

The USGA Green Section Record

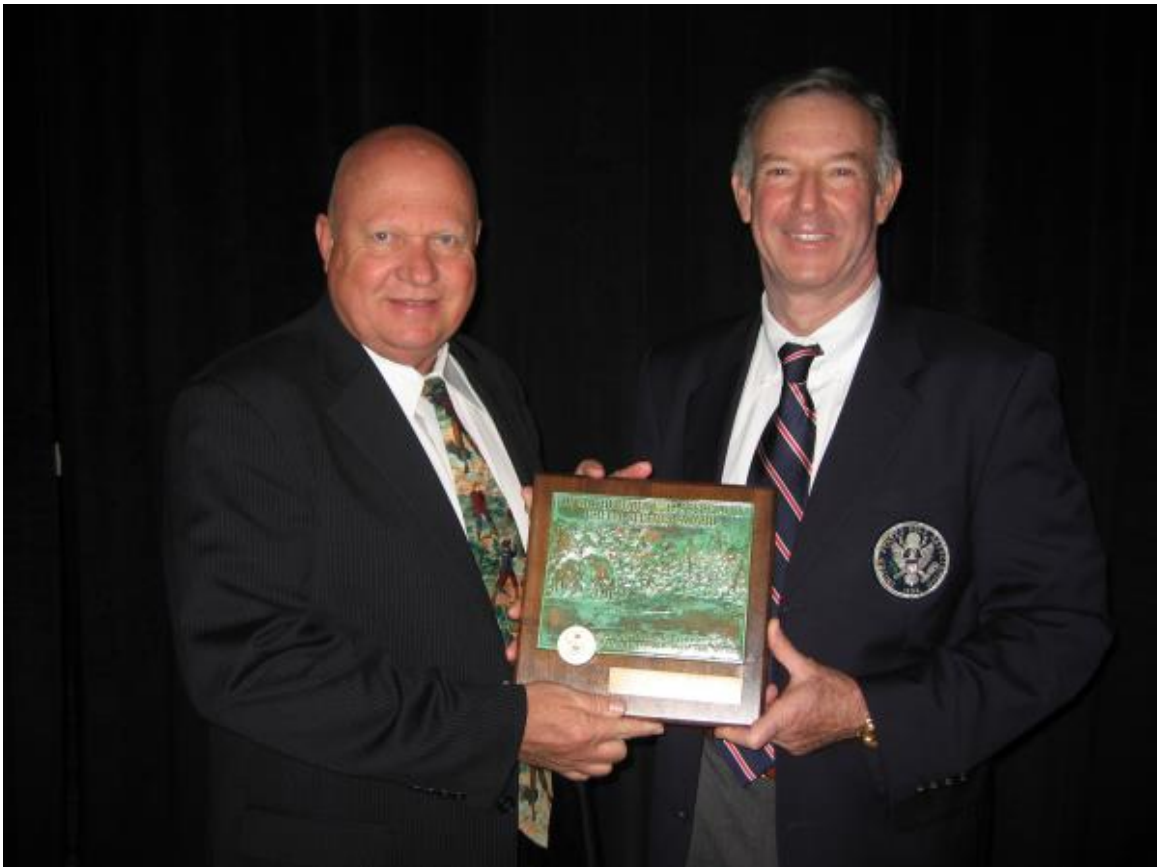


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2011 Green Section Award

Dennis Lyon, CGCS, recipient of the Green Section's highest honor

by the USGA staff



Dennis Lyon, CGCS (left) receives the USGA Green Section Award from USGA Executive Committee member and Green Section Chair, Steve Smyers.

Dennis Lyon was awarded the United States Golf Association's 2011 Green Section Award on February 11, 2011 at the USGA Green Section Education Conference in Orlando, Florida. The Green Section Award has been presented annually since 1961 to individuals who contribute significantly to the game of golf through their work with turfgrass.

"I am honored to receive this award, and very pleased that it helps bring recognition to the efforts of many people here in Colorado to improve the game we love," said Lyon. "Our state has been a leader in efforts to improve turf conditions and other

environmental and management practices at municipal courses, and I believe this work has had national implications."

Lyon, who recently retired as manager of golf for the city of Aurora, Colorado, spent nearly his entire professional career dedicated to public golf. A graduate of Colorado State University's horticulture program, he earned his master's degree in management from the University of Northern Colorado. In 1973, he was hired as superintendent of the Aurora Hills Golf Course and in 1976 was promoted to manager of golf for the city of

Aurora where he supervised seven municipal golf courses over a 34 year period.

Always willing to take a leadership role, for more than 20 years, he hosted an annual public golf operators meeting bringing together public golf operators from Colorado's Front Range to discuss common issues and potential solutions. In 2008, he served as the general chairman of the U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship conducted at Murphy Creek Golf Course, one of the golf courses under his direction. He also is a student of the traditions and history of the game, authoring the *Golfer's Creed* and the *Junior Golfer's Creed*.

Lyon is a past president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and the organization's first president to represent a municipal facility. He volunteered on the USGA Public Golf Committee from 1986-2000 and currently is a member of the USGA Green Section Committee. He served as president of the Colorado Golf Association, the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association. He was elected to the Colorado Golf Hall of Fame in 2005.

"Through his knowledge, activities and dedication to volunteer service, Dennis has set a very high standard for golf industry professionals," said Jim Snow, national director of the USGA Green Section. "In particular, his influence on municipal course management practices extends well beyond the borders of his home state."

Lyon has been a dedicated friend of golf on many levels, including his work as a golf course superintendent enhancing golf course management and mentoring many others in the industry. For that, all of golf has benefited.

For past Green Section Award recipients, visit: [USGA Green Section Award](#)

Regrassing Greens at New Haven Country Club

A successful regrassing project, utilizing washed sod, modernized and restored the classic green pads.

by Jason Booth, golf course superintendent, New Haven Country Club



Extensive soil preparation and drainage work was accomplished prior to regrassing the greens.

The New Haven Country Club is a golf course designed by Willie Park Jr. that was built in 1921. The large, undulating, push-up-style greens had a long reputation for providing some of the best South German bentgrass surfaces in the state of Connecticut. However, annual bluegrass became more prominent in the greens, and by 2009 it dominated most of the surfaces. The surface soils in the greens had been modified with sand through topdressing and aeration practices, but there were no signs of functioning subsurface drainage. And, like many older golf courses, a number of greens were impacted by shade and air circulation problems.

I began my tenure as superintendent at the club in 2008, which happened to be a wet and fairly hot summer. It did not take long that summer for the shallow-rooted annual bluegrass on the greens to show its true colors. The putting green surfaces declined from wet wilt and a severe case of crown rot anthracnose. We reestablished the surfaces and modified our maintenance approach to reduce stress and manage the anthracnose disease. Nitrogen fertility was increased; we raised mowing heights to 0.130 inch, utilized smooth rollers, and shortened the interval between fungicide applications. We continued to selectively remove trees and added internal drainage to three of the most poorly drained greens. All was well as we entered the 2009 season, or so we thought, with the more conservative management approach we adopted in 2008. However, a mid-August heat wave and humidity once again impacted the putting surfaces, and it was at that point we realized that simply modifying cultural practices alone was not enough to address the problems with our 90-year-old greens.

[See the process step-by-step by reading the rest of this article.](#)

The Dickey, Icy Decision



A North-Central Regional Update

by [Bob Vavrek](#), senior agronomist

There has been no shortage of snow cover at most courses across the Upper Midwest. Several early storms followed by a blizzard produced a deep layer of insulation across the region's golf courses. Generally, a dense blanket of snow is the ideal scenario to ensure turf survival by protecting the turfgrass crowns from frigid temperatures.

However, the current snow cover may be a two-edged sword this winter. Several days of

unusually mild weather, accompanied by rain just prior to the first of the year, melted nearly all of the December snow except for playing surfaces located in low-lying, protected sites that tend to accumulate extra deep snow cover. Exposed sites that lost all snow and frost in the ground benefited from the current snow cover, but protected sites found the frost impeded water movement through the turf and were sealed beneath a dense layer of solid ice to start the year. Snow cover over the ice-affected turf increase the potential for ice suffocation.

[Read the rest of this update.](#)



Document the turf health from greens affected by ice and snow throughout the winter to determine the potential benefits of ice removal. The foul smell of anaerobic soil conditions noted during the sampling process will support the decision to remove ice from putting surfaces.

Spring Fever In February



A Mid-Continent Regional Update

by [Ty McClellan](#), agronomist

Only a week ago a whopping 49 of the 50 U.S. states had snow cover. This was the after-effects of one of the worst winter storms on record that hammered much of the country with ice, snow and sub-zero temperatures. In the upper Mid-Continent region, some were buried beneath nearly 28 inches of snow.

Fast forward to this week, and temperatures climbed into the 50's and 60's. In fact, a few parts of the region have experienced record daily temperature highs for February. It's hard to imagine it, but areas in the Great Plains that saw temperatures dip to -35°F last week, reached close to 65°F this week. That's a 100-degree turnaround in a week.

Keep in mind that it is times like these where golf courses are most vulnerable to traffic damage. Even when air temperatures rise to a comfortable level to play golf, soils may thaw near the surface, but will remain frozen several inches below. Subsurface drainage is impeded, which causes water to dam at the surface. Soft and wet soils are extremely prone to compaction damage from any sort of traffic, and rutting is possible with heavy tire traffic. Either situation will require significantly more aeration in the spring and summer to correct the damage that has been done, and spring green-up will be slowed considerably. Play should never be allowed during such conditions.

[Read the rest of this update.](#)



Courses are most vulnerable to traffic damage when snowmelt is occurring. Play should never be allowed during wet soil conditions because of the increased risk of compaction and rutting.

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