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November - December 2012

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Cover photo: Fred Meda raised golf course maintenance standards in the nation's busiest golf region and will receive the Carolinas GCSA's Distinguished Service Award in November. Photo: Keith Jacobs.

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Time Flies When YOU'RE BUSY



Linville Ridge Golf Club's Tommy Clark, left, and Steve Sheets, right, with Carolinas GCSA president, Doug Lowe, CGCS and the heavy fog that prevented play at the annual fall mountain meeting.

They say time flies when you're having a good time and so by that rule of thumb, this past year as Carolinas GCSA president has been a lot of fun. The year certainly has gone quickly. Another reason it has passed so swiftly is that it has been so busy. I think I have shaken more hands than I have hit golf balls this year. The meetings were many and often with golf industry interests other than superintendents.

In fact, getting to know a great many more people both in our association and across the industry has probably been the biggest highlight for me. Our game attracts people from a very wide spectrum but the game always enables us to find common ground. The networking platform this association offers all of us, whether we are on the board of directors or a member turning up to meetings is extremely valuable, both professionally and personally.

Transitioning Rounds4Research to a national program was a great way to resolve our concerns with the weight of administering the program. It was an enormous project for a regional association to take on and that it was so successful only speaks to the quality of talent we have on staff and in the board room. Obviously it is also a bonus for the national research fundraising landscape that the pool of potential courses now spreads from coast to coast.

I think the recent assistant superintendents meeting in Charlotte was a good thing for the next generation on a number of fronts. No doubt the specialized education and networking opportunities gave these young folks a considerable push forward as they build their careers. I think it is also important that they know this association works for them too, not just their bosses.

I think the closer we can bring resources to the members who need them, the better job we will be doing as an association. In that regard, kudos to the guys in the new Blue Ridge Turfgrass Association who identified a need and took it upon themselves to fill that gap. They made great use of the Carolinas GCSA's resources to help get their association off the ground. This is a real success story making a difference in the working lives of guys in that part of the Carolinas.

Your association also made significant investments in technology and we have seen some of the immediate benefits over the past year. The new web site is far more functional than its predecessor and has streamlined many aspects of administration and record-keeping at headquarters. The efficiencies it brings will save considerable time and money in the long-term. Keeping pace with technology and using it to our advantage is critical for the organization and for each of us as superintendents.

Obviously, the 50th anniversary of the Carolinas GCSA Conference and Trade Show is a good indicator of the health of our association. The future of the Carolinas GCSA appears to be as bright as any association in the country and a major reason for that is the quality of the companies and individuals who support our annual trek to Myrtle Beach. We all owe a debt of thanks to every single exhibitor who has ever occupied a booth on the trade show floor. Please make a point of thanking those who are there this November.

All the necessary elements are in place with a great staff and board, solid leadership at both levels, supportive industry partners and an active membership. That's a great recipe for our continued success as we strive to fulfill the needs and wishes of our wide-ranging membership. I believe the Carolinas GCSA will continue to stand tall in the eyes of the members and in the view of the broader industry as a whole.

In this day and age and economic climate, there is no place for a weak link in the chain of this industry. No matter what our previous roles may have been or how they are perceived by people, we all need to be flexible, adaptable, innovative and willing to step up. That is true for superintendents, general managers, owners and golf professionals. We all need to invest in our industry, not just our own backyard. ■



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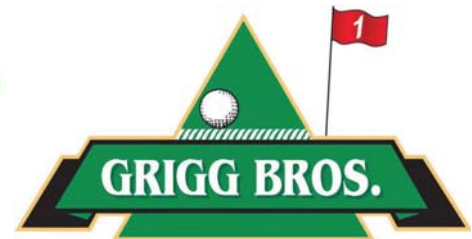


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Time for Industry Partners TO TAKE A BOW



Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger, center, catches up with longtime members, Paul Waycaster, left, from Linville Land Harbor Golf Club, and Pete Gerdon, from Grandfather Golf and Country Club, at the annual fall mountain meeting.

By Tim Kreger

Soon golf course superintendents and the people they do business with will pull out their suitcases in an annual tradition that has played out now for 50 years. Some 2,000 of them will be getting ready to head to Myrtle Beach, SC for the golden anniversary of the Carolinas GCSA's Conference and Trade Show.

Let me say it is a pleasure to count myself among that number and a privilege to be doing so as your executive director. This association and this event got going long before a lot of us came along but I think we all feel a very strong connection to those who paved the way for the benefits we enjoy today. Lord knows there are a lot of them.

Think about it. The first conference, which old-timers remember as an education session or two with a few tables covered in pamphlets at the old Clemson House Hotel, took place when JFK was in the White House. The first Super Bowl was still several years away. And no one had ever heard of *Mary Poppins*.

A lot of people have passed through the profession and the doors of the Conference and Trade Show since then. Each, to some degree, has contributed to the event we will attend this November, even if only with their membership dues. Any association, regardless of the interests it represents, is still ultimately about the people behind those interests. The Carolinas GCSA and our Conference and Trade Show are a sum of every single one of "our" people.

None have done more to bring us to this 50th anniversary Conference and Trade Show than our industry partners. Without their support and readiness to invest in superintendents and their professional advancement, we would never have gotten here. They are the people who ensure that ours is the largest regional event for superintendents in the entire nation. They make a huge financial investment just to be there, let alone to partner in events such as our golf championship, the 27-hole challenge, Carolinas Night at the Beach and so much more.

But since attending my first show in 2007 – in my first week as a Carolinas GCSA staffer – I have come to know that our industry partners also make a huge personal investment each year. Of course they are in business to turn a profit like everyone. But I can honestly say that the vastly overwhelming majority of our industry partners that I have gotten to know are in it for more than that. They genuinely care about the welfare and success of the people they do business with. And that's pretty darned special.

As you would expect during these recessionary times, there have been some hard decisions across every segment of the golf industry. Rest assured there have been some deep and difficult discussions around the board table of the Carolinas GCSA too. We have had to trim our sails and wind back some of our ambitions. But it could have been a lot worse, and would have been if our industry partners had not been so loyal and committed to the long haul.

This year, again, our show is forecast to generate more than \$600,000 in gross revenues. Of course expenses eat away a major share of those dollars but what is left still represents the bedrock of the association's business. I would hate to imagine what our membership dues would need to be if Conference and Show disappeared tomorrow. And so should you.

Which is why, more than ever, I respectfully request that each and every superintendent and assistant superintendent spend as much time as possible on the trade show floor this year. Let our industry partners know how much we value their support. Sure, this is a golf course superintendents association but after 50 years of stepping up to the plate, let's do all we can to make our industry partners the stars in Myrtle Beach this year. They've earned it. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Kreger".



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IT'S A WONDERFUL SHOW

The good news is that holidays are nearly upon us. Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here in a jiffy. We can enjoy family, friends and that special spirit that always comes with the season. The bad news is that, starting in a few weeks, you won't be able to turn on a television without seeing "It's a Wonderful Life."

Yes, friends, it's almost time for George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart) to leave what-ever quaint black-and-white heaven he resides in for 10 months a year and, like Punxsutawney Phil, emerge into our lives again. Ugh.

If you are unfamiliar with "It's a Wonderful Life" - which seems wholly impossible if you're breathing and have access to a television - it's the story of a man at his wit's end. He's considering suicide and about to leap off a bridge and end his misery until an angel appears to show him what life would have been like for everyone he loves without him. He changes his mind ... happy ending ensues.

In short, George Bailey learns that his life - though imperfect - is valuable and without him the world would have been a very different place. Now, let's replace George and create a new movie called, "It's a Wonderful Show." This version stars the Carolinas GCSA expo. Instead of Jimmy Stewart, picture Tim Kreger in the leading role. (Okay, picture Tim with a better haircut and no ratty beard.)

Imagine, if you will, what your life would be like without the show. At first blush, you might think, "No big deal." You'd certainly still be able to have access to products and salespeople. Heck, the iron guys bring demo products right to your course and there's no problem getting

chemical sales folks or others to stop by your place.

If you're like most superintendents, you probably see a lot of your buddies year-round, or text them or talk to them on the phone, so that time together in Myrtle Beach networking isn't mission-critical, is it?

And education? You can get that lots of places these days. Geez, *GCI* and all the other groups offer free webinars and



Pat Jones

the suppliers provide seminars. You could probably get all your education credits someplace else and never leave home.

How about the association stuff? The annual meeting and the various gatherings that take place during the show couldn't be very important. If you weren't there, somebody else would take your place, right?

So, if the Carolinas GCSA Conference and Show jumped off a bridge into the murky waters of the Pee Dee River tomorrow, it wouldn't really be missed, would it?

I'll play Clarence the Angel at this point and tell you why it would be missed ... sorely missed.

First, the Conference and Show is a galvanizing event for the entire industry in the Carolinas. It is unique as the largest regional golf turf show in the nation. It is also unique because it increasingly has national implications. When I talk with my *GCI* clients - the people in charge of selling stuff to superintendents nationally and globally - the Carolinas GCSA show is very much on their radar. So, without the show, the Carolinas GCSA, and each of its members, loses a little bit of shine and prestige.

Second, how would you feel about your dues going up 500 percent? I don't know the exact finances, and I don't want to, but I'm betting that the revenues from the show far exceed the combined revenues of everything else the association does. Dues might only be 20 percent or so of total revenues. Take away the show, and you take away funding that helps keep down the cost of membership, education, communications, lobbying and all of the other programs that don't pay for themselves.

Trade shows are like what your dentist says about your teeth: ignore them and they will go away. When you go to Myrtle Beach, dedicate time to be on the show floor. Spend time with exhibitors big and small. Ask them questions. Thank them for supporting your profession. Sure, you could

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skip out and go play golf or head to the bar ... but when you do, the show dies a little and the risk of a much more expensive, less effective association grows a tiny bit.

Third, you may have plenty of friends and contacts that you can see anytime, but what about the new people you meet every year? The connections created at the event could make an enormous difference in your career. One tip I always give people is to have a plan when you go to a show. Too many guys just pack their duffle bag and their clubs and head off to a big conference to attend a few seminars, hang out and drink beer. You should have specific goals: see new products that will improve your operation; gain new knowledge to help you improve professionally; and meet new people who can help you go to the next level of your career.

That last one might be the most important thing. You should absolutely use

shows as a way to expand your career horizons. Think about four or five people who will be at that show who could help you get your next big job or to really solidify the job you have now. Contact them a couple of weeks beforehand. Set a time and place to meet. Don't just say, "See you there," and hope you cross paths.

It truly is a wonderful show. But, you have to commit to keeping it wonderful by being there, engaging, making the most of the opportunity, and recognizing that it makes a difference in your life. And, like George Bailey, you make a difference in life of the show. Remember what Clarence the Angel said: "Strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?"

Don't leave a hole in your show. See you there. ■

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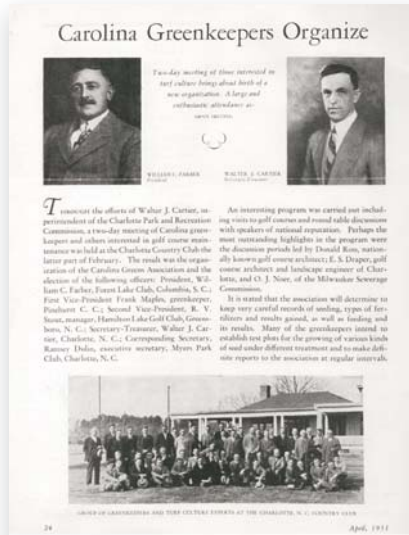
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CAROLINAS ROOTS

Run Deeper than We Thought

By Trent Bouts

Here's a little news that may be of interest while history is in the air with the golden anniversary of the Conference and Trade Show. It turns out there was a forerunner organization to what we know and love as the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association. Way back in 1931, *The National Greenkeeper* reported the first meeting of the Carolina Greens Association.

The new group's mission was to "keep very careful records of seeding, types of fertilizers and results gained, as well as feeding and its results." The report went on to say, "Many of the greenkeepers intend to establish test plots for the growing of various kinds of seed under different treatment and to make definite reports to the association at regular intervals."

Clearly, the tradition of cooperative discovery and a commitment to excellence in this part of the country is older than we all believed. Among 52 attendees listed was a "Donald Ross, golf architect, Pinehurst, NC" along with a number of golf professionals, club presidents and managers from as far afield as Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Florida and Georgia.

Ironically enough, the Carolina Greens Association formed at a meeting at Charlotte Country Club, the same venue where the Carolinas GCSA came into existence in 1954. At this point, what happened in between is a mystery. The fact that is a mystery is, well, a bit of a mystery in and of itself when you consider the ties between some of those who were key in the formation of both groups.

Stay with me now. Among others at that first meeting of the Carolina Greens Association were father and son, Frank and Ellis Maples. Frank was in fact elected vice-president. Now this is where it gets a bit weird. Another of Frank's sons, Henson Maples, a younger brother of Ellis, was one of two people credited with founding the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association 23 years later. So it's difficult to imagine that Henson, or co-founder Grant Bennett for that matter, ever thought their idea for a regional group was an original.

Now this is where it gets even weirder. The person who brought all this to our attention was none other than Gene Maples, former executive director of the Turfgrass Council of North Carolina, and, wait for it, son of Henson Maples. Gene was as surprising as anyone when he learned about the Carolina Greens Association. Not a single word of the group's existence ever filtered down to him from his grandfather, uncle or father.

"It's fascinating for me," Gene says. "I would dearly love to find out what happened to that original group and I imagine so would a lot of other people." He, and we, might never have heard about it if not for the fact that a cousin of his, Nancy Maples-Weant (daughter of Carolinas GCSA Distinguished Service Award winner and GCSAA past-president, Palmer Maples, Jr.) had been a teaching professional at Charlotte Country Club.

It was she who faxed the report from *The National Greenkeeper* to Gene after a friend of hers stumbled upon it while searching for something else in the archives at Charlotte Country Club. Nancy thought Gene would get a kick out of it given the strong family ties in the report.

So now the search is on to join the dots between the group that formed in 1931 and that of 1954. As things stand, the implication of course is that something went awry or momentum was lost somehow. Surely, the *Greenkeeper* was right when it said the new group was "bound to be of great assistance to the golf and country clubs" of the "middle south." But it was the time of the Great Depression after all and a lot of things ground to halt through that period.

By contrast, as this year's Conference and Show promises to underscore, the Carolinas GCSA is as strong as ever, regardless of the twists and turns of the past. And that's despite the recession. All the more reason to shake the hand of exhibitors and other industry partners on the trade show floor in Myrtle Beach. ■

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Dr. Bert McCarty

Dr. Bert McCarty, Research and Extension Turf Specialist at Clemson University, will address any turf-related question in this column. Write to him c/o:
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By Bert McCarty

Nature Matters as Much

AS THE TIME INVOLVED



Figure 1. In a survey of European golfers, the most important factor on determining the quality of a golf greens was trueness. Consistency (e.g., uniform speed on all greens) has the second largest impact on play, though speed was not rated as the most important quality parameter.

This is a summary of additional trials I thought would be of interest from the recent European Turfgrass Society’s meeting held in Norway.

Nordic Golfers’ Perception of Quality (Denmark). “What is a good playing quality” differs widely among golfers. A survey was gathered in the Scandinavian countries on parameters related to the maintenance of the course and performance of the grass. In total, 1,949 players responded, 83 percent male and 17 percent female representing 310 different courses. The most important factor on golf greens was trueness. Consistency (e.g., uniform speed on all greens) has the second largest impact on play, though speed was not rated as the most important quality parameter (Figure 1). Players with handicaps less than 10 were more focused on the course’s physical parameters. When asked about their golfing experience, respondents implied ‘nature’ is just as important for the golf experience as course layout and time per playing round (Figure 2).

Resources should also be used on nature development (trees, plants and wildlife). The study demonstrated however, the concept “environment” did not occupy golfers’ consciousness. The survey also showed over 50 percent of players had no knowledge about possible effects of pesticide use reduction. Respondents also indicated an environmental profile (certification) was not of great importance when choosing a golf course to play on. Thus, environmental certification is not a strong argument when trying to attract more players.

Overall, clubs should pay attention to the development and preservation of nature, as many players indicated nature is of great importance. Finally, clubs need to be more focused on environmental issues, and should educate players on the consequences of pesticide reduction.

Demand-Driven Fertilization. N Productivity in Four High-Maintenance Turfgrass Species (Sweden). Effect of four N availabilities was studied in velvet bentgrass, creeping bentgrass, slender creeping red fescue and chewing fescue. It proved possible to control important turfgrass traits such as shoot growth rate, shoot to root ratio, leaf morphology and carbohydrate storage by monitoring leaf N concentration. Lowest possible leaf N concentration without adverse effects on plant health and appearance was between 3.1 and 3.5 percent of dry matter in both bentgrasses and fescues associated with high golf playing quality. This value can be used as a target in minimizing fertilizer usage and N leaching losses.

Evaluation of Organic Fertilizer Sources for SEUSA Turfgrass Maintenance (Alabama). Organic fertilizers can behave as a slow-release N fertilizer, with a delayed greening response, low burn potential and varying N release rates in different environments. For this work, ‘organic’ refers to commercial fertilizers from wastes

such as sewage sludge (biosolid), poultry byproducts (manure, litter, feather meal), or other byproducts (whey, meals, oils). Three separate three-month long studies were performed on creeping bentgrass and hybrid bermudagrass to evaluate the effects of organic fertilizers on various turfgrass and soil parameters. Organic fertilizer sources were compared with hybrid bermudagrass and bentgrass fertilized with urea or a commercial urea/methylene urea fertilizer. All N sources were applied once yearly at a rate of 1 lb N/1,000 ft². In general, application of sources with large portions (or 100 percent) of soluble N (urea and a urea/methylene urea blend) produced turf with a darker green color, higher N content and greater clipping yield than plots fertilized with materials containing organic N. Urea provided consistent high quality color for the same 10 to 12 week period as the organic sources, while no organic source provided acceptable color for any longer period than soluble N sources. Few differences in soil N, carbon or microbial biomass resulted due to N source.

Carbon Sequestration in Selected Turfgrass Species Grown in Central Chile: Preliminary Results. Recent global concerns over increased atmospheric CO₂, which potentially can alter the earth's climate systems, have resulted in rising interest in studying Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) dynamics and carbon sequestration capacity in various ecosystems. Turfgrass can help carbon sequestration, capturing CO₂ through photosynthesis and sequestering it into the soil. A field trial of 23 common grasses and mixes used in central Chile including cool and warm-season species, was established as was bare soil (control) adjacent to the turfgrass plots in order to compare carbon sequestration potential with or without turf cover.

Soil samples were taken in spring and fall of the experimental years and divided into three depth sections: 0 to 10 cm, 10 to 20 cm, and 20 to 30 cm. After preparation, samples were analyzed for organic carbon content as well as seasonal CO₂ assimilation. Amount of soil organic carbon was calculated using organic carbon concentration, soil bulk density per layer and layer thickness. Data from the first year suggest more SOC can be accumulated with a turfgrass cover. Cool-season grasses achieved high values of SOC due to their ability to keep relatively high CO₂ assimilation rate through the year, while warm-season grasses, such as bermudagrass, compensate their dormant period with an increase in high CO₂ assimilation during summer. Additional data will be taken to better understand the relationship between SOC accumulation and physiological behavior between cool- and warm-season turfgrasses.

Influence of Fertilization Regime on Carbohydrate Content of Turfgrass (Sweden). Winter injury is a major problem on golf courses in Scandinavia, therefore a research trial was performed to develop and improve maintenance strategies to optimize overwintering and early spring growth for creeping bentgrass and a mixture to two red fescues. Two different fertilization regimes were tested: (1) based on commonly practiced fertilization strategy on local golf courses (applied every two weeks) - termed "traditional"; and, (2) based on growth curve of the grasses to keep an ideal constant N concentration (applied every week) - termed "Demand Driven." The average total N applied during the three years to bentgrass was 4.6 and 3 lbs N/1,000 ft² and to fescues at 2.3 and 1.7 lbs N/1,000 ft² for the two fertilization regimes, respectively.

Comparisons between the fertilization regimes indicate carbohydrate storage of bentgrass was higher for the Demand Driven than for Traditional and was less pronounced for the fescues. Bentgrass had the highest carbohydrate storage in



Figure 2. In the European survey, when asked about their golfing experience, respondents implied 'nature' is just as important for the golf experience as course layout and time per playing round. In addition, the respondents said course resources should also be used on nature development (trees, plants and wildlife).



Figure 3. A major research thrust in the turfgrass business is finding nutrient sources that are cheaper, longer lasting and less likely to leach. This is coupled with trying to find less disruptive means of thatch control.

winter, while it decreased during spring and summer during periods of more intensive growth. For the fescues, however, carbohydrate concentrations were highest during summer and decreased during fall. Matching N addition to plant demand and keeping a consistent N concentration in plants affects carbohydrate storage positively. Therefore, Demand Driven fertilization can be a tool to increase carbohydrate storage and winter hardening of turfgrasses. Further investigations are needed to understand the differences in carbohydrates stored between the different grass species.

Influence of Single N Application Rates on the Extent of N Leaching from Sand-based and Sandy Loam Rootzones (New York). Little is known about the maximum N application rate without causing leaching and was the objective of this study. Two soils were used: (1) quartzite sand with 0.1 percent organic ►

matter; and, (2) a sandy loam with 62 percent, 24 percent, 14 percent, and 1.1 percent sand, silt, clay and organic matter, respectively; then sodded with Kentucky bluegrass. Following turf establishment, 15 N fertilizer treatments were applied from 0 to 1.5 lb N/1,000 ft² at 0.1 lb N/1,000 ft² intervals, using granular ammonium sulfate as the N source. Just prior to and one week after N fertilizer applications, containers were leached with water equivalent to two pore volume (4 gal for sandy loam, 6.5 gal for sand) to leach all soluble N from containers. Results indicate that single application of a soluble N source should not exceed 0.3 lb N/1,000 ft² on sand-based sites and 0.7 lb N/1,000 ft² on a sandy loam soil in order to reduce N leaching risk.

Thatch Control on Newly Established Velvet Bentgrass Putting Greens (Norway). Thatch management is considered to be one of the biggest challenges in maintenance of velvet bentgrass greens (Figure 3). Thatch control can be grouped under four categories, namely: (1) prevention of excessive plant growth and shoot density; (2) enhancement of microbial thatch degradation; (3) thatch dilution and modification by topdressing; and, (4) mechanical thatch removal. In this study, two N levels (1.5 or 3 lb N/1,000 ft² yearly as 40 percent nitrate and 60 percent ammonium) and one of four mechanical/biological treatments: (1) weekly grooming; (2) weekly grooming + monthly verticutting; (3) weekly grooming + monthly spiking; (4) weekly grooming + monthly spiking + monthly application of “Thatch-less,” a biological product containing *Bacillus licheniformis*, *B. subtilis*, and 24 percent cellulase enzymes derived from *Trichoderma reesei*. It was applied three times at 10-day intervals

at the beginning of each growing season and then monthly after spiking until the end of August. Plots were further subdivided into two subplots that received seven and 14 mm (0.28 to 0.55-inch) annual sand topdressing (14 applications with two-week intervals).

Mechanical-biological treatment had no effect on mat thickness. Compared with grooming only, grooming + vertical cutting reduced organic matter (OM) in the mat from 64 to 53g/kg. It was the only treatment which actually removed thatch from the mat and reduced OM. Mat depth increased 33 percent and from 48 percent, respectively in response to doubling the N rate and 25 percent and 26 percent, respectively, in response to doubling the topdressing rate. Topdressing of 14 mm (0.55-inch) per year contributed not only to thatch dilution, but also to thatch degradation.

It is speculated that heavy topdressing provided adequate oxygen concentration in the mat where more N did not only stimulate turfgrass growth but also microbial degradation of OM through amplification of soil microbial communities and/or a lower C:N ratio. N rate of 3 lbs N/1,000 ft² softened the green surface. Plots receiving 0.55-inch topdressing were four percent harder than plots receiving 0.28-inch. Among mechanical treatments, spiking + grooming led to softest green surface. The biological product “Thatch-less” increased hardness of plots also receiving spiking + grooming treatment. It was speculated “Thatch-less” stimulated degradation of cellulose, but not of lignin. Surface hardness was probably a more sensitive character than OM reflecting thatch degradation in the mat. ■

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Chris Hartwiger



Patrick O'Brien



Summer Fades INTO FALL



There were many things to see and discuss on golf courses again in 2012.

As the leaves begin to change color, our activities as USGA agronomists begin to change as well. The frequency of on-site Turfgrass Advisory Service consulting visits has slowed down and we are preparing for the upcoming conference season. It's also a great time for us to play more golf.

As we reflect on the season that has passed and plan for the beginning of our golf season, we wanted to take a proverbial trip through each part of the golf course and offer a few thoughts on the tips, trends, or ideas we observed in 2012.

PRACTICE FACILITY

A round of golf generally begins with a trip to the practice facility. The biggest trend in practice facilities this year was educating golfers about the benefits of practicing in linear divot patterns. Ty McClellan wrote an excellent article on this topic for the Green Section Record: <http://gsr.lib.msu.edu/article/mcclellan-practice-6-8-12.pdf>. Practicing in this way will allow more efficient use of the limited amount of turf on the practice range.

TEES

There are more turfgrass species and varieties available for tees than ever. Many of these varieties have unique characteristics that make them well adapted to issues such as shade, high traffic, water quality, overseeding tolerance, etc. Due to difficult economic conditions, large scale renovations are not as popular as they were in the 1990s and 2000s. However, there are often a few capital dollars available and many golf courses have taken advantage of some of the improved genetics associated with newer varieties.

FAIRWAYS

Although more courses in the region are embracing the goal of fast and firm fairways, the Southeast is known for clay soils and 50 inches of rain per year. There was only a short window in June where superintendents could manipulate fairway firmness. Nevertheless, there were plenty of trends on fairways. Numerous coastal courses are taking advantage of the aggressive growth habit of Celebration bermudagrass and they are actually no-till planting Celebration bermudagrass into hybrid fairways mottled with off-types. The results to date have been encouraging.

A second trend is occurring within the resort course market. The number of courses that desire to have green turf in the winter remains the same, but the method for achieving the color is changing. The number of courses that use colorants instead of overseeding continues to increase. Pat O'Brien has written an excellent article on this procedure:
<http://gsr.lib.msu.edu/article/o'brien-instant-7-6-12.pdf>.

ROUGH

We rarely hit the golf ball into the rough, opting instead for shots straight into the woods or a hazard. However, we did take a look at enough rough to know there are a few new developments on this part of the golf course. First and foremost is playing quality. Fewer and fewer courses are favoring a difficult setup with penal rough. They are not only encouraging golfers to "Tee It Forward" but they are also maintaining bermudagrass rough at heights between 1 – 1.25 inches to help make the game more enjoyable and faster to play.

Finally, growth regulation and a reduction of inputs for the rough has been a popular topic on Turfgrass Advisory Visits. Bermudagrass is an extremely versatile grass and has produced an excellent quality rough in the Southeast for decades. Unfortunately, the inputs required (water, fertilizer, mowing) are not in alignment with an economically challenged golf market. We see the opportunity to either develop different grasses for non-essential rough on the golf course or to develop growth regulator strategies with the purpose of reducing inputs, particularly mowing.

BUNKERS

A round of golf would not be complete without a comment or two about bunkers. After all, they are the second most talked about topic on Turfgrass Advisory Service visits and they can divide a room faster than an in-state college football rivalry. We can say confidently that in our region, the variety of construction techniques and quality of sand available is unparalleled in golf course management in the Southeast. Unfortunately, we have to report that based upon our observations, golfer satisfaction is no higher than it was 15 years ago. In other words, more dollars are being spent and golfers are not more satisfied. The solution - continue golfer education on the role of bunkers in the game of golf.

PUTTING GREENS

The overall trend on putting greens continues to be the removal of creeping bentgrass putting greens and the establishment of ultradwarf bermudagrass putting greens. It is good to be in a

region where either grass system has proven to be effective. We have enjoyed helping clubs with conversion projects and teaching surface management techniques for ultradwarf bermudagrasses.

A second trend is underway that is worth mentioning. The triplex mower is making a big comeback for a variety of reasons. First, the quality of the cutting units on the triplex mowers continues to improve. Second, the quantity and quality of skilled labor at wages available is harder to come by. Savvy superintendents are making the switch and the results have been positive to date.

HOW IS YOUR GOLF GAME?

Now that we have reviewed a golf hole and discussed multiple agronomic topics, perhaps you believe that you are ready to take your game to the next level. Fortunately, you may not have to travel far as there will be four amateur USGA Championships in the Southeast in 2013:

U.S. Women's Amateur at the Country Club of Charleston

U.S. Senior Amateur at Wade Hampton

U.S. Mid Amateur at the Country Club of Birmingham

U.S. Women's Mid Amateur at Biltmore Forest Country Club

CONCLUSION

We enjoyed working with many of you in 2012 either in person or through written resources such as this publication or the Green Section Record Online. As always, we welcome the opportunity to be of assistance to you and your golf course. Please give us a call or email any time.

Chris Hartwiger (678) 591-7410 chartwiger@usga.org

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The regular Headliners column normally features media coverage of golf course maintenance issues and personalities, as part of an ongoing partnership with Syngenta Professional Products. But the following column, which appeared in *The Pilot* newspaper in Southern Pines, NC is a twist on that theme. Veteran golf writer Howard Ward takes golf purists to task and gives Carolinas golf course superintendents two thumbs up in the process.



Veteran golf writer, Howard Ward, receives a plaque of appreciation in 2006 for his coverage of golf course superintendents in the North Carolina Sandhills from then Carolinas GCSA president, Paul Jett, CGCS.

Nothin' Finer than the Carolinas, NOT EVEN ROYAL ST. GEORGES

By Howard Ward

Indulge me for a moment: OK, you love golf. You love golf courses. You consider yourself, if not a purist, at least a connoisseur of the game. Now picture this: You're enjoying a ride through the countryside one summer afternoon and see a turnoff sign for a golf course. It's a course you aren't familiar with, so you figure, what the heck, take a look.

What you find is something called Royal St. George's. Hmmm, never heard of it. So you park, get out of your car and take a closer look. Oh, yeah, just what you were looking for. Another dog track stuck out in the country. Wonder if they have the nerve to charge green fees to play this eyesore. I recently watched a

rerun of a British Open held on Royal St. George's and it kindled this reaction.

OK, so I'm just another spoiled malcontent, but seriously, folks, let's be honest here. If you drove up to Royal St. George's with no clue as to its stature in the golf world, no hint of it being anything more than just an unkempt golf course, would you even consider playing it?

Golf course superintendents in the Carolinas must get a laugh when they watch the British Open being played on courses that their spoiled clientele wouldn't set foot on. I mean, you've got fairways with no level landing areas, rough that comes up to

your waist, greens that wouldn't hold a suction cup, and weather conditions that would make a New Englander flinch.

I admit that it's fun to watch the British Open on television. I can sit in my recliner and smile when a drive lands in the middle of the fairway and ends up in a hayfield that's in serious need of a herd of goats. I can chuckle when what looks like a perfectly struck approach shot lands two feet from the cup and bounces sideways, then trickles off the hardpan green, down into the valley of iniquity and finally into one of those pot bunkers from hell.

Oh, yeah. This is fun. This is golf the way it was meant to be played. Are you kidding me?

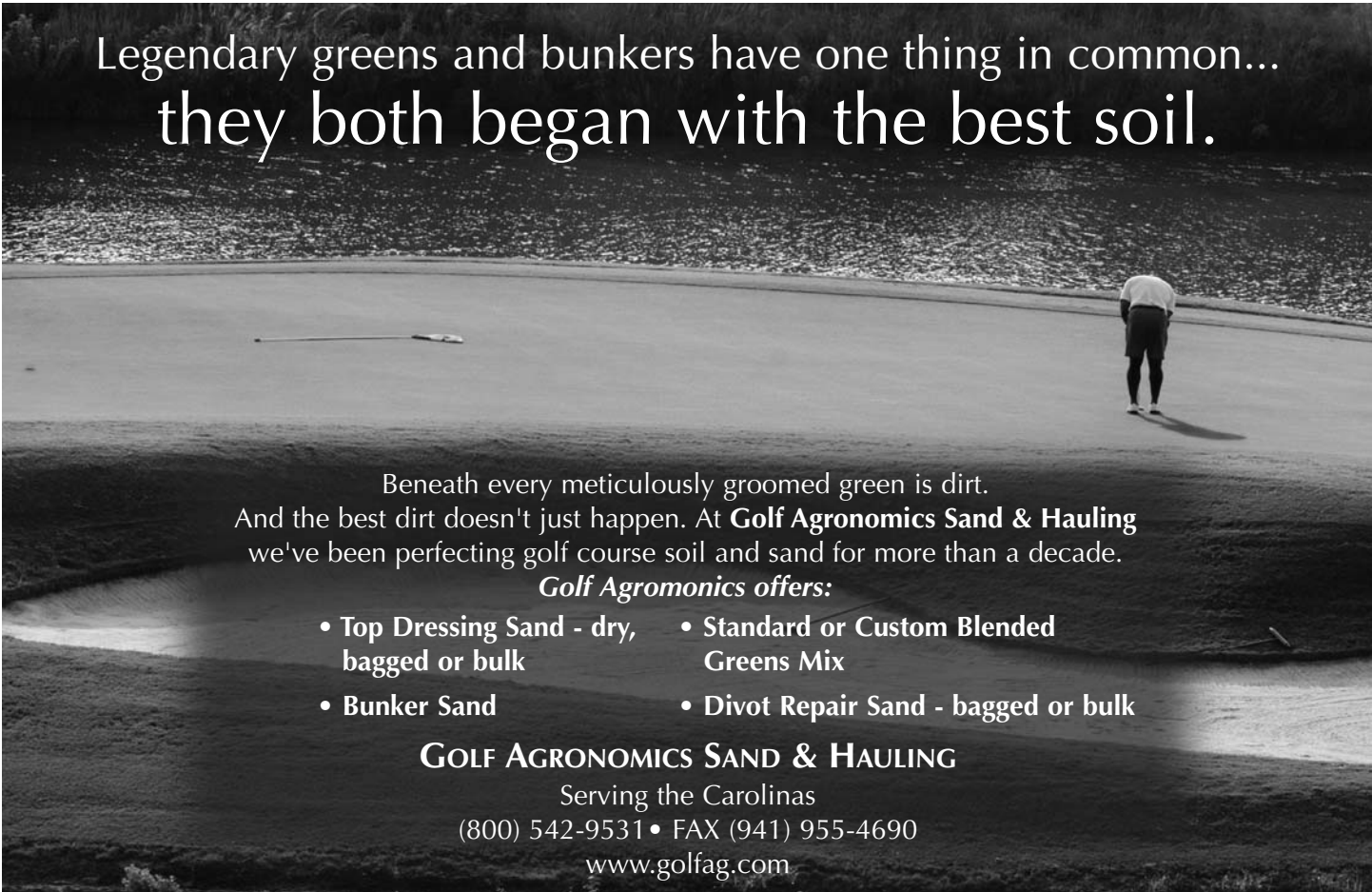
Frankly, my friend, I'd rather pay to play any golf course in the Carolinas than play Royal St. George's for free. My idea of a fun time at a course like that would be to spend the day on a bulldozer. What this course needs is for a tornado to come through and do a couple of million dollars worth of improvements.

Frankly, I get a little tired of hearing some of our golf "purists" frothing at the mouth about what a great test of golf this is. Give me a break! This isn't a test of golf; it's a torture chamber. Courses like this don't reward good golf shots; they destroy a person's sanity.

I'm the first to admit that American golfers — especially those who play courses in the Carolinas — are spoiled rotten. We expect every blade of grass to be perfect, even the ones we gouged up in anger after miffing another chip shot. But you show me a man who would prefer going to England or Scotland and playing an ugly, poor-conditioned course to something like one of our Pinehurst area, Grand Strand, Charleston, Hilton Head or mountain courses, and I'll show you a man who is badly in need of some mental renovation.

Look, I know all about the great tradition and I appreciate the importance of the British Open in golf as much as the next duffer. And I certainly don't want to see them plow up St. Andrews' Old Course and turn it into a Bushwood Country Club. But, tell you what, I'd rather play Bushwood or any other well-manicured course on a regular basis. In fact, I can think of about 40 golf courses in a 20-mile radius of Midland Road in Southern Pines that I'd prefer playing to Royal St. George's.

If that makes me sound like someone who'd rather fly an eight-iron into a receptive green than try to roll a four-iron through a series of washouts and a couple of feet of gorse, so be it. I'm a green acres kind of guy. ■



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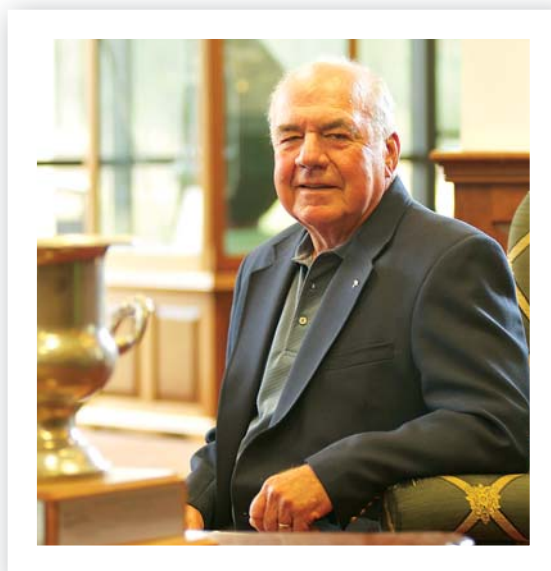
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A photograph of an older man, Fred Meda, standing outdoors. He is wearing a dark blue blazer over a light blue patterned polo shirt and khaki pants. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a blurred green landscape with trees and a body of water.

A Man Ahead of his Time Peers to Honor Meda with DSA

Fred Meda will receive the Distinguished Service Award at the 50th anniversary Conference and Trade Show in Myrtle Beach, SC.



By Trent Bouts

Hundreds of people picked up countless tricks of the trade from Fred Meda over the years but learning how to reverse somersault from the top of a wood-chipper wasn't one of them. Yet that's what a select group of his crew members were doing some 20 years ago at Myrtle Beach National Golf Club. And while Meda didn't teach them how to do it, the mere fact that they were points as profoundly as any example to his ability to think outside the proverbial box.

Not for the first time in the history of golf course maintenance, good labor was proving hard to find back then. Meda was scrounging high and low for smart, reliable people he could train to walk-mow greens so he could turn his full-time staff to other tasks. Somehow, he learned that a troupe of Russian acrobats with a nightly show near the Waccamaw Pottery Mall had a lot of spare time during the day.

Clearly, here were guys who understood the value of precision and repetition, two qualities essential for the task Meda had in mind. He made himself known and for the next year and a half, they helped him achieve his goal while the steady work helped them satisfy visa requirements. Not all their practice was golf related however.

"We started them off chipping tree limbs and I remember a couple of them doing these triple back flips off the chipper," recalls Rob Vaughan, who worked for Meda then and is now golf course superintendent at Brunswick Plantation and Golf Resort in Calabash, NC. "And sometimes you'd find them out there stacked on each other's shoulders three and four high. But they learned to walk-mow greens and they did a really good job of it."

Like all the best in the business, Meda was first and foremost a pragmatist. Solving the problem mattered more than how

refined the process might be. But again like all the best, he retained an artist's sensibility for the acreage he maintained. "The golf course is a painting you get to work on every day," he says. "You get to create and shape how it looks, how people see it. There are not a lot of professions where you can do that."

Fred Meda made art and found solutions on golf courses over a career spanning the best part of 50 years. His forward thinking, his attention to detail and his supreme – frankly, at times extreme – work ethic made him one of the giants of the golf course superintendent profession. This November, during the Carolinas GCSA's 50th anniversary Conference and Trade Show, he will receive the association's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award.

A previous winner of that award, Bill Anderson, CGCS from Carmel Country Club in Charlotte, NC says that through Myrtle Beach's transformation from a beach resort with some nice courses to a golf resort with a nice beach, Meda was "the Godfather." "He was the most successful superintendent with the biggest job," Anderson says. "He knew who was doing what and how well they were doing it. He knew everything that was going on. He was a political broker. But everybody liked him."

Vaughan says that's because Meda always made time for people. "Whether they were raking bunkers or cleaning the toilets, Fred treated everybody fairly," he says. "I remember working on the irrigation system at one point and him lying right down in the drain hole with me and explaining things. He was a very good teacher. If he wasn't that kind of person I don't know if I would be in this business today."

Anderson considers Meda a mentor as well. He was young and just starting out at Carmel when Meda was the man at ►



Fred Meda receives the Superintendent of the Year award from then Carolinas GCSA president, Fred Biggers, in 1991.



Fred Meda with the late Stan Boraski, a Carolinas GCSA past-president. Those youngsters in the background are another past-president, Chuck Green, (standing) and Dr. Bruce Martin.



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Raintree Country Club. Anderson wasn't the only one who looked to Meda for answers at that time. Clay Brittain, who founded the Myrtle Beach National company, drove north for a face-to-face meeting to recruit him after a phone call failed to get it done. A month later Meda resigned and headed south for a job he would hold for the next 28 years. "I saw a lot of ups and downs in the business over that time but I really enjoyed it," he says today.

In those days, Myrtle Beach National commanded three of the barely two dozen courses along the Grand Strand. By the time he left at the end of 2004, the company's stable stood at 10 among more than 100 courses in the area. All of them were better conditioned because of Fred Meda, says Randy Allen, CGCS now with Modern Turf and himself a Distinguished Service Award winner.

Allen was at Camden Country Club at the time but he was a regular visitor on golf trips to the beach. You could say he later became The Godfather II of the beach over a long career at The Dunes Golf and Beach Club where he hosted multiple Senior Tour Championships. Meda's impact was almost immediate, he says. "He hadn't been there all that long before the standard of golf course maintenance at the beach went to a whole new level. There was a lot more attention to detail so then expectations went up and accountability went up too. He just wanted excellence and he worked hard to get it."

At times, Allen says, Meda probably pushed himself too hard. Meda would be the last one to argue with that. In 1991, on a mountain drive in North Carolina he suffered a massive heart attack and was clinically dead for 11 minutes. "I would say I self-destructed," he reflected in an interview more than a decade later. He was stressed, overweight and "pretty darn stubborn" as he took on more and more responsibility, more headaches. The cumulative impact eventually "split the rock."

The irony there is that Meda had failed to heed his own advice. More than a decade before his own heart attack, Meda had warned a young superintendent at Pinehurst Resort that he might be working himself into the ground, if not in fact under it. "He asked me when my last day off was and I'm not sure I'd taken one at that point," that former superintendent says. "Fred pointed out that my golf course had been around for something like 75 years and that he guessed it would be around tomorrow even if I wasn't. He said it was only grass and that I might want to take a day off here and there before I killed myself."

That superintendent, who had learned under Meda at Myrtle Beach National, was Tim Moraghan, who would go on to become the USGA's director of championship agronomy for more than two decades and is now principal of Aspire Golf Consulting. "Fred kind of invented the way it's done today," Moraghan says. "In his reporting methods, his clear lines of responsibility, the criteria his people were expected to meet, and his management style and the way he ran the operation, he was ahead of his time."

Meda was influential in establishing the Palmetto Golf Course Superintendents Association, which remains one of the largest local associations in the Carolinas. He spoke regularly at meetings and turf conferences around the country. He won a Superintendent of the Year award from the Carolinas GCSA in the early '90s. He was Carolinas GCSA president in 1981 when the association's annual budget was around \$3,700. That it stands north of \$1-million today is in no small part thanks to the success he helped bring to the Carolinas golf industry, not just golf course superintendents.

Fred Meda will receive the Distinguished Service Award at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center on Wednesday, November 16. ■

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SHOW PROSPECTS STRONG

But Industry Questions Remain



Carolinas GCSA members will receive a new lapel pin at this year's show.

Death and taxes are famously said to be the only certainties in life but recent experience suggests that uncertainty itself might now be another. Even as the Carolinas GCSA heads towards what shapes as a triumphant anniversary Conference and Trade Show, some of the people responsible for that success are unsure about what might follow. A number of companies exhibiting at this year's show enjoyed better business this year but are hesitant, if not downright gun-shy, about proclaiming any industry turn around.

"We have had a good year in golf but, boy, I wish I had a clearer picture," says Steve Smith, Smith Turf and Irrigation president. "We've made some headway as a company, getting our employees on a stronger footing and slowly making some additions to staff. But I don't think there's going to be a major uptick for a long time."

Larry Feller, with Syngenta, is similarly conservative and suggests that cultural shifts are compounding the cloud over the economy. "I definitely don't think we're out of the woods as an industry," he says. "I think the whole golf industry is going to have to make some major changes to deal with the way the world is changing. The younger generation is not going to allocate five hours to playing a round of golf. So many of them haven't grown up playing the game so getting them interested now is even more challenging."

Like Smith at STI, Feller says Syngenta has “had a really good year” after taking a “double hit” when some major products went off patent at the same time the economy tanked. “But now I think we are seeing some people coming back to the branded products and I’m excited about some new products we’ve got going,” he says. “I think a lot of courses regained rounds in 2011 so at least it’s not a negative cash flow situation so much anymore. Yes, I’m encouraged but the challenge is stabilizing the golf market.”

On the face of it, early numbers for Conference and Show in Myrtle Beach, SC from November 12 through 14 suggest the industry may finally be emerging from the gloom. A month before the show, revenues in every single category were ahead of the same time last year. Only three of 376 booths on the trade show floor plan remained to be sold. The golf championship had only a handful of playing slots still available. Education seminar registrations were so strong across the board that not one seminar would have to be canceled, perhaps for the first time in show history.

The 27-Hole Challenge, always popular with attendees, was in such high demand from exhibitors wanting to participate that the event will be a 36-Hole Challenge this year. “We just had so many exhibitors wanting to take part that we wanted to do all that we could to accommodate them,” says Carolinas GCSA office manager, Angie Smith. “We realize this will mean a little extra legwork for attendees to fill out their scorecards but with the chance to win \$5,000 or some of the other great prizes, it’s got to be worth it.”

Smith, whose work at the association headquarters is probably as deep in the heart of the Conference and Show as anybody’s, suspects several factors are at play in the strong early numbers. She says a series of email reminders to members of looming deadlines helped keep Conference and Show front and center. “We also introduced a \$100 late fee for exhibit registrations for the first time and I think that helped some companies make their decision sooner whereas in previous years they might have waited,” she says. “It has been crazy in here but it’s really heartening to see so much interest from both exhibitors and attendees once again.”

Steve Hamilton, CGCS from The Dunes Golf and Beach Club in Myrtle Beach and sitting Carolinas GCSA vice-president, says that, anecdotally at least, he is hearing of more clubs starting to do more in terms of projects and purchasing. “I think everybody has been sitting tight since 2008 when everything just came

to a screeching halt,” he says. “But there is starting to be some movement, I think, albeit in a small way. Golf rounds are up but there are some big question marks.”

As Hamilton intimates, the presidential election shortly before the conference, generated considerable uncertainty on a host of fronts. What would happen with taxes, what would be the fate of employee health insurance and so on? “While there are some good signs, I think a lot of clubs are still struggling and the economy is sputtering, so who knows,” Hamilton says.

STI’s Smith says the crash in 2008 and what ensued was “very tough.” “I haven’t seen one like it in my 36 years,” he says. “In previous recessions there seemed to be enough projects planned or committed to that you had some kind of a bridge through it. But with this one there was no tailing off. It just stopped, like somebody flipped a light switch.”

Like many in the Carolinas and nationally, Smith’s company was forced to make lay-offs, the impact of which was deeply personal for employers, the people they had to let go and for the customers those people did business with. It’s a fact of life in the golf industry, and particularly here in the Carolinas, that the line between professional and personal relationships is often blurred, in the best possible way. Good people tend to make friends with good people and there are a lot of both on each side of the commercial transaction.

Smith might as well be speaking for the principals at any company in the Carolinas when he recalls some of the personnel decisions that followed the crash. “To tell people who have done absolutely nothing wrong that their jobs just aren’t there anymore was the hardest thing I have ever had to do,” he says.

“There is no worse feeling than that as an employer.”

Smith suspects that the increase in business this year was partly due to pent up demand with leases due to rollover and, four years after the recession hit, time simply having run out on postponing some projects and purchases.

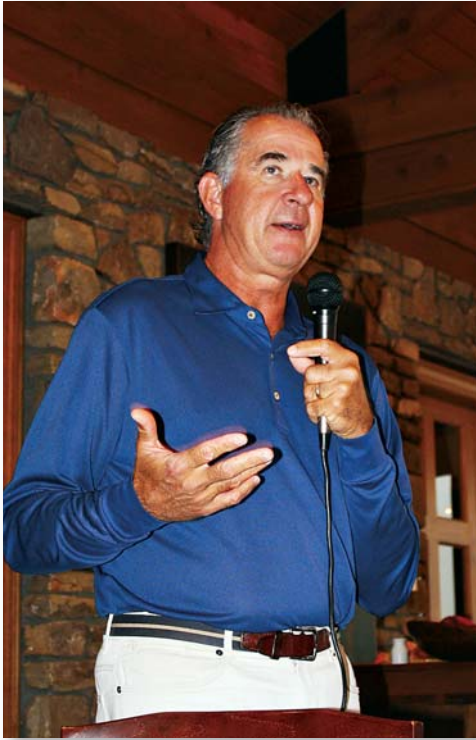
Feller says the recovery in rounds played this year might have also convinced golf course operators “to loosen the purse strings a little.” The people I do business with are seeing an increase in play,” he says. “The resort areas are seeing people starting to travel again. But there are things the industry is going to have to look hard at like retrofitting courses into six-hole loops so people can choose how long they want to be out there. This was about as big a wake-up call as the industry could have had, I think.”



The former 27-Hole Challenge will be a 36-Hole Challenge this year due to high demand. Marty Stephenson, from Colonial Country Club, (with check) won last year’s 27-Hole Challenge presented in partnership with John Deere represented by Lon Fleming, left, from Greenville Turf and Tractor, and Turner Revels, from Revels Turf and Tractor.

Fog Falls Over FALL MEETING

Bobby Weed delivers some thought-provoking comments at the annual fall mountain meeting.



Derek Oglesby, of Corbin Turf and Ornamentals, and Todd Kirkley, from Oak Hills Country Club, were among the crowd at the fall mountain reception provided in partnership with Tri-State Pump and Controls.



From left, Carolinas GCSA's SC legislative advisor, Charlie Rountree III, board member, Troy Sanders, and Dennis Harmon, Goose Creek city administrator, enjoyed a round at Grandfather Mountain Golf and Country Club, on the eve of the fall meeting.

Fog may have pulled a blanket over any hopes of playing golf at the Carolinas GCSA's annual fall mountain meeting but speaker Bobby Weed offered a clear view on what is ahead of young superintendents. Weed, an award-winning golf course architect and 30-year veteran of the industry including a start as a superintendent, was at Linville Ridge Golf Club to speak about the course 100 Carolinas GCSA members were about to play. His company renovated the George Cobb design with considerable help from the club's golf course maintenance leaders Steve Sheets and Tommy Clark.

But when an early burst of fall shrouded any hope of play, Weed tweaked his address to take in more than the work on the golf course. Weed offered no illusions about any imminent return to golf's glory days of a decade or more ago. Indeed, he forecast the industry would lose another "2,000 to 3,000 courses" in the U.S. over the next 10 years. "But I'm still as enthused and excited as I've ever been because now we can be part of the solution," he said.

First and foremost, he said, the industry needed to "put fun back in the game." That would mean a range of adjustments including relaxed dress codes, shorter rough to speed play as well as smaller and less formal clubhouses. "The bottom line is we've got to put business back in the industry," he said. "We've had a bad model for too long that hasn't made a lot of business sense. It's been proven over the years to be a failed model."

One point he said that spoke to the industry's wayward focus stemmed from the fact that only 18 percent of all golfers carried a handicap and only one percent could be considered "expert" golfers. He asked why then did golf facilities devote so much time and resources on features and conditioning levels that served to make the game so difficult. "Superintendents can really have an impact there because of your role in the set-up of the course," he said.

Young and aspiring superintendents could serve themselves well by building their experience and their resume with construction experience. Weed forecast that many courses in the U.S. would look to undergo some form of renovation or reconfiguration in the years ahead. That work would be necessary as older courses strived to be competitive, as some sold off or redeveloped parcels of land to pay for improvements or as some reconfigured layouts to create more loops to and from the clubhouse.

"We will see more core-style golf courses," Weed said. "I don't think you're going to see any more of those sausage link-style courses where there are chains of nine holes leading out and back to the clubhouse. Anything we can do contain the size of our land parcel is going to help limit those fixed costs like labor." Weed said he had worked on projects where the existing course had been "pushed around" to free up 15 to 25 acres of land that could be repurposed as real estate to fund the renovation.



Nick Willis, of Turf Dynamics, catches up with John Lavelle, from Diamond Creek Golf Club, at the evening reception at Linville Ridge Golf Club.

“As superintendents, if you want to improve your stakes you’ve got to have construction experience,” he said. “I think a lot of college graduates looking to get into the industry will have to come in at a lower level. One of the best things they can do is work for the best superintendent they know. I don’t care what it is you have to do to get a start. Just identify the most respected, most skilled superintendent you can find and work your way up.”

Weed also offered some firm advice for more experienced superintendents looking to move up the career ladder. “Debt is the biggest anchor that has taken down more facilities than anything else during this period,” he said. “So if you’re interviewing for a job don’t be afraid to ask some hard questions about a club’s finances because that will absolutely affect your budget. Do your due diligence. Ask about revenues, how old the equipment is. You’ve got to look under the hood.”

Weed said the benefits of asking the right questions were twofold. For one, it could provide important information on which to base a decision on whether to accept a job. Two, it demonstrated a higher level of engagement and interest in the business side of the operation. “I don’t think that’s crossing a line for you to try and understand more of what’s going on in the club’s business,” Weed said. “Really, I think it’s more likely to turn on a light for whoever’s interviewing you.”

Because the weather prevented the scheduled golf event, Linville Ridge’s director of golf course maintenance and grounds, Steve Sheets, arranged for the club to give a rain check to those Carolinas GCSA members who were registered to play. Those members have until the end of October next year to make use of their invitation. They can bring a non-Carolinas GCSA member as a guest at the club’s accompanied guest rate. Guests who are Carolinas GCSA members will pay a cart fee.

“We are very grateful to Linville Ridge extending that level of hospitality because of the weather conditions,” Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger, said. “We have been lucky to have meetings at the club in the past and I know many of our members were very excited to see the course after the renovation.”

With no golf tournament to decide winners of prizes for the day, Carolinas GCSA president, Doug Lowe, CGCS drew names from a hat, including his own as luck would have it. Winners were able to redeem their gift certificates in the club pro shop immediately. They were:



Joel Ratcliff, CGCS of Coastal Floratine, and fellow Carolinas GCSA past president and fall mountain meeting host, Steve Sheets, make the most of a wood fire against the early season chill.

First flight –

- 1 – Jon Skillman, Southern Ag.
- 2 – Doug Lowe, CGCS Greensboro Country Club
- 3 – Jay Reins, CGCS Green Resource

Second Flight –

- 1 – Todd Kirkley, Oak Hills Golf Club
- 2 – Cordie Morgan, Milliken Turf Products
- 3 – Sam Friar, The Members Club at Woodcreek and Wildewood

Third Flight –

- 1 - Anthony Durham, Old Town Club
- 2 – Craig DeJong, Hendersonville Country Club
- 3 – Dave Wanta, Jacobsen

Fourth Flight –

- 1 – Rob Hamrick, Golf Agronomics
- 2 – David Letterman, Wolf Laurel Country Club
- 3 – Jeff Briggs, Cleary Chemical

Fifth Flight –

- 1 – John Romansky, Blue Ridge Golf Center
- 2 – Brent Anders, Tri-State Pump and Controls
- 3 – Shannon Peterson, Mountain Air Country Club

Assistants Gathering

EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS



Craig Darst, from Greenville Country Club (SC) Riverside course; Sadler Stowe, from The Club at Twelve Oaks; Patrick Stanley, from MacGregor Downs Country Club; and Nicholas Puskarich, from Mountaintop Golf and Lake Club.



Stephen Drews, from Highland Country Club, Nate Stevely, from Chechessee Creek Club; Erik Kennelly, from The Golf Club at Ballantyne; and Andrew McClannon, from Starmount Forest Country Club.

The Carolinas GCSA's first assistant superintendent-only meeting drew nearly twice as many people as organizers initially hoped for. Nearly 60 assistants attended the event at Carmel Country Club in Charlotte, NC in September. "When we first started working on this back in May we thought maybe 30 would be a good number," says assistant superintendent advisory committee member, Trent Nelson, from Greensboro Country Club. "I have to admit that even then I thought that number might be a little optimistic. So to get so many there was wonderful."

Nelson says the strong turnout was proof that assistant superintendents are hungry for education and networking opportunities tailored to their needs. "It's a tough industry for assistants right now with very little movement in the upper management positions," he says. "So guys are staying in the assistant role for longer than ever. They know they need to keep up with their education and to do things like network more to gain any sort of leg up on the competition."

The Carmel event included a golf tournament, social event and a day of education that featured a panel of veteran superintendents, another of club managers and a sprayer calibration session that carried pesticide credits. "There was a lot of good information and it was particularly helpful to hear directly from club managers," Nelson says. "I think for a lot of us that's something we don't normally get to do even at our own clubs where we might say hello when we see the general manager but that's about it. Hearing from their panel was a totally different view."

The superintendent panel that included host club superintendent, Bill Anderson, CGCS spoke to the group about hiring practices, budgets and general expectations. Presenters from the club managers included John Schultz, CCM, general manager at Carmel Country Club; Jill Philmon, CCM, CCE, general manager and chief operating officer at Ballantyne Country Club; Tom DeLozier, CCM, general manager at Quail Hollow Club and Corinne Grimaldi, managing director of the Carolinas Chapter of the Club Managers Association of America. The sprayer calibration session was delivered by Gordon Langley from Smith Turf and Irrigation.

Assistant superintendent organizers also thanked Green Resource as a partner in presenting the event. The assistant superintendent advisory committee seeks several volunteers heading into 2013. One of the original committee members was recently promoted to a superintendent position. Willing candidates can contact Chad Prest at cprest@oldchathamgolf.org or Kim Clark at the Carolinas GCSA at kclark@cgcsa.org for more information.

"There is no doubt there are some very high caliber people working in assistant superintendent roles in the Carolinas," says Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger. "The strength of our golf economy and the lifestyle our region offers make it an attractive target for young men and women wanting to become superintendents. But that also makes for more competition in an already tight job market. As an association, we want to do all we can to make sure these folks have what they need to succeed because they are the future of the golf course maintenance profession." ■

The Equipment Technician PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE



MacGregor Downs' equipment technician, Preston Burl left, with the author and golf course superintendent, Todd Pippin.

By C. Todd Pippin

The golf course mechanic that we all used to know and love is quietly fading away. The industry is now replacing him with the modern day equipment technician or, as I favor, the equipment manager. The contribution that these individuals make within the golf course maintenance arena is often under appreciated, as they play an ever-increasing role in the overall conditioning and management of the facility.

No one individual can take credit for the performance, presentation and conditioning of the golf course. It takes a team to make it happen. A successful team is made up of individuals who do their job not because they have to but because they want to, taking pride in their work is an understatement. They are willing to do whatever it takes to reach their goals and “make it happen.” At the end of the day they also realize the importance of everyone’s contribution not only in their own success but to the overall success of the team and the facility.

The golf course superintendent plays a critical role in developing the property into its full potential but the equipment manager is the one that will leave the team’s signature on it when the day’s work is done. That role can determine whether a member or customer returns to play again or make it their last call. Being responsible for more than \$1-million worth in rolling stock is no small task and it takes every piece of that equipment that they are responsible for to fulfill the day’s assignments.

The various disciplines required to manage the modern day golf course equipment fleet are quite varied and potentially extremely technical in nature. The equipment manager is the point man for everything from two-cycle, small engines, diesel, hydraulics, electrical, fuel systems, preventative maintenance schedules and most importantly, cutting units, and that’s just the equipment. Good preventative maintenance can potentially save a facility hundreds of thousands of dollars in purchases

of new equipment, time lost to repairs, lost efficiencies from poor equipment performance and sub-par conditioning and presentation on the course.

As the name implies, the equipment manager is much more than a skilled mechanic. They not only maintain the fleet but play a critical role in total shop management. Total shop management encompasses everything from spatial development of the equipment warehouse, ordering parts, fuel reserves and managing staff within the shop proper. More often than not they also will be the lead trainer for new equipment operators.

Every aspect of their performance from the equipment, total shop management, training staff or managing inventories all affects the bottom line. In the “new normal” that we have all found ourselves in, doing more with less is the standard for operations. Running a golf course is running a business and more often than not it is big business. The equipment manager without a doubt has become the most critical link in the management team.

As many of you are aware, qualified technicians are in high demand within the industry. There are many more jobs than there are qualified technicians to fill them. Many of the staff on the golf course maintenance team has an alternate that can fulfill their duties in the event of an absence. Not so with the equipment manager, they are the one and only individual that has the full skill set to complete the tasks they are charged with. With no equipment, there is no work to do.

Equipment managers are critical to the operation of any modern day golf course. No longer are they “just the mechanic.” They are the equipment manager. Equipment managers, we need you and we thank you for all that you do.

- C. Todd Pippin is golf course superintendent at MacGregor Downs Country Club in Cary, NC. ■

Jenkins Helps Raise BRICK LANDING



Superintendent John Jenkins and assistant superintendent Chris Cummings overlooking their handiwork and the 18th green. (Photo: Irene Dowdy)

By Elsa Bonstein

There is nothing sadder than a golf course that has been shut down. No irrigation, no mowing, no aeration, no fertilizing, no raking, clipping, mulching. No spraying. Within weeks, the grass burns out in the glare of the sun, weeds take over the fairways, saplings push up through the earth. Ponds fill with algae and bunkers erode. Years of painstaking work disappears in a few months.

Brick Landing, in Ocean Isle Beach, NC was built in 1987. A Michael Brazeal design, the course enjoyed popularity for a number of years. It was short, a mere 6,788 yards from the tips, but countless water hazards, sharp doglegs and narrow fairways made it challenging. Fabulous views of the Intracoastal Waterway on the beginning and finishing holes made it a popular destination for both visitors and locals.

After two economic downturns and six different owners, the Brick suddenly closed on January 1, 2010. Four groups of golfers were pulled off the course and given refunds. For six months, nothing happened on the business end, while Mother Nature wreaked havoc in the clubhouse, the maintenance area and the course. Clothes in the pro shop mildewed, food in the freezer spoiled. Mowers and tractors, rakes and clippers rusted in the maintenance facility. Irrigation heads disappeared as weeds grew over everything.

In June, the bank (Carolinas Bank) took it over and started cutting the grass. For the next two years, the course lingered in bankruptcy. It was finally auctioned, but the deal fell through.

Into this chaos, enter Larry Doyle, a retired investment banker looking for a troubled property with promise. He had already bought and successfully resurrected Olde Point Golf Course near Wilmington, and he saw promise in the wasted, neglected property that was Brick Landing.

“My team had turned Olde Point around, and I wanted to have the same people on board for Brick Landing,” Doyle says. “I brought in John Jenkins, the superintendent, and Chris Cummings, his assistant, to oversee the renovation and reconstruction of the course. Joey Godley, director of golf at Olde Point, became general manager.”

A Carolina Beach native, Jenkins started out as a fisherman and morphed into a golf course superintendent, quite by accident. “I was in the Florida Keys on a fishing boat and across the way was Sombrero Country Club,” Jenkins explains. “In my off time, I started working on their golf course maintenance crew. David Triano, the superintendent took me under his wing. I looked at where my life was going and decided I wanted to be a superintendent, not working on a fishing boat. It was a good decision.”

Jenkins worked at various venues in Florida and pursued his education at Gateway College in Lake City, FL. His golf courses included the Polo Club, Belfair, Grand Haven and the Palmer Legends Course at The Villages. Eventually, he missed the Carolina coast and found a job in Wilmington, working on the renovation of Olde Point.



Then: A view of the 17th fairway as the course fell into decline.



Now: How the same view looks this fall after Brick Landing's renaissance.

"I came here right after Brick Landing changed hands on August 7," he says. "We had to completely redo the greens and it was late in the summer." Jenkins and his team decided to install Jones Dwarf for a number of reasons. "Jones Dwarf has no mutations and it is adaptable because it is a natural selection versus a man-made hybrid selection," he says. "The grass has 50 percent less thatch than TifDwarf and 80 percent less than other ultradwarfs. In addition, it requires fewer nutrients and can be used wall to wall."

To complicate matters, the irrigation system at Brick Landing was in very bad shape. Sprinkler heads were lost in the huge thatch of grass that had grown up over two years, pipes were broken and the intake pipes in the large pond that supplied water had collapsed. "It was a nightmare," Jenkins recalls. "Divers went into the pond to investigate and were immediately surrounded by several large alligators. We had to call in animal services to take them away. It all took longer than expected and consequently, the Jones Dwarf did not come in as fully as we had hoped. Four weeks after we sprigged, I drove to Florida through the night to pick up a truckload of new sprigs. We finally overseeded the greens with double the normal amount of rye, but we knew when the spring came and the transition began, our greens would be patchy because they had not been fully established in the fall."

Because the course was in a transitional state, general manager Godley decided not to hype the course with a big

grand opening. "We knew it would take at least a year to get the course in good shape," he says. "We opened for play on October 29 with four temporary greens. The members were happy to have their course back. They knew we were working hard to make it better."

While work on the greens progressed, collapsing bulkheads were fixed, bridges repaired, trees were pruned and removed, and some cart paths were replaced. Overgrown bunkers were weeded and edged by hand. New tees were installed, and the par three fourth hole became a par four using an old green that had not been used in several years.

"We all worked like dogs," Jenkins laughs. "We were trying to grow new greens through drought conditions with a barely functioning irrigation system. There were times I felt like weeping like a child."

Today, Brick Landing is well on its way to becoming a jewel of the Carolina coast. Greens are flourishing and the fairways are strong. The clubhouse has been renovated and the dining room is open for business. "I am excited at the progress that John's team has made on the course," owner Doyle says. "We are finishing the second floor of the clubhouse with a grand staircase and a dining room that will seat over 200 guests. We've already booked over a dozen weddings for next year. The members are happy and each day more visitors come to play." ■

Great Time to Formulate a WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

By Dr. Dara Park

Fall is always a busy time for preparing playing surfaces to weather the winter. But with winter soon upon us, now is a good time to grab a good cup of joe and get cozy at your computer and work on your water management plan. A water management plan (WMP) can be kept fairly simple or can be quite detailed. Regardless of what your WMP needs are, there are great resources and templates on the web.

Two of my favorites include one produced by our very own Carolinas GCSA in collaboration with North Carolina State University and Clemson University. It features a self-assessment tool to evaluate your current water management. You can sign up at www.terc.ncsu.edu/.

While the tool does not assemble a WMP for you, the output does have most of the basic elements that should be a part of any WMP: course description, detailed water use logs and common water management practices. Add some short- and long-term goals and you can easily convert the output into a simple WMP.

If you need something a little more detailed, my other favorite is the University of Georgia's *Developing Best Management Practices for Golf Course Water Conservation: Approaches and Management* by Bob Carrow, Clint Waltz and Ronnie Duncan. The document gives in-depth information on how to develop a comprehensive WMP including a template, cost v. benefit analysis and how to track and attain conservation goals. This might sound a little overwhelming, but it is put together well and very easy to navigate and utilize. You can download the 53-page document here: www.commodities.caes.uga.edu/turfgrass/georgiaturf/Publicat/1650_BMP_H2O.htm.

If you need additional information on specific management practices, try using the information available through the Irrigation Association Resources webpage. Besides information on offered certification courses, you can find step-by-step detailed golf irrigation audit worksheets and a list of irrigation best practices and standards:

www.irrigation.org/Resources/Resources_Splash.aspx.

Another good go-to website for detailed information is the Cal Poly Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC). While

ITRC includes information for irrigation of agricultural systems, there is a lot of great applicable information ranging from soil salinization to irrigation pump design. They too, offer classes and sell irrigation audit supplies and books: www.itrc.org/.

If you get overwhelmed in the sea of information and need a little guidance, feel free to send me an email or call and together we can determine the best strategy for you to develop a WMP.

Current Conditions:

Wow ... we look good. Only about nine percent of North Carolina is "Abnormally Dry" with the rest of the state experiencing no drought conditions (Figure 1). South Carolina is a little worse off, with 56 percent of the state falling in the "Abnormally dry" and "Moderate" categories and 44 percent not experiencing any drought (Figure 2).

You may have had to increase irrigation during fall due to the good growing conditions (for cool-season grasses at least) and breezy weather increasing evaporative demands. As your turf goes dormant and if the current conditions persist, supplementing rainfall will be minimally needed. However, don't forget even dormant turfgrass needs water.

Yes, the most common form of winterkill (direct low temperature kill) can be exacerbated by over applying water. But don't let that stop you from applying any water to your dormant turfgrass. Applying water is necessary to avoid the next two most common forms of winterkill: from plants not having enough water to take up (causing plant water stress) and water losses from evaporative (wind) desiccation.

So if you want your turfgrass to wake up green in spring, frequent winter water is just the thing. Timing your irrigation during warmer weather and daylight hours will help in ensuring against low temperature kill.

In case you were wondering, Georgia shows improvement, but still has about 30 percent of the state in either "extreme" or "exceptional" drought categories. By comparison, this time last year Georgia had nearly 80 percent in the same categories.

- Dr. Dara Park is assistant professor for turfgrass, soil and water quality at Clemson University. ■



Dr. Dara Park

Figure 1

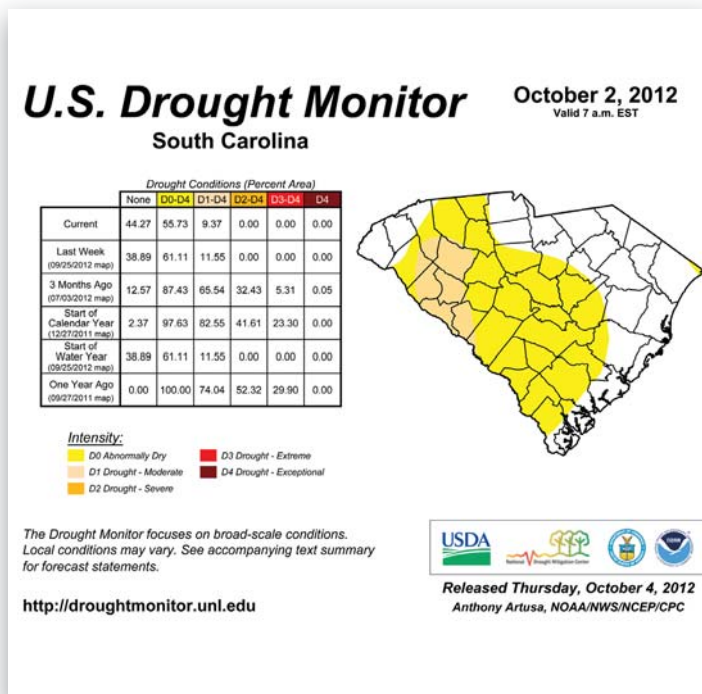
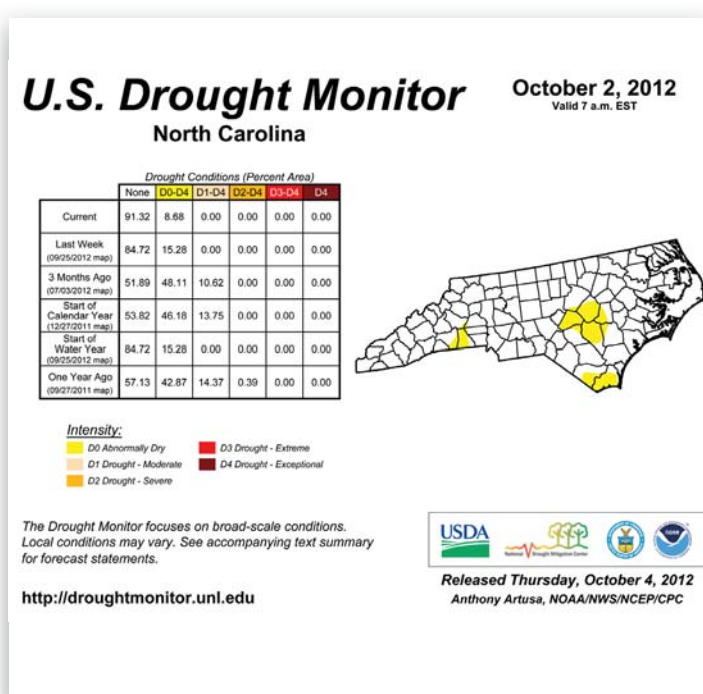


Figure 2



Agri Supply has what you need to save your greens

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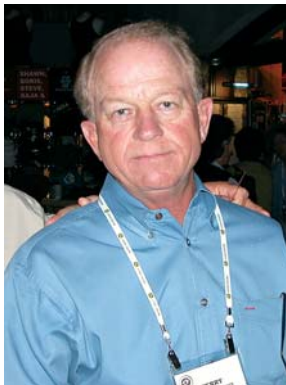
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SANDHILLS



Perry Payne, CGCS



Morgan Stephenson



Zack Cumbrea receives his raffle prize of four tickets to a Carolina Panthers game from Randy Hilburn.

The end of another long, hot summer has afforded the members of the Sandhills GCSA the opportunity to get together and celebrate. The fall event season began with our annual gathering at Sandhills Turf Farm. Mark Harris and his staff provided the membership with yet another memorable outing. Fun was had by all, highlighted by Mark's raffle of four Carolina Panthers tickets and a parking pass. Thanks again Mark, for hosting such a fun-filled event.

The second event of our busy fall schedule was to be the annual fundraiser at Tobacco Road Golf Club, to be held late October. This episode was guaranteed to be a crowd pleaser given such a great venue. Thanks again to Perry Payne, CGCS and Morgan Stephenson for allowing the association access to such a beautiful golf course.

Lastly, the wildly popular assistant superintendent and crew members outing will be moved to Whispering Woods Golf Club sometime in November. This is always well attended and hopefully the later date will allow for an even better turnout. We will make sure to keep you guys informed as we finalize a date.

Again, thanks to our illustrious membership for all of your help and participation. Dave L'Italien and I welcome any suggestions you may have.

- Randy Hilburn, *Whispering Woods Golf Course* (910) 690-5178.

EASTERN NC

The Eastern North Carolina Turfgrass Association has had several events over the past couple of months. Our first event was the Richard Williams Memorial Golf Tournament at Falling Creek Golf Course in Kinston in September. There was an awesome outpouring of support for this event that was organized to help support the family of Richard Williams, our president who passed away unexpectedly in July.

A big thanks goes out to everyone who helped organize this event, those who donated items for the silent auction, those who sponsored the event, those who volunteered at the event and those who participated in the event. Richard's family was overwhelmed by the support and extremely thankful for all the help that they have received from our industry.

We were proud as an association to be able to raise \$13,500 for Richard's young family although we know nothing will ever replace the presence he was in their lives, or ours. He will be sorely missed but fondly remembered.

Our most recent event was our annual member championship, hosted by Roger Olmstead at Reedy Creek Golf Course in Smithfield. Dr. Leon Lucas was our guest speaker and he updated everyone on what he has seen this year as he has traveled the Carolinas for the Carolinas Golf Association.

Terry Kallam edged out Les Bailey as the gross champion on a scorecard playoff after they each shot 77. Jonathan Richardson was the net champion with a net of 64 followed by Robert Furr, who had a net 68. Good playing guys.

Our next event was to be our Ryder Cup matches against the guys from the Cape Fear Association mid-October at Carolina Colours Golf Club in New Bern. I am sure Jason Price and his staff were going to have the golf course in great shape for this fun event.

We end the year at the Country Club of the Crystal Coast on December 6, 2012 with host Andy Ippock, where we will

have our annual meeting and elect three new board members. Thanks to everyone who supports our association and our industry.

-Brian Green, *Lonnie Poole Golf Course* (919) 828-7820

TRIANGLE

The Triangle TA would like to wish everyone a very safe and enjoyable holiday season. It is hard to believe that 2013 is right around the corner. The fall is a busy and very enjoyable time of year for our association.

Our golf championship, hosted by Pine Hollow Golf Club, was shaping to be an exceptional event at press time. For the first time in the Triangle's history it was played on bermudagrass greens. Thank you to our host superintendent Grant Warren and his staff for providing what were sure to be excellent conditions. Grant is an exceptional individual and superintendent and we are very proud to have him as part of the Triangle family.

The Triangle hosted a social event the week before the championship and a good time was had by all. This event was open to all involved in the turf industry as a thank you for all that they do. Attendees included anyone from superintendents, assistant superintendents, vendors and equipment managers.

Our annual Christmas Party will be hosted again by Carolina Country Club with a gracious thank you to superintendent Bob Young for making this event possible. This year we have a slight menu change and hope all of those that attend enjoy.

On a personal note I want to thank all of the Triangle board members for their time, effort and commitment to our association. We cannot move forward or provide for our membership without your energy and devotion. I am looking forward to the 2013 season and am honored

to serve as president of the Triangle Turfgrass Association. - *Joe York, North Ridge Country Club (919) 669-1852.*

UPSTATE

After a long hot summer, you would think the Upstate Turfgrass Association would take it easy for a while, but no! It is time to reflect on the last few months and look ahead with the "Boys of Fall" who will hopefully not embarrass themselves on the softball diamond this fall. That's right, the Upstate TA has formed a softball team, appropriately named the "Grassholes," who will compete in the Greenville County YMCA league.

Sadly, the first league game in September was not kind to the Grassholes, who were nipped in the late innings 20-0 by an opponent too fearsome to be named here. Coach Kyle Traynham was slightly upbeat about the performance of a few players, notably Gary Jones whose pitching gem kept the 'Holes in the game for a few outs. Less impressive were outfielders Adam Charles and Chuck Connolly. One bystander termed their performances as "disgraceful" and "unfit" for the proud Grasshole tradition. Much better performances were seen on the golf course in our annual grudge match with the Midlands Turfgrass Association. This year's match was held at Musgrove Mill late September. I am pleased to report that the Upstate cruised to crushing 23½ to 9½ victory. Stalwarts for the Upstate were Ray Bindewald, Alan Corbin, Patrick Martin, Craig Harris, Craig Darst, Lynn Young, Josh Henson and many others. As an onlooker, I was wondering where all these great golfers were during the Hamrick Cup. Overall, it was a great day and we are thankful to Will Holroyd for hosting us this year. Special thanks also to Dr. Bert McCarty for speaking at our event.

We are very happy to announce that the Upstate TA awarded two scholarships

this fall. Congratulations to Weslyn Jones, daughter of Gary Jones; and Mary Kate Garrett, daughter of Don Garrett, CGCS for earning our two \$500 scholarships. They are worthy recipients and we thank our sponsors for helping us make the scholarships possible.

Our final golf event of the year was set for the end of October with our golf championship at Thornblade Club, where Jeff Stover will defend his crown. Special thanks to Randy Long for hosting us this year.

- *Paul Brandenburg, CGCS Furman University Golf Course (864) 294-2060.*

CAPE FEAR

At press time, the Cape Fear GCSA was looking forward to the annual Coastal Cup mid-October at Carolina Colours Golf Club in New Bern. The Cape Fear was looking to retain the cup from 2011. Our last scheduled event of the year is the Mike Claffey scholarship tournament, which will be played at Cape Fear National Golf Club. This event helps raise money for the scholarship that is given yearly to a turfgrass management student at Brunswick Community College.

- *Paul W. Hughes, Cape Fear National Drive (910) 465-6210*

PALMETTO

The Palmetto GCSA has had the opportunity to enjoy two great outings since the last magazine. The first was our annual superintendent championship at True Blue Plantation. We had 43 players turnout for this event. I was fortunate enough to win the gross division with a birdie on the final hole, finishing with a round of 70, one shot clear of Jim Knaffle, CGCS. The net division was also close and had to be decided with a scorecard playoff. Max Morgan, CGCS finished on top from Brett Whitson, after both carded net 66s.

Closest to the pin winners were: No. 3 - Brett Whitson; No. 7 - Glaze Rollins; No. 14 - Mike Bankert; No. 16 - Jim Knaffle, CGCS. Our sponsors for this event were: golf - Green Resource; prize package - Buy Sod and Bayer Environmental Science; dinner - Revels Turf and Tractor; beverage cart - Palmetto Turf Consultants.

Our next outing was at Oyster Bay Golf Links. This was our elections meeting and we had 35 in attendance. Our format for this event was a Texas scramble with two net scores per hole. In our team format the winners, with a score of 120, were Joe Kobylarz, Keith Sarvis, Matt Schrader and Gary Humphrey. Runners-up with a score of 126 were Dave McGhee, Jim Miller, Jim Burris and David Smith. Closest to the pin winners were: No. 6 - Joel Ratcliffe, CGCS; No. 8 - Steve Hamilton, CGCS; No. 15 - Gary Humphrey; No. 17 - Brett Whitson.

Thanks to Dave McGhee and his staff for having the course in fantastic shape. Our sponsors for this event were: golf and dinner - Harrell's Fertilizer and Schreiner Golf; prize package - Modern Turf and Lowcountry Aquatics; beverage cart - Palmetto Pump Services.

After golf and dinner we held our annual elections and would like to congratulate Dave McGhee and Jay Noyes for being elected to the board. We truly thank our sponsors

for their assistance in making all of our outings a great success. At press time we were looking forward to our annual year-end review meeting at Pine Lakes Country Club.

- *Kevin S. Thompkins, True Blue Plantation (843) 907-8969.*

LOW COUNTRY

The Low Country GCSA is winding down from a very busy summer season. There were numerous courses doing projects this year and there are a number of members really happy to see the summer come to an end. Jay Gratton at Spring Island, Brian Hollingsworth at Dataw Island Club, Mitch Wilkerson, CGCS at Moss Creek, and Jerry Ross at Ocean Creek Club at Fripp Island have their courses back open after doing major renovations this summer. Congratulations to these guys and their staffs for a job well done.

During October we held our first annual social and cornhole tournament at Cheap Seats on Hilton Head. We would like to thank the staff at Cheap Seats for hosting us. A great time was had by all. Please look on the website for results.

Please mark your calendars for our annual Christmas tournament at Savannah Golf Club. This will be held on December 3. Details on this outing will be sent out soon. This is always a great tournament and we would like to thank Mike Carn and the staff at Savannah Golf Club for hosting us every year. The ▶



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COASTAL PLAINS



Marty Bahen

Fall is officially here and the fishing results are in. The fishing tourney was a great success again this year with 28 anglers in the fleet. We had our closest finish ever with the Trifecta being determined by only one ounce. It was great seeing everyone out there having fun and raising money for Clemson turfgrass research. Thanks to our sponsors we will be making a \$1,000 donation.

Gold sponsors: Jeff Fitcher with Coastal Florantine, Marty Bahen with Smith Turf and Irrigation, Mike Brown with Green Resource, Steven Terrell and Al Hicks with Tri-State Pump and Controls/Jacobsen, and Jonathan Smith with BASF.

Silver: Larry Feller with Syngenta, Bubba Jones with Murray Sand, Willie Mays with Regal Chemical, Mitch Williams with Helena, Andy Burns with Simmons Irrigation, Bob Marschner with Agri-Business Technologies, Dave Swanigan with Bayer, Tom Player with Carolina Eastern Molony, Richard "Squirrel" Shultz with Think Squirrel, Scott Martin with Corbin Turf and Ornamental Supply, and Matt Schrader with Harrell's.

Congratulations to our winners including some repeat performers. Marty Bahen won the red fish category for the second year in a row. But what about Brad French. It was the fourth year in a row that he has won the trout category. Yes, that's right. Four years in a row. I think we can officially call him Troutman now.

Red fish

1 - Marty Bahen, 4lb 10oz; 2 - Tom Player, 3lb 9oz.

Flounder

1 - Stephen "Coach" Johnson, 5lb; 2 - Tom Player, 4lb 10oz.

Trout

1 - Brad French, 2lb 14oz; 2 - Rowland Dority, 2lb 10oz.

Trifecta

1 - Stephen "Coach" Johnson and Rowland Dority, 11lb 2oz; 2 - Tom Player and Brad French, 11lb 1oz

A special thanks goes out to Jonathan Smith of BASF for cooking the low country boil, banana pudding and providing beverages at our captains' meeting the night before the tournament.

This will be the last article before our annual business meeting and we, as a board, would like to invite everyone to attend. This year we are going to host the event at Shadowmoss Golf Club, on December 6. Check-in will begin at 9am. The business meeting will start at 9.30am with golf to follow. After golf, we will have the award ceremony, food and drinks.

This will be a free event for anyone that RSVPs. Let me repeat that, this is a free event! All we ask is that you consider joining or commit to being a member of the Coastal Plains GCSA for 2013. If you are friends with someone in the industry that hasn't made a meeting in a while give them a call and bring them out. It will never be more affordable than free.

Hope to see everyone in Myrtle Beach in November and at Shawdownmoss in December. If we miss you, have a wonderful holiday season and we will see you in 2013.

- Brian Brown, Wrenwoods Golf Course (843) 963-1300.

Low Country GCSA wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

- Brian Roller, Oldfield Club (843) 645-4632.

MIDLANDS



Will Holroyd

The Midlands Turfgrass Association has been busy this fall with educational seminars and golf outings for our members. In August, we attended an educational seminar and golf outing at The Members Club at Woodcreek Farms with host superintendent Sam Friar. J.C. Chong, from Clemson University, presented "Time saving management of turfgrass and landscape pests," and added helpful information concerning mole crickets, army worms and earth worms. Sam had the golf course in great shape for everyone to enjoy despite battling off and on rain showers throughout the day.

In September, we had our annual joint meeting with the Upstate TA. The meeting was held at Musgrove Mill Golf Club with host superintendent Will Holroyd. Dr. Bert McCarty, also from Clemson, gave a quick talk concerning "New products and old problems," then opened the floor for discussion. Fun was had by all, despite the beating that was taken on the golf course.

In November, we have our annual championship at the Country Club of Lexington. This event draws a great crowd and are we eagerly looking forward to this event. As always, a special thanks goes out to all the host superintendents and their staff members, as well as, all the Midlands TA sponsors that make these events possible.

- Jim Young, Columbia Country Club (803) 754-5968.

NORTH-SOUTH

Tim Carpenter graciously hosted our stroke play tournament at Gaston Golf Club in September. The course was in great shape as usual. Congratulations to our vice-president Matthew Wharton for getting his name on the Bill Anderson Trophy.

Many thanks to Paul Query for hosting our annual members meeting at Cedarwood Country Club in October. The annual business meeting was conducted prior to golf and our new board was elected. Once again we had more nominees than positions available which is a credit to our membership. It is no small commitment to volunteer time and energy to your association and I greatly appreciate all who have served.

Back in September, Raintree Country Club hosted the Symetra Classic and I am happy to report it was a great success.

This was the first of three annual tournaments to be hosted on the North Course as the best women golfers compete for their LPGA Tour card. Mi Hyang Lee closed with a four-under 68 on Sunday to win by one stroke. Andrew Wheeler and his crew worked very hard to get the course in the best possible condition and the golfers and organizers were very impressed. Rumor has it even Brad Fellrath, CGCS was satisfied with the conditions. I can tell you having 144 young ladies at your course is good for crew morale.

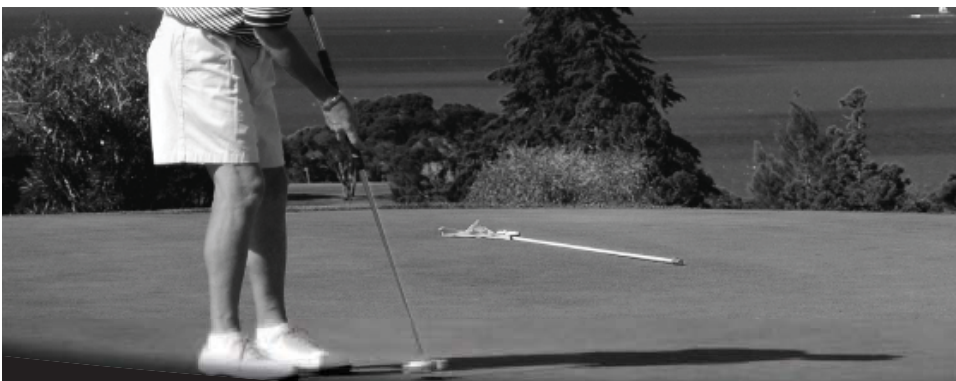
The location and date of our Christmas party are still in the planning stages. We have celebrated at Chimas Brazilian Grill in uptown Charlotte the last two years - which has been excellent - but we may try something different this year. You will be notified by mail or email as soon as we have secured a venue.

In closing, I would like to thank you for allowing me to serve on your board. My term will be up soon but I am confident the North-South TA will thrive with Matthew Wharton of Carolina Golf Club at the helm. Enjoy the quiet months and I look forward to seeing you all at future events.

- Christopher Fortnum, Raintree Country Club (980) 721-1452.



Mi Hyang Lee wins the first Symetra Championship at Raintree Country Club.



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WATER PERMITTING DEADLINE LOOMS

South Carolina golf course superintendents have until December 19 to apply for water use permits. There is a significant difference between permitting for a new user and for an existing user. These differences can include fee rates and varying degrees of studies and possibly public hearings. If you withdraw more than three million gallons in any month you need a permit.

If you have been reporting your usage you are considered an existing user. If you have not been reporting your usage and break these thresholds then you must

apply for a new user permit or provide evidence of pumping prior to January 1, 2011 to the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control.

There is the possibility you qualify for an exemption. On page 8, Section C.1.d. of the Act, the following is cited as a possible exemption which may keep you from having to get a permit. If this applies to you, send DHEC a letter explaining your exemption situation: “d. a person withdrawing surface water from any pond completely situated on private property and which is supplied only by diffuse surface water, or supplied by springs completely situated on the private property, or supplied by groundwater withdrawals.”

The team at SCDHEC has been very helpful to our golf courses and is really there to help. They look to superintendents to be the experts at the facility and expect that we can make the necessary determinations based on the information presented in the permit and applications. Still, they are there to answer any questions that you may have at any time. If you have technical questions concerning completion of the application, please contact Michael Bishop at (803) 898-3553 or bishopma@dhec.sc.gov, Rob Devlin at (803) 898-3798 or devlinrj@dhec.sc.gov, or Charles Gorman at (803) 898-3112 or gormancm@dhec.sc.gov.
- Carolinas GCSA staff. ►

AUDUBON STAMPS OLD CHATHAM



Brian Powell, CGCS

Audubon International recently certified Old Chatham Golf Club in Durham, NC in environmental planning through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. The program is designed to help landowners preserve and enhance the environmental quality of their property.

“We choose the most environmentally friendly practices for maintaining the beautifully diverse ecosystem of Old Chatham,” says Brian Powell, Old Chatham’s golf course superintendent and Carolinas GCSA secretary-treasurer. “We are proud of our ability to do so, while maintaining the highest standards of play on the golf course.”

“It is an honor to be part of such a prestigious group and to be involved with such an important issue as our environment,” adds John Marino, Old Chatham’s director of operations. “The land our golf course was built on was specifically chosen by the founding members for its natural beauty. We know that everything we do here impacts our surrounding land and wildlife, so we care for it with great respect.”

Old Chatham is a Rees Jones design that opened in 2001 and is the third golf course in the Triangle area to be certified under the sanctuary program. TPC Wakefield Plantation and Brier Creek Country Club also have been certified by Audubon.

By joining and participating in the ACSS, Old Chatham Golf Club will be involved in projects that enhance habitat for wildlife and preserve natural resources for the benefit of the local community. These projects may include placing nesting boxes for cavity-nesting birds such as bluebirds and swallows, utilizing integrated pest management techniques, conserving water, and maintaining food and cover for wildlife.

KERNS COMES TO NC STATE

Jim Kerns, from the University of Wisconsin, will join the Department of Plant Pathology at North Carolina State University starting January 1. He will take on leadership of the turf pathology program and further strengthen the NC State's reputation for having one of the best turf programs in the nation.

SPIERINGS RENEWS CERTIFICATION



Darrin Spierings, CGCS

Darrin R. Spierings, from North Stone Country Club in Huntersville, NC has completed the renewal process for maintaining his status as a certified golf course superintendent with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. A former Carolinas GCSA board member, Spierings has been at North Stone since 1998. A 20-year GCSAA member, he initially achieved his certification in 2002.

COACH GRATTON STEPS DOWN

Jay Gratton leaves for work in the dark, returns in the dark and didn't want to leave anyone in the dark about where he might be at a given time, so he stepped down as Beaufort High School's softball coach after

three seasons. Gratton, the golf course superintendent at Old Tabby Links on Spring Island, has been part of the course's \$4.5-million renovation since March, about the time softball season was winding down. The project was scheduled to finish at the end of October, just before softball practice began.

Gratton, who began coaching when his daughter was a senior on the team and stayed on two more seasons, said he needed a break to spend time with family and maybe play a little golf.

"I've just been tired here lately," Gratton told the *Island Packet* newspaper in Hilton Head, SC. Gratton also spent three years as the Eagles junior varsity coach. The Eagles varsity made the playoffs in 2010 and 2011. They finished 8-12 this past season. "We're proud of what took place there," Gratton says. "Hopefully the tradition will continue and they'll keep getting better."

BEACH COURSES REOPEN AFTER RENOVATIONS



Max Morgan, CGCS

Grande Dunes Resort Club in Myrtle Beach, SC has reopened after a three-month renovation. The Roger Rulewich-designed course is one of 22 Prime Times Signature Courses owned or managed by National Golf Management. Grande Dunes closed at the end of June to convert its former L-93 bentgrass greens to Champion ultradwarf bermudagrass and reopened late August to rave reviews from visitors and members.

"We're delighted to take a course ranked in the top 20 in South Carolina by the major golf magazines and make it even better," says Max Morgan, CGCS National Golf Management's director of agronomy. "Frank Coughlin, Brett Whitson and the entire staff at Grande Dunes are to be commended for a successful project that has yielded high-quality year-round putting surfaces at one of our flagship courses."

National Golf Management also spent three months renovating Meadowlands Golf Club in Calabash, NC. In about 100 days, the golf course maintenance team at Meadowlands, led by superintendent David Pridgen, converted the course's TifDwarf bermudagrass greens to TifEagle.

"TifEagle will provide a faster surface and will not have the contamination or mutation that the TifDwarf greens had, which is a function of age," Morgan says. "The new greens will also not require overseeding" which makes for year-round consistency that golfers look for.

"We could not be happier with how this greens conversion and renovation has turned out," said W.J. McLamb, president of Meadowlands Golf Club. "We're grateful for Max Morgan's guidance and expertise and to the entire National Golf Management team for their support throughout this project. The golf course is in phenomenal shape."

SYNGENTA CLOSES ON DUPONT DEAL

Syngenta acquired the DuPont Professional Products insecticide business. As a result of this transaction, Syngenta now owns insecticide brands Altriset®, Advion®, Arilon®, Acelepryn®, Calteryx® and Provaunt®. A number of DuPont Professional Products employees have also joined Syngenta. In addition to targeting the professional turf and pest management markets, Syngenta will pursue adjacent market opportunities in ornamental horticulture and the consumer space. The closing price for the acquisition was \$125 million.

MSMA USE EXTENDED

On October 1, the Organic Arsenical Products Task Force (OAPTF) extended the use of MSMA for weed management on golf courses and sod farms beyond the original phase-out date of December 31, 2013. The OAPTF anticipates labeled turfgrass “applications will be extended for at least three years and likely longer.” Use of MSMS for highway rights-of-way has also been extended. The extension applies while the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) conducts a new review of information related to the use and impact of MSMA.

In the meantime, MSMA use on golf courses will remain subject to use restrictions established in 2009. Golf course use is limited to spot treatments not to exceed 100 square feet per spot, or 25 percent of total golf course acreage per year. One broadcast application is allowed for newly-constructed golf courses and sod farm use is limited to no more than two broadcast applications per season. A 25-foot buffer zone must be maintained around permanent water bodies.

MSMA is an organic arsenical post-emergence herbicide and has less risk than inorganic arsenic. The OAPTF anticipates the NAS review will take 41 months. Upon the conclusion of the review the OAPTF believes the data will support unconditional re-registration of MSMA for current sites and ability to restore previously lost sites (e.g. sports fields). This extension of MSMA use does not alter the previous decision for turfgrass professionals managing residential and commercial lawns or athletic fields. These site uses remain off-label and are not permissible on MSMA sold after December 31, 2010. However, MSMA with an “old” label for these sites can still be used until it is depleted.

COURSE CRAFTERS FOUNDER DIES

The Carolinas GCSA extends sympathies to the family and friends of Robert “Bob” Pinson. Pinson founded Course Crafters in 1992 and was a past-president of the Golf Course Builders Association of America. He was a former Carolinas GCSA member and his company was a

regular exhibitor at Conference and Trade Show in the 2000s. Pinson died September 5 after a sudden illness. He was 57.

CAROLINAS LEADS NATIONAL R4R

Carolinas golf facilities have provided the majority of donations to the new national Rounds4Research program. At press time nearly 100 Carolinas courses had donated rounds for the online auctions will now be rolled out over the year. Georgia and Virginia, states which partnered

well with the Carolinas GCSA’s pioneer Rounds4Research campaign, have also been the prominent donors in the new program. While the Carolinas may be the biggest donor, the number of courses participating so far is a dramatic drop from the numbers that helped generate funds for turfgrass research in the past. Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger, urges members to encourage their facilities to participate again because those courses will benefit from the research their donations help fund.

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■ Grinning Granite



Smile and the whole world smiles with you, they say. Well, Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger, certainly got a grin out of this unique rock formation on the side of the road in the mountains of western North Carolina. Clearly somebody else did too, adding a pair of eyes and a tongue to complete the picture.

■ Right on Cue



Andy Yoder

Andy Yoder, from Diamond Creek Golf Club, is one of the mildest-mannered guys in the business. Always ready with a smile and warm handshake, he gives the impression he wouldn't hurt a fly. Just never put a pool cue in his hand. As a group of Carolinas GCSA members gathered at a local watering hole on the eve of the annual fall meeting, Yoder showed himself to be a master with the long straight stick, barely cracking a grin as he wiped the table time and again with his opponents.



■ Summer Bonus

You could probably irrigate an entire course with the sweat expended by superintendents and their teams in the Carolinas each summer. Just getting through to fall can feel like a reward in itself but Ryan McLeod, assistant golf course superintendent at Crowfield Golf and Country Club in Goose Creek, SC, left, received an extra thank you this year. Crowfield's director of golf operations and Carolinas GCSA board member, Troy Sanders, organized a round at celebrated Harbour Town Golf Club as thanks "for a full summer." Sanders was also grateful to host superintendent, Jonathan Wright.



■ Quality Signage

It's the thought that counts. Staff at the Quality Suites in Banner Elk, NC went out of their way to welcome Carolinas GCSA members to the annual fall mountain meeting. The trouble was that they were clearly a little confused about who was coming. As the photo, left, shows, they welcomed the Carolinas Golf Association instead. It's hardly the first time the Carolinas GCSA has proved too big a mouthful for some host facility. And it's certainly not the last time someone will mess up with the signage on their marquee. Sometimes the errant sign is more entertaining than the correct one, like this one spied outside a movie house in Tennessee several years ago: "We love Britneys pears."

■ Something Fishy

Research for the member profiles now featured on the Carolinas GCSA website each invariably turns up more than we bargained for week. One good story leads to another and so on. In the end, there are too many tales to tell in the space provided. Like this one from Eastern Turf Equipment's Adam Ancherico.

Ancherico once called on superintendent, Scott Clawson, in the Pinehurst area only to learn that Clawson had gone for the day and wouldn't be back until Monday. A big tuna fan, Ancherico accepted an invitation from Clawson's assistant and sat down to eat his lunch in Clawson's office.

Having been on the other end of some practical jokes from Clawson over the years, Ancherico decided to get some of his own back. He opened one of Clawson's desk drawers and slipped his leftover tuna can deep in the back and slammed it shut. It was the middle of summer so by the time Clawson returned, Ancherico may have been long gone but the smell of rotting fish was not.

OUR FRIENDS

■ Tim Cup



Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger, cuts a cup on a green he just aerified for Kyle Traynham.

Upstate Turfgrass Association president, Kyle Traynham, had a little extra help on the crew during his recent aerification at Willow Creek Golf and Country Club in Greer, SC. Carolinas GCSA executive director, Tim Kreger, gave up his coat and tie for the day and sweated it out pulling plugs on an aerifier and tackling various other duties.

Kreger has now done similar “volunteer” work for a number of superintendents in the Carolinas since joining the association. Each has been grateful and impressed that the ED is willing to get his hands dirty and learn from the ground up about the profession he represents. The Clean Up Lap agrees but also suspects Kreger simply gets a kick out of riding loud machinery and rumor has it that he has occasionally been heard making revving noises behind his desk at the association headquarters in Liberty, SC.

It's doubtful Kreger could have had better instruction at Willow Creek. Not only is Traynham an experienced superintendent but his father, Dillard, was a lifelong superintendent as was his grandfather, E. J. Traynham. E. J. Traynham actually attended the meeting that is the basis for the column on page 10 of this issue of *Carolinas Green*.

- Nelson Cato**, formerly with World Tour Golf Links, Myrtle Beach, SC is now sales representative for Vereens Turf Products.
- Chris Crawford** has been promoted to assistant golf course superintendent at Okatie Creek Golf Club, SC.
- Aaron C. Daganhart**, formerly assistant golf course superintendent at Blowing Rock Country Club, Blowing Rock, NC is now assistant superintendent at Talamore Golf Resort, Southern Pines, NC.
- Scott Denny** is now golf course superintendent at Argent Lakes Golf Course, Bluffton, SC.
- Michael V. Garzo** has been promoted to assistant golf course superintendent at Pinewild Country Club, Pinehurst, NC.
- Cory Huskey** has been promoted to golf course superintendent at Riverwood Golf Club, Clayton, NC
- Mathew Kidd** is now golf course superintendent at Okatie Creek Golf Club, Bluffton, SC.
- Daniel McDowell, Jr.**, formerly golf course assistant superintendent at Cliffs at Glassy, Landrum, SC is now golf course superintendent at River Falls Plantation, Duncan, SC.
- Kyle E. Oakes**, formerly with River Landing Country Club, Wallace, NC is now assistant golf course superintendent at Wilson Country Club, Wilson, NC.
- Matthew S. Robinson** has been promoted from assistant golf course superintendent to golf course superintendent of Salem Glen Country Club, Clemmons, NC.
- Ben Stackhouse**, formerly with Holly Tree Country Club, Simpsonville, SC is now golf course superintendent at Greer Golf and Country Club, Greer, SC.
- Chad Stockton** has been promoted to assistant golf course superintendent at Highlands Country Club, Highland, NC.
- Daniel Brett Sullivan**, formerly with Highland Country Club, Fayetteville, NC is now assistant superintendent at Prestonwood Country Club, Cary, NC.

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