

Summer 2020

Volume 28 Issue 2



Congratulations Chapter Champions!
Crowned on a great day at Fossil Creek! Photos on page 11

Affiliate Champion (L)
Drue "3-Peat" Thompson

Superintendent Champion (R)
Ed "1st Time" Martinez

Bully Cup XIV

Rescheduled - July 20, 2020

Ridglea Country Club - North Course

2020 Captains:

East - Kyle Embry

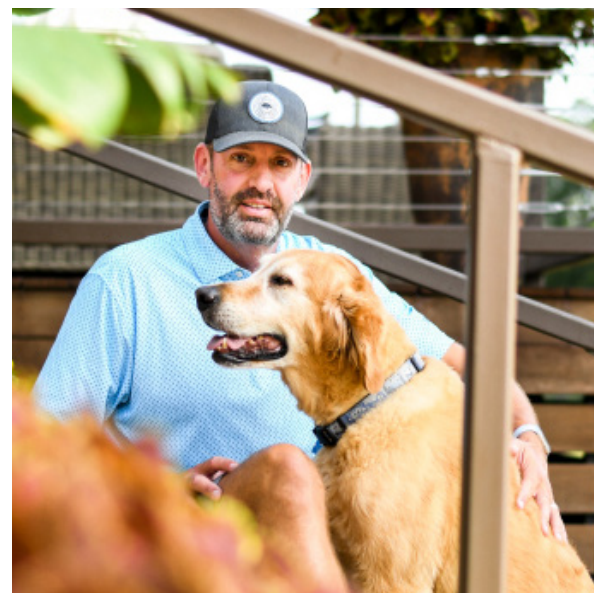
West - Kyle Moore - Defending Champs



President's Message

It sure is nice to be needed! With all the chaos, tension and negativity at every turn with mainstream media and social media alike, people are turning to golf in record numbers to get relief.

Courses around North Texas are recording all-time high usage during this pandemic. The weather has cooperated and we, through our craft, have brought some much-needed peace to many and an outlet of stress to others. Now, maintaining a golf facility with all the social distancing and new safety protocols for staff combined with increased rounds can be challenging, but much better than the alternative. It has been nice to see some fresh ideas on Twitter with how many are dealing with the various hurdles faced.



KD Davis CGCS
Golf Course Superintendent
Royal Oaks Country Club

I would like to promote Rounds for Research again.

Let's not lose track of this incredible program with all the noise around us right now. The dates have been adjusted and donated rounds will be accepted throughout the auction. The Auction will be held July 20 – 26. This program allows us all to give towards our Chapter without having to dip directly into our own pockets. 80% of the money raised by courses in North Texas comes back to North Texas!!! This allows us to give as much as possible to scholarships and fund research with schools that support us. It only takes moments to join and I urge all to participate. North Texas is BLESSED with great golf and we need to showcase it! Besides, the money goes straight back into growing our side of the business. Please feel free to reach out to me, or any others on the board if you are on the fence about this incredible program.

I hope through all this turmoil that everyone's crew and families are doing well and staying safe. Please reach out to your North Texas GCSA board if there is something we can help with.

Hope so see everyone at the Bully Cup!!

KD



**Rounds 4
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GCSAA

***Rounds 4 Research auction rescheduled for July 20-26
The annual event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Donations are still being accepted and will be accepted throughout the end of the auction.***

Donate here:

www.eifg.org/research/rounds-4-research

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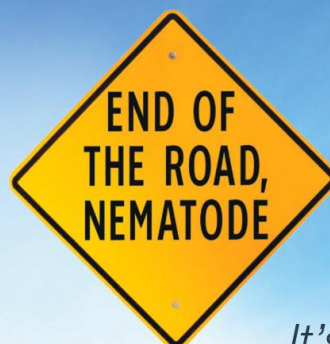
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Enter your golf course canine companion in LebanonTurf's 2021 Dog Days of Golf Calendar and Dog of the Year contest. If selected for the calendar, your dog will also have a chance to be crowned 2021 Dog of the Year, garnering a \$3,000 prize for your affiliated chapter and a \$500 prize for you. Additionally, LebanonTurf and GCSAA will also make a \$2,000 charitable donation in honor of the winner to K9's for Warriors

Entries due August 3

Be creative, have some fun, and by all means show off your dog! For more info, visit

www.gcsaa.org/dog-calendar



OFF & On

The COVID-19 pandemic has not spared golf, with tournaments postponed, rescheduled and even canceled. For some superintendents, their events (hopefully) get a reprieve. For others, their opportunity may never happen again.

Howard Richman

Wearing medical masks and social-distancing, crew at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas, is preparing for the PGA Tour's Charles Schwab Challenge this month. From left to right: Mark Jones, horticulturist; Tyler Bryson, assistant superintendent; Bart Bellmon, assistant superintendent; Scott Ebers, CGCS; Jan Owen, head mechanic; and Mercedes Sanchez, assistant mechanic. Photos by Geno Loro

"This is really strange. You hope it all goes away and we get back to normal."

— Tyler Bryson



Back on course?

Preparing for professional golf's probable return has brought plenty of changes and challenges to the maintenance team at Colonial Country Club
PAGE 34

GCSAA
Golf Course Management Magazine
www.gcsaa.org • June 2020

Congratulations to Scott Ebers CGCS and the entire staff at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth for hosting the return of the PGA tour in June. By all accounts from players and the press, the course was in outstanding condition that resulted in a great return week for the PGA Tour. Congratulations to Daniel Berger for winning the Charles Schwab Challenge in an exciting playoff finish.

Golf Course Management magazine featured Scott and his staff in their June Issue and

recognized the unusual circumstances surrounding the event and the precautions taken to keep Colonial employees safe and healthy. Check out the June issue at GCMonline.com. [CLICK](#)

Golfdom

Scott was also featured in a Golfdom interview with Editor Seth Jones. It also included great insight in to the tournament preparation logistics and precautions. Check it out at golfdom.com [CLICK](#)



Above: Colonial CC crew member Carmen Rubio on watering patrol. Right: Colonial assistant superintendent Tyler Bryson does daily temperature checks, this one for crew member Jonathan Segura Cruz.

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Disaster Relief Fund - GCSAA

In 2006, in reaction to Hurricane Katrina, the association established the GCSAA Disaster Relief Fund to assist GCSAA members who suffered personal loss. The fund has continued to be a resource for members who face tragedy caused by natural disasters.

Those who are affected and may be eligible for financial assistance and resources from the fund can contact 800-472-7878 or email mbrhelp@gcsaa.org.

Donations made to the fund are an opportunity for those in the golf industry to directly assist their peers. The fund is administered through GCSAA's philanthropic organization, the Environmental Institute for Golf. The EIFG is a 501(c)3 organization and gifts are tax-deductible. Your tax adviser can provide you with information specific to your gift. Be assured that 100 percent of your donation to the Disaster Relief Fund goes to impacted members. Click here to make a donation to the fund.

Whether from hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding or wildfires, GCSAA and the Environmental Institute for Golf have established a relief effort for victims. This effort will focus on providing support directly to the GCSAA members who suffer personal loss due to disasters. GCSAA's deepest thoughts and prayers go out to those whose lives are affected by such tragedies.

If you are a member who has been personally impacted, please call 800-472-7878 or email mbrhelp@gcsaa.org.

Covid Disaster Relief

GCSAA knows many members around the world have had their lives impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The GCSAA Disaster Relief Fund is now providing financial assistance to those affected by the crisis.

GCSAA's friends at BASF are doing their part by donating \$25,000 to the Disaster Relief Fund for those affected by COVID-19. Thank you BASF!

GCSAA's friends at Syngenta are doing their part by donating \$15,000 to the Disaster Relief Fund for those affected by COVID-19. Thank you Syngenta!

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TEXAS SPORTS SANDS

Thank you to our great hosts at Fossil Creek! Our host Superintendent Nathan Swanson and his staff had the course in outstanding condition providing a great venue for our 2020 Chapter Championship. The NTGCSA is back and better than ever! Looking forward to great events in 2020 while helping to keep everyone safe and healthy! Thank you to all who participated and our great sponsors!!

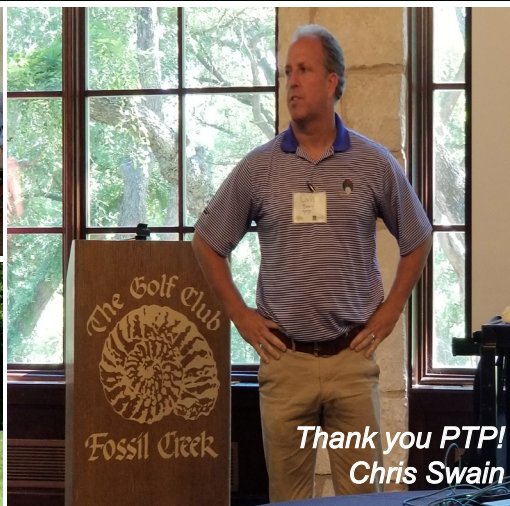


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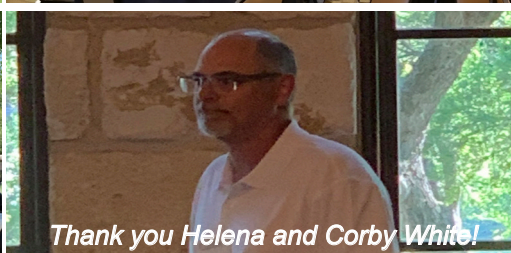
3 in a row!
Drue Thompson



1st Place Affiliate Net
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50 / 50 Winner Blake Cain



Thank you Helena and Corby White!



This is awesome!
South Texas was a piece of cake!

Don't Be Afraid to Go Around in Circles



John Daniels
USGA Agronomist,
Central Region

Going around in circles is usually not a good thing, but when it comes to mowing fairways and tees it can be just what the turf needs.

Circle mowing – where an operator continuously makes wide, overlapping turns – is an effective surface management technique for combating grain formation. Although it might look strange to golfers, this process is customary for warm-season turf like bermudagrass that produces an expansive network of aboveground stems called stolons. Left unchecked, bermudagrass stolons can extend to a foot or more in length, causing scruffy playing surfaces and potentially snagging the club of an unsuspecting golfer.

The easiest and least-invasive way to address an abundance of leggy bermudagrass on a fairway or tee is to mow in a circle. Attacking the grain at many unique angles reduces the chance of a long stolon escaping the cut. Brushing or raking the turf immediately prior to circle mowing can further increase the effectiveness of this practice. Of course, this will likely cause a little bit more mess in the short term, but the long-term improvements to the surface that can be achieved are generally well worth the added cleanup.

Repeatedly mowing turf in the same direction can make grain formation worse, so it is important to change the mowing direction every few days. However, even regularly switching up the direction may not be enough to combat an unruly bermudagrass. Going around in circles might be the solution you need to get things smooth again.

The advertisement features a background image of a golf course with a red flag on a green. Overlaid on this is the Aqua-Aid logo (a red oval with 'AQUA-AID' in white) and the product name 'PBS150' in large, bold, green and blue letters. Below the product name, it says 'POLYFUNCTIONAL BRANCHED SURFACTANT'. On the right side, a blue box contains the text 'MULTI-BRANCHED SUSTAINS A LONGER UNIFORM SOIL MOISTURE PROFILE'. At the bottom left, a white box contains contact information for Brian Daniel.

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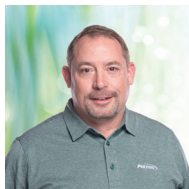
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Another Punch in the Golf Stomach

Steve Wolfard - published April 2, 2020



Well, it appears that golf is poised to take another hit from this virus pandemic. Maybe this shouldn't concern anyone when we are dealing with life and death, but it is concerning for our industry which had stabilized from the 2008 punch to the stomach. During this period of isolation, maybe any of us interested in golf should do some soul searching on what each of us can do to promote it. I know, I know, please, not another grow the game rant. No, just some quick thoughts on getting more folks involved.

We gravitate to sports initially as kids because they are fun. When they are easy to access, then even better. As a youngster I could view six baseball practice fields from my front yard. The neighborhood kids played baseball all summer. And by playing baseball, I mean we had games that we could "play baseball" whether we had 3 people or 18 people and any number in between. Baseball was accessible and cheap. Now my town was a bit different in that we had an older gentleman that would mow lawns in the morning and in the afternoon he would walk back through town looking to get kids involved in pickup baseball games. His name was Jimmy Porter and there are literally hundreds if not thousands of kids that owe some of the best times of their youth to Mr. Porter. He would come to the ballpark on game night to encourage and support us. He loved us, he loved the game and he helped us to see the greatness of the game of baseball. The fact that Jimmy was a black man in a mostly white southern town did not matter to anyone.

Our favorite coaches were the ones that challenged us but did so in a way that was fun. They made practice fun to the point you could not wait for practice. There are certainly many organizations, golf instructors and coaches doing excellent work in the youth golf arena. Through imaginative programming they are keeping kids engaged in golf by making it fun. Golf needs more gatekeepers that make the game fun. Golf needs many more Jimmy Porters.

My children are grown and with no grandkids my influence on young golfers is limited. I have enjoyed designing several short courses as well as short and sporty nine-hole venues. For Clubs, these smaller golf amenities provide another reason for a family to join. A public golf facility can use them as a gateway to the game for kids and women as well as a shorter and less expensive golf option for all. A short course is a great way to introduce the game to your significant other or your daughter. If we are interested in the future of golf, then we should all focus on how we can make it fun and accessible for the beginner especially for the kids or women.

- If you have kids or grandkids, put them in fun situations relative to golf
- Lobby for alternative golf venues for kids. Other sports have little league venues. Why not golf?
 - Simplify equipment access, club fitting and cost for kids and adults. Offer a package deal for club fitting, club purchase and a lesson.
- Also, golf isn't life or death. Let's play the game quickly and go get a pizza!

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There's always a way

Anthony L. Williams, CGCS, CGM

Mr. Williams has experienced plenty in his career. But he's never experienced anything like Covid-19. He reveals the intangibles needed to handle an unprecedented situation.



There are seasons in our lives and careers that seem to define us. They force us to evolve and craft a different way of living and working. We are certainly going through an epic season of change in 2020. Covid-19 and the resulting pandemic have forever altered our lives and now we find ourselves facing a multitude of change and challenges.

The GCSAA has gathered a lot of information that can help you manage your golf facility and answer general questions about the current pandemic and the constantly changing rules, regulations and suggestions. You can access this information at www.gcsaa.org/resources/covid-19-pandemic-resources. I want to share with you some new wisdom with old roots that can help you and our industry navigate safely in this brave new world.

I have been in the golf management industry for many years, and I have worked in multiple markets and climates. I have survived economic downturns, Y2K, droughts, floods, fires, labor shortages, language barriers, Pythium Volutum and prep for five televised golf tournaments. Collectively, all these events added together are small compared to the Covid-19 pandemic. My grandfather used to say when times were tough, "There is always a way. It may be difficult, it may seem unlikely, or even impossible, but there is always a way." From growing up on a family farm in Indian Creek, Georgia, to managing one of Texas's most famous golf resorts, I have observed with each problem, no matter how complex it is, there's always a solution and way to succeed. Three things are critical to finding the way through problems whether they are ordinary (broken irrigation line) or epic (Covid-19): 1. Control your emotions; 2. Display a will to succeed; 3. Blend tradition with innovation to create a new reality.

Control your emotions

The shock of how fast our normal lives changed with the pandemic was staggering. Superintendents were operating normally one minute and then they were notified by authorities that their club must close at midnight.

When this happens, superintendents must create full contingency plans and an immediate response to all stakeholders. There is no Google answer to this situation and the clock is ticking. Generally, when given these parameters, you would be mad and confused. Unfortunately, you have just arrived at the first of many decisions that will shape the future of your staff, your property and yourself. Boom! Welcome to the new world.

Your story may be worse or better than this example. No doubt you are being tested. Personally, I had to lay off 15 staff members and reduce the remaining staff to 20 hours per week during our closure, but at least we can execute essential maintenance. Your first actions should be professional, kind and full of emotional control. This will not be easy. Your attitude and words will become your legacy while fueling the response of your team. Be positive and do the job at the highest level possible with the given resources until the job ends, whether it's today or 30 years from now. You cannot control every situation, but you can control how you react and that is the key. Replace your fear with the faith that you are the property expert and best hope of finding success in the new paradigm.

Display the will to succeed

There is something powerful within each us when the will to succeed is larger than any trial or tribulation. How committed are you to seeing your club through these difficult times? What sacrifices are you willing to make? Where do you draw the line? Champions make the all-in commitment, risking it all to win that day.

Heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali said, "You have to have the will before you can gain the skills." This is true of any endeavor. Right now, you may only have some of the skills needed to rise to the top of our profession during these trying times, but the will to succeed will inspire you to improve, learn new skills and persevere.

Covid-19 is a serious threat and we have not yet seen the deep impact it will have. We cannot stop believing that this, too, shall pass. We can make a difference. Everyone has a breaking point. I know from personal experience that what we think is our breaking point is far from our actual breaking point. In Karate, we have a saying: Everyone wants to be a champion until they get hit (or kicked) in the face. It is a matter of choice.

Success is truly a ratio of your desire to succeed vs. your willingness to quit. I have chosen to do everything I can to help my property and staff weather the pandemic storm. I am learning new skills and perfecting old ones. I never thought I would have to take the temperature of every staff member before and after every shift or that my 9th degree black belt would make me a great security guard during the course closure. My advice to you is to take care of your mind, body and spirit, and commit 100 percent to building a better golf industry and career. Be the example for your property and, by force of will, overcome the current trials and be a hero in our most dire season.

Blend tradition with innovation

Now you must draw on the best of yesterday and forge the latest skills. Combining tradition and innovation is the cornerstone that the refit golf industry will be built upon. The core best management practices that have stood the test of time must still be employed and mastered, with the missing ingredient being the skill to innovate and master your craft under new expectations.

The difference in knowing how to do something and why you do something requires a dose of reverse engineering. Starting where we are today, glance into the future and project where you want to be. You must develop people, projects and processes to move from our current reality to the brighter future.

You may need better agronomics or, perhaps, a blending of agronomy and finance. Labor and team-building will be in high demand. There will be individuals and organizations that will see a better way where everyone else sees only obstacles. Do you have some ideas that fit this synergy? Do you have the courage in these most challenging of times to put them into action? When I was 16 years old, I coined the phrase "environomics" as part my FFA SAE project. Environomics, the fusion of an environmental and financial plan, has guided my life and career. I expect that environomics 2020 will feature some new twists of execution given our current situation. We are an industry of innovators that all have apprenticed with legends of our profession. It's time for our generation to prove its worth. I look forward to seeing the results.

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We have never seen a challenge as great as the 2020 pandemic. I hope that you can use these words of encouragement to improve your personal and professional situation. Please follow the latest recommendations to be safe, wash your hands, avoid touching your face with your hands, practice social distancing, stay home if you are sick, cover your cough, wear a mask if you are sick or caring for someone who is, and see a doctor if you have a cough, fever or other symptoms. Follow the posted rules for shelter in place or other directives from designated authorities and above all be kind to everyone you encounter (including yourself). My thoughts and prayers are with the golf course industry and may we all find our way through this difficult time.

Anthony L. Williams, CGCS, CGM, is the director of golf course maintenance and landscaping at the Four Seasons Resort Club Dallas at Las Colinas in Irving, Texas, and a frequent Golf Course Industry contributor.

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GOLF COURSE
INDUSTRY

Grooming Final Piece of the Pie!

Bud White, CPAg

Arnold Palmer Golf Management



My series of three articles for the NTGCSA Newsletter have been dedicated to the cultural management practices of putting greens, with the individual articles devoted to aeration, vertical mowing, and topdressing, respectfully. This fourth and final article in the series focuses on the grooming process and how it is woven together with the more aggressive cultural management programs. It is critical to understand the importance of grooming for any type of putting green turf, but the difficulty today is matching the delicate balance between being aggressive enough for the newer turfgrasses yet not creating surface disruption for an inappropriate length of time. This last article in the series will examine some of the suggested techniques for the grooming process, and explain how to balance the different parts of the grooming process while tying them into more aggressive cultural management programs throughout the year, such as a deeper vertical mowing and aeration, and a heavier topdressing during aeration.

In a previous article, I discussed the incredible differences in aggressiveness of the new putting green turfgrasses today compared to earlier varieties. As was noted previously, it has been estimated that the new grasses can produce as much as 160 pounds of organic matter per 1000 sf per year. This alone has altered the cultural management and grooming processes, and these changes should be in three areas:

Frequency of operations
Depth of vertical mowing
Rate of topdressing applied

Also, remember that the best approach for managing organic matter accumulation at the surface and maintaining the best playing surfaces possible is a combination of removal and dilution. Let's take a closer look at all these operations together.

Verticutting

Verticutting is the oldest and most common mechanical grooming process that has been available to turf managers short of the brush. However, in the early days, deep vertical mowing was usually done one to two times annually at aeration with the Mat-A-Way.



It is common for putting green grasses to be groomed with a verticut at a depth of $\frac{1}{8}$ inch during the heart of the growing season and $\frac{1}{16}$ inch on the shoulders of the growing season. For the Dallas-Fort Worth market, using the $\frac{1}{8}$ inch depth on the ultradwarfs from May until the first of August, and $\frac{1}{16}$ inch afterwards is recommended. For the newer bentgrasses, verticutting at $\frac{1}{8}$ inch would be done in March/April, as well as October. The $\frac{1}{16}$ inch would best serve in May as well as September and November.

What about double verticutting? Is it necessary or beneficial and if so, what approach is best? The most common double vertical mowing has been two operations at a 45° angle at the same time. However, superintendents with ultradwarf greens have devel-

1/4 inch depth on bentgrass

“Many believe that huge amounts of calcium are taken up by the plant when applied in foliar form, but this is not the case.”

oped a process called “backtrack” vertical mowing which has served to be a particularly good process for the ultradwarfs. It is rarely used on bentgrasses and in my experience, the 45° angle is better for the bentgrasses than backtrack vertical mowing.

In terms of depth of the grooming verticutting combined with the cultural program verticutting, the deeper ½ inch verticutting, as you recall is done once a year with aeration. To provide a good balance of organic removal and dilution of the sand to a little deeper depth, on 1 inch centers. Managing the organic matter in the upper ¾ to ½ inch of the profile is critical and the area must be reached with verticut blades and not just aeration. This allows for significantly more topdressing sand to be worked in this zone which increases firmness and uniformity as well as greatly improves the natural degradation of the organic matter.

Light verticutting on a grooming basis is usually two to three times per month during the growing season at the appropriate depth and one to two times per month during the shoulder seasons.

Topdressing

Topdressing has been used in variation more than any other type of grooming practice, in my experience. Several years ago, the USGA surveyed many clubs across the country who had similar budgets and maintenance practices. Ironically, test results showed a tremendous variation in the amounts of topdressing applied per 1000 sf each year.

We are all familiar with utilizing a heavier topdressing during aeration. Often this is more of a medium-coarse textured sand to work down in the holes. In the topdressing article of the January 2019 NTGCSA Newsletter, we addressed the concern of using finer sands for a grooming type of topdressing, with the coarser particles being left on the surface. I reiterate again that care must be taken with utilizing fine sands. The only way to know if a finer sand will cause damage to the greens profile through plugging pore spaces is to have a physical test done by an accredited lab.

Most superintendents today use a hopper of topdressing sand, from the spin type topdresser, for every two to three greens, depending on the size of the greens (about 125-150 lbs). This is done with and without light verticutting, but if verticutting is not carried out immediately prior to the topdressing, then most are using a slightly lesser rate since incorporation is not as complete as with verticutting. If a bagged sand or kiln-dry sand is being applied on a more frequent basis with the rotary spreader, the rotary spreader is usually set to a wide-open setting and the throw is from wheel to wheel. Usually the green is gone over twice at one application on a weekly to biweekly basis.

A Note about Fertility

Putting green fertility is important when discussing grooming practices and improving putting surface performance on a year-round basis. Personally, I have always been a proponent of basic plant health management and have found a putting green fertility program of 50% granular and 50% soluble most successful. Research confirms this. Remember that the soluble portion does not feed the soil but only the plant. Key primary nutrients such as phosphorus, potassium, calcium, and magnesium are best applied as granulars, so they are absorbed into the soil and thus into the soil chemistry. Many believe that huge amounts of calcium are taken up by the plant when applied in foliar form, but this is not the case. Some superintendents utilize as much as a 90% granular program for their putting greens, applied light and frequent, and obtain great surface uniformity and smoothness without excessive lower cutting heights. Again, I encourage you to evaluate your fertility program accordingly.



Brushing

Brushing is the grooming technique that has been utilized on putting greens for longer than any other, except for mechanical grooming. Brushes were first used on walking mowers with the style usually referred to as a “mustache brush”, which was a short bristle brush mounted on the bed bar, or a rubber type fingered brush for lifting up the turf prior to mowing. Both were highly effective, and the mustache brush has made a comeback in the last few years.

The next step in using the brush was an out-front brush attachment and it is used very effectively today on walk mowers and triplex units. This is a very versatile brush because not only is a grooming operation done without any extra labor, but the aggressiveness of brushing can be adjusted through weights or downward pressure.

Outfront brush on triplex mower

The rotary brush came on the market a few years ago as a grooming tool, placed in the position of the groomer head on putting green reels. The reverse grooming with the brush has been successful, especially on the ultradwarfs. To any superintendent who has not utilized this brush before, I add a word of caution. This brush should be set very high in your initial stages and slowly moved down until it is touching the surface. To set it up as a grooming unit below the bed knife or even level with the bed knife will cause significant damage to the putting surface because of how low this brush will operate.

A tennis court brush as well as a cocoa mat are other grooming types of brushing operations and both do an excellent job. The tennis court brush is the least aggressive of any and therefore is an excellent way of doing some light topdress incorporation when needed during shoulder seasons when the turfgrasses are in environmental stress or lacking full growth rate. The tennis court brush or light cocoa mat also serves as a brush that helps to stand grass up without damage.

A typical brushing frequency during the heart of the growing season is commonly done about four times per week if you are not utilizing a groomer, or two times per week if groomers are being utilized.

Groomers

Groomers came on the market as a grooming accessory for putting green units many years ago and became highly successful in fine tuning the putting surface. Normally groomers are used two to four times per week during the growing season and are utilized best in conjunction with brushing.

They matched up perfectly with the heavier grooved front roller which has already been on the market for several years. The two together produce a much-improved putting surface, not by removing thatch as much as through grooming the turfgrass canopy



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and producing a more upright growth habit. At the same time, it removes wider leaf blades (often called flag leaves) which tend to lay down and contribute to the organic matter accumulation at the surface. The newer, more aggressive putting green turfs today are more difficult to respond to the groomer than the older varieties because of the need for a little more depth of disturbance on a regular basis due to their aggressive growth habits. Groomers are still wonderful tools for surface management, but particularly with the newer grasses, they are strictly confined to surface grooming.

Cutting Heights

For the putting surface quality to be all it can be, cutting height and the efficient use of height selection must be examined. Extreme lower cutting heights are not needed when balanced fertility and quality cultural management programs are utilized to produce the surface smoothness and speed golfers are demanding today. A total program of all the procedures discussed in this series, along with a balanced growth regulator program will produce the desired speeds without having to go below 0.115 inch, as so many are doing today. At these cutting heights, the rate of return is exceeded in turf health and in production of increased speed and smoothness. Cutting height is not the preferred "first response" when increasing speed.

Properly groomed ultradwarfs will produce all the speed that is needed at .115 inch. The new bentgrasses are the same. If a course cutting height is .100 or less, I encourage a serious evaluation of the fertility, cultural and growth regulator programs as these heights simply are not necessary to produce the speeds that are in demand today. This creates an unsustainable stress zone that is counterproductive at these extreme heights – primarily inhibiting root health and development. Remember the old adage- close cutting height at the expense of rooting!

In closing this series, I again encourage you to take a very close and unbiased look at each component of your current cultural management programs, including grooming, to determine where these areas can be enhanced for better putting surface productivity and health. Sacrificing turf health, especially at the wrong time of the growing season, is a mistake many superintendents get caught up in every year from golfer pressure. I am referring especially to bentgrass in late spring and to bermudagrass in the late summer/early fall. If I can help answer any questions, please contact me by phone or email.



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The world is a much different place than when we gathered in Orlando in January for the 2020 Golf Industry Show. It seems much longer ago than just five months. And as many of you have had to adjust or adapt your business operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so has GCSAA. Each summer, we begin revving up planning for the next conference and trade show. 2021 is no exception to that, but as we look toward Las Vegas, it is with a much different lens than in other years.

Our usual work of coordinating the gold standard education, networking opportunities and industry innovations you have come to expect continues, but we are also driven by the key question in the face of an uncertain world:

Can we produce a quality experience that meets the safety recommendations for COVID-19?

To help us prepare, we are developing five scenarios and mapping out what every activity would look like in each scenario. The five scenarios are based on potential pandemic threat levels.

Scenario One (low threat): Business as usual.

**Scenario Two (minimal threat):
Live event in Las Vegas with social distancing
and large-gathering restrictions in place.**

**Scenario Three (moderate threat): Hybrid with a
live event in Las Vegas and virtual event options.**

**Scenario Four (substantial threat):
An all virtual event.**

**Scenario Five (significant threat):
Event postponed or cancelled.**

We were very fortunate that the 2020 GIS had already taken place before the virus took hold in most of the country. Many similar gatherings were postponed or cancelled this year, and we have been able to watch and learn from others.

Las Vegas

We are equally fortunate that Las Vegas, a city so dependent on tourism, is at the forefront of making sure visitors are safe. The city reopened its casinos on June 4, and the brand-new Las Vegas Convention Center, hotels and all venues are



consulting with public health experts to redefine cleaning, safety and sanitation standards. The Global Risk Advisory Council's STAR is the cleaning industry's only outbreak prevention, response and recovery accreditation for facilities. The LVCC is one of the first convention centers to pursue this certification and should be accredited by the end of August.

The NFL's 2021 Pro Bowl recently announced it plans to hold the event in Las Vegas on Jan. 31, and the Consumer Electronics Show, the largest tech industry event in the world, has announced it will go forward with its 2021 convention January 6-9 at the new LVCC. We too are currently moving ahead with hosting our event in Las Vegas.

Timeline

In addition to keeping an eye on the latest data and the status of other events, we also want to know what your level of comfort is in attending a live event. In mid-August, we will be conducting a survey of members to gauge your sentiment on traveling and any other factors that could affect your attendance. In October, we will have a follow up survey in case circumstances have changed. Using this information and guidance from health and venue officials, we will decide on the best scenario for all involved in October, with registration opening in November.

With so much uncertainty in the world, it is difficult to know where we will be at the start of 2021.

However, I am certain that GCSAA is putting your safety and comfort first when it comes to planning the conference and show. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Rhett Evans
GCSAA CEO





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Changes coming to Term Life Benefit

As a valued GCSAA member, we want to inform you that effective July 1, 2020, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Basic Life and AD&D membership plans will be changing, as well as the voluntary plan solutions. The coverage will be provided by a new insurer, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MetLife), and administered by a new broker partner, USI Affinity.

Market conditions and costs have increased since the plan was initiated with UnitedHealthcare, and this resulted in restructuring the membership benefit plans to focus on younger members who have a greater need to protect their family financially. This change comes after significant evaluation and market research completed by the Association and USI Affinity. The new policy requirements and benefits are detailed below.

This benefit is available to all members who meet specific requirements. Learn more at gcsaa.org

GCSAA Members to receive Boardroom Magazine

GCSAA members will have another tool to help them navigate the industry. BoardRoom magazine, the premiere publication of the private club industry, is extending its reach by offering GCSAA members free digital subscriptions. BoardRoom, now in its 24th year of publication, has a longtime relationship with GCSAA, which includes regular publication of GCSAA-supplied articles and other education material from GCSAA. GCSAA members will receive an email link to the latest BoardRoom beginning with the current May/June issue, which includes articles on topics such as crisis strategy and planning, data driven decision making and financial best practices during a crisis.

With access to BoardRoom, GCSAA members can: Learn about timely issues boards and clubs are facing. Have a better understanding of committee responsibilities. Build a stronger relationship with greens committee chairs, general managers and owners. Play a stronger role in budgeting process and strategic planning.

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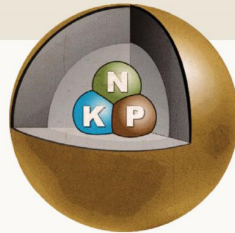
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