval to continue my turf journey when he asked me if I would be willing to move to southern Ontario to help out my brother, who at that time was the assistant at Bayview Golf and Country Club working under superintendent Tom Charters. Both my brother and my dad saw something in me and I felt that they were giving me their blessing to keep moving forward with my career and what was the family passion. From Bayview I went on to

work for some of the greatest people in the business. I spent time working for the late Gord Witteveen, and eight years working as a turf labourer for Rhod Trainor at Hamilton Golf and Country Club. I am currently in my fourth year as an assistant at The Oaks of St. George working alongside superintendent, Richard Voigt. If it wasn't for my dad, taking the time to teach me what he could, pushing me to give one hundred percent and to take pride in what I do every day, I would not have had the opportunities to work for these amazing superintendents.

Manitoulin Island Country Club was purchased by Manitoulin Transport in 2018 and is now called Manitoulin Golf. My dad at age 77, with 30 years of service is still

working at the course, and is now mentoring the new superintendent, Dave Carr. Perhaps my dad may retire, someday.

Arthur Pummell was and is, a small fish in a big pond and year after year has produced some of the best playing conditions possible in our small town, on an island that most people have never even visited! I wanted to share this story because I think it's important for all of us in the turf industry to remember the “small fish.” Those who mentored and taught, those who worked the long hours and laid the groundwork for how the profession is highly regarded today. And, if you ever find yourself on Manitoulin Island, stop by the golf course, sit back, have a beer and enjoy the view! ■

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Conference Season

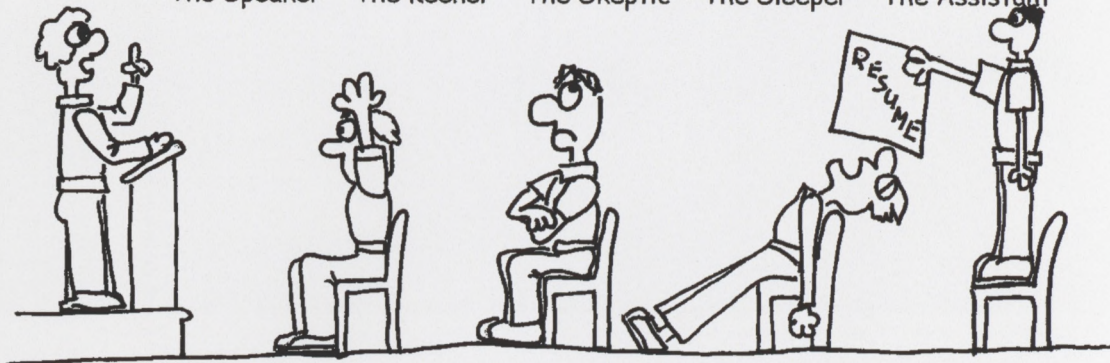
By Doug Breen,
Superintendent,
Golf North Properties.

It's Conference Season again! I'm a huge proponent of what educators call "life-long learning" (or what my Dad called "paying attention"). Nothing will stagnate a person's career, attitude, or emotional state faster than deciding that they've learned everything that they're ever going to learn. We all have a weird uncle who decided that he's not going to listen to any new songs, watch any new movies, or allow any new ideas to leak into his brain. Face it – he's awful to be around and is well on his way to becoming a surly, lonely old man who people avoid. Most of us have a relative who has decided that all new technology is just "beyond me" (and possibly sinful), so they refuse to learn how to use their remote control and watch the same channel all day long.

Agronomy (in our case Turfgrass Science) is a constantly evolving world. Things that were the norm when I started out (mercury fungicides and greens that stimped in the mid sevens for example), would be unimaginable to today's young superintendents. Add to that – changes in social norms, labour laws, environmental limitations, and the budget crunch that has resulted from increased costs paired with stagnant or reducing revenue. If a superintendent had decided to "check out" on their education in 1999 – they'd be in some serious trouble today. We need to stay on top of the latest breakthroughs in turfgrass science, social science, and fiscal management. Fortunately, we have options.

We have the internet. I'm old enough to remember when the internet wasn't a thing. I'm also old enough to remember when Al Gore claimed to have invented it! Then he went on to lose a Presidential election and invent global warming – super busy guy. But I digress – the internet is perhaps the greatest invention for the dissemination of

The Speaker The Keener The Skeptic The Sleeper The Assistant



Conference seminar attendees...

knowledge since Steve Guttenberg invented the printing press. Then he went on to make all those Police Academy movies – another super busy guy! Before the internet, a person could only garner the knowledge that they could pick up from another human being, or what was available in books. Unless you owned a book, once the library was closed, the learning had to stop. And if anyone really believes that the internet is a less reliable source than what we used to pick up from other human beings – well, I'm here to tell you that stupidity paired with confidence predates social media.

We have formal education. Most of us are unable to quit our jobs and go back to school (as fun as that would be), but there are still options. Since the 1930's, the University of Guelph has offered distance education. Originally, it was intended to allow a farmer in Saskatchewan to get a diploma in Agronomy without having to leave their farm, putting their family and operation at risk. It has expanded to a huge department, which offers many agronomic, business, and management courses to people who work for a living. It used to be all handled through the mail, but the advent of the internet (thanks again Al Gore) has made the quality of online education arguably better than being on campus – certainly there are less distractions. Most schools in Canada (and the world) offer quality distance education as an option. One can receive anything from a certificate, to a diploma, to a Bachelor's degree, to an MBA – and still hold down a full time

job. There are also excellent short-term education offerings. I can personally vouch for the quality of the Turf Manager's Short Course.

We have conferences (this is my favourite). Not only is the education excellent at our conferences – but we get together communally to talk about our challenges, successes, and our failures. For thousands of years humans have known how important it was to get together regularly to ensure our emotional well being. We formed religions and social clubs. We had square dances and fall fairs. We all went to the pub for a pint on the way home. Somewhere along the line, we stopped getting together to support each other. Conferences allow us to do that. Whether it's the OGSA Conference, or a supplier sponsored day, or even just a golf tournament – getting together with other superintendents is perhaps the greatest education of all. I know a bunch of superintendents who have a regular Friday afternoon "Health & Safety Meeting" at a pub.

We have options for life-long learning – lots of them. We have options for every budget and every time schedule. We have libraries full of books, and the infinity of the internet. Keeping all facets of your professional education current – will make you more valuable to your employer, more attractive to other potential employers, and make your professional life easier. And don't forget to get together with other comrades in the battle – "We're all in this together". ■

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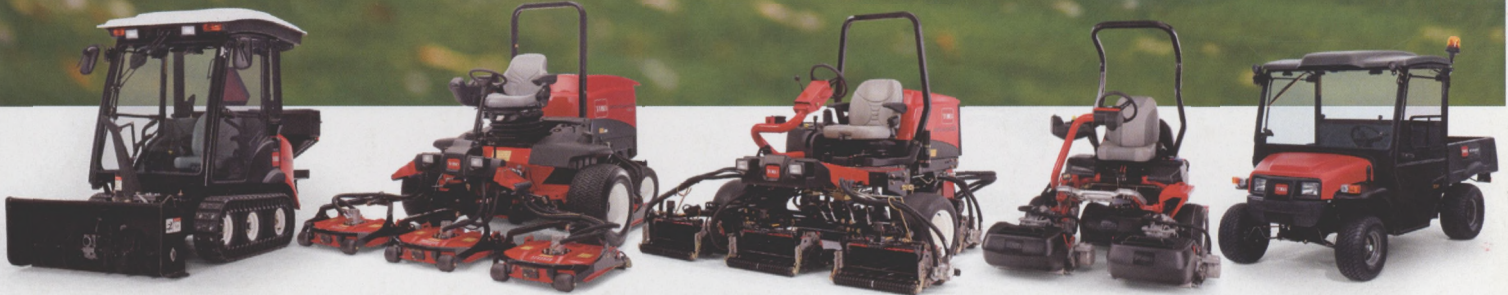
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