



# THE NEWSLETTER

June 2018

of the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.**

Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund – Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

## Thoughts From Your Executive Director *by Don Hearn*



*Erik Doldt, left and Kevin Corvino*

This year we are fortunate to again have Kevin Corvino and his able caddie, Erik Doldt representing the GCSA of New England to help raise funds for the Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund. If you would like to make a donation that may come back to you in the form of a scholarship being awarded to a member of your family or staff please visit the Ouimet website at <https://www.classy.org/event/2018-ouimet-golf-marathon/e181306>. This is the eleventh year Kevin has been involved with this fundraising event.



*Richard Luff, Vice President, left and Elaine Gebhardt, Executive director of the NEGCOA*

The New England Golf Course Owners Association (NEGCOA) held their 17th Annual Golf Outing at the Province Lake Golf Club in Parsonfield, ME on the shore of Province Lake. 2018 is the 100th year of Province Lake Golf Club's existence and a celebration was to be one of the year's highlights. Instead, a raging fire during a howling nor'easter leveled the clubhouse, golf shop and

restaurant. In a show of support and to keep the 100th Anniversary Celebration alive, the NEGCOA chose to hold their Annual Golf Outing at Province Lake on Tuesday, June 5th. The rain held off until golf was over and all who attended had a great time. The GCSA of New England has been a supporter of this event and we enjoy a close, mutual relationship with the NEGCOA.



*Russ Heller, left, in red shirt and Kevin Frawley, in red shirt*

Students from the Dearborn STEM Academy in Dorchester, MA made a visit to the Wm. J. Devine Golf Course at Franklin Park in Dorchester, June 7. They participated in First Green. First Green is an innovative environmental and STEM education outreach program using golf courses as environmental learning labs. Golf course superintendents and/or local golf course representatives host students on field trips where they test water quality, collect soil samples, identify plants, design plantings, assist in stream bed restoration and are involved in the ecology and environmental aspects of the golf course. The students are also introduced to many other aspects of golf. A tax-exempt non-profit, First Green was founded in the State of Washington in 1997 and is expanding nationally. The day was beautiful and 39 sixth and seventh graders had a great time learning from and quizzing the presenters, flying a drone, measuring areas, learning about moisture meters, mowing equipment, irrigation tools, soil types, putting lessons, aeration, how to change the hole on a green along with other items that are part of the golf course maintenance routine. Being responsible stewards of the land was stressed and examples of this were on display.

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## Thoughts From Your Executive Director (continued)



### *Ed Downing explains the difference in soil materials*

Presenters were Russ Heller, superintendent at Wm. Devine Golf Course who served as the day's host; Kevin Frawley, golf professional at Wm. Devine; Ed Downing from Read Custom Soils; Scott Lynch, assistant superintendent at Wm. Devine; Jason Van Buskirk from Turf Cloud, Inc; and Ken Stamos representing Green Sight Agronomics. The students were eager to know more about what they saw and especially liked the "furry" feel of the putting green. It was an exciting day for the students and I was excited watching the eager kids conducting themselves like gentle people wanting to know more about the world they live in.

To learn more about First Green click this link <http://www.thefirstgreen.org/>

## SHELTER HARBOR GOLF CLUB

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# Short CUTT

## Gazing in the Grass

Frank S. Rossi, Ph.D.

The season continues to surge back with consistent above normal temperatures and from a Growing Degree Day (GDD) perspective is now AHEAD of last year and the 30 yr. average. This obviously has wreaked havoc in attempting to predict our usual Spring pest management practices, notably ABW and root pathogens governed by soil temperature. There is no substitute for vigilant monitoring of populations, temperature and moisture data. However, phenological indicators are also an important tool, as are soap and salt flushes.

In spite of the torrential rains that have been relentlessly dropping over a foot of moisture in the Mid-Atlantic and north to Central NJ, there is a very wide gradient of moisture stress setting up in the Northeast. The majority of the soils in the interior North and West from Pittsburgh, PA through North Jersey to the Cape have begun are dry. While there is rain expected this week for most, it is not expected to be significant (<0.5"). Coupled with the sun at its' Astronomical Peak, expect EvapoTranspiration (ET) rates to be 0.25" per day. Any compromised root growth from soil borne pathogens might begin to show stress in these dry areas. Interestingly the typical arrival of Take-All patch samples on bentgrass in Diagnostic Labs has begun. Summer patch on AB expected in the next few weeks depending on stress; More stress = more pressure on rooting = more weak and thinning turf.

Turfgrass top growth began to surge in the last few weeks and keeping up with mowing has been a challenge. Urban landscapes dominated by impervious surface create an additional challenge as it is easy to simply discharge the excess clippings into the street and drive away. I am not persuaded by the landscape industry that claims the banning of powered blowers makes cleaning up more difficult. First, work to bag clippings along pavement, discharge into lawn, and if discharged to pavement then work to sweep and remove the clippings to prevent release into water bodies. Studies show that 10 percent of all non-point source pollution comes from impervious surfaces less than single digits from lawns. To those that continue to perform this *irresponsible* practice, you have just discharged hundred of pounds of a 3-1-2 fertilizer on the street. As an industry when we stand to argue against N fertilizer restrictions designed to protect water quality, it is vital we are also working to prevent discharge of clippings, landscape debris, and applied fertilizers and pesticides to impervious surfaces. Its not an easy job but someone has to do it!



You may be familiar with Cornell University's Turfgrass ShortCUTT (Cornell University Turfgrass Times). For those who aren't, this is a seasonal, weekly, online publication offering information in brief articles that offer ideas and comments from Frank Rossi, Ph.D the well-known and popular professor from Cornell University. Included here is the latest article received prior to the NEWSLETTER deadline. If you would like to receive your own subscription please contact Carl Schimenti at [css223@cornell.edu](mailto:css223@cornell.edu).

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

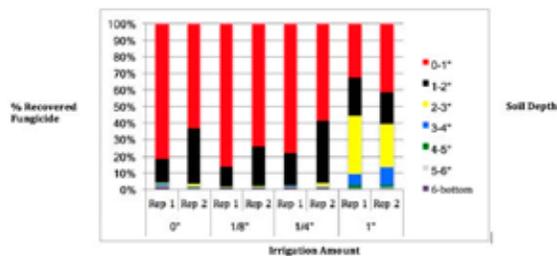
*I'm concerned about some summer patch break through in my control program*

*Should I reapply fungicide?*

The annual arrival of turfgrass samples infected with soil borne pathogens has begun in most of the Diagnostic Labs in the Northeast. The first to arrive are the Take-All samples on bentgrass that is beginning to show the presence of ectotrophic hyphae on the roots, root rot and vascular discoloration of those roots, with clear infection sites. These symptoms are similar when annual bluegrass plants arrive to labs infected with summer patch. Summer patch samples will begin to arrive as more persistent heat stress arrives in late June/ early July.

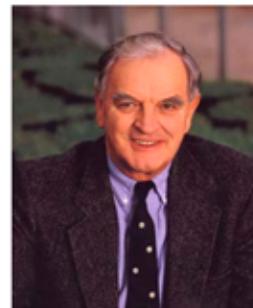
By every measure plants showing infection at this point likely were not treated at the proper time nor in the proper manner. From Rich Buckley, *To control active summer patch on a high value turfgrass, make an application of a thiophanate-methyl containing fungicide or azoxystrobin. Continue to repeat the treatments at two week intervals. Use the highest label rates and a 3 to- 5 gallon dilution or enough water to move the product into the root zone. To prevent Summer Patch in susceptible turfgrasses apply fungicides in late-May when the soil temperature stabilizes around 65F. Repeat the treatment at 28 day intervals in late-June, late-July, and late-August. For optimum control, apply the materials in 3 to- 5 gallons of water per 1000 square feet. If that is not possible, use the closest dilution to the target and gently water the material in immediately after application.*

To understand how vital it is to apply enough water to provide effective control of the pathogen, consider some recent work in Professor Jim Kerns lab at NC State. His data show clearly that to get 40% of a soil applied fungicide to a 1-2" depth in the soil 0.25" of water must be applied. To get 40% to a 2-3" depth then almost 1" of water.



## Note of Passing; Emeritus Professor Noel Jackson

A personal note for my old mentor Dr. Noel Jackson from the University of Rhode Island who passed away at the age of 86. It is hard to measure the impact Dr. Jackson had, when you consider his students Drs. Peter Dernoeden and Peter Landschoot that toiled directly under Dr. Jackson's tutelage. In my time as an undergraduate then graduate student at URI, that I spent with fellow ShortCUTT Contributor Victoria Wallace, Dr. Jackson allowed me to work in his lab on a new issue in turf during the early 1980's-Endophytes! From his obituary, "Dr. Jackson was a natural teacher, with a passion, enthusiasm and curiosity for learning that inspired a generation of students to pursue careers in the turf industry, golf course management and academia. He was well known for his booming voice, hearty laugh, broad Yorkshire accent and his keen, sometimes blunt, sense of humor." I can say I was on the receiving end of his bluntness on more than one occasion and I am a better scientist for it. He challenged those around him and asked for more, or why, or how we thought something might work. Then, while I squirmed trying to find an answer he would smile and hand me the reference to review. His lasting legacy is the Dollar Spot organism that has been reclassified from *Sclerotinia homeocarpa* to *Clariireedia jacksonii*. A final tribute to a man that gave so much.



# HOW TO DEAL WITH DISAPPOINTMENT *By Don Hearn*

Disappointment is a tricky emotion to deal with because every day can bring about new situations to be disappointed over. Sometimes disappointments come at rapid speed (“when it rains it pours”). Sometimes disappointments are truly huge and life changing. Then there are those that are small, annoying, or simply just make you cringe. Meanwhile, difficult times around the world might add to your daily stressors and can heighten your reaction to negative news. What follows is an article where experts have been asked to share their ideas to improve your ability to cope and bounce back quickly from the disappointments and frustrations that are a part of our everyday lives with edits (italicized) added by me.

## 1. Take a moment to...wallow.

You may find your sense of calm more easily if you allow yourself not be calm for the initial shock of disappointment. “When you get bad news, take a moment to let it sink in,” says [Tina Gilbertson](#), LPC, DCC, psychotherapist and author of [Constructive Wallowing: How to Beat Bad Feelings by Letting Yourself Have Them](#). “Also, find a word for how you feel, such as disappointed, resentful, or afraid. Labeling feelings helps us make sense of our experience.” Let the waves of disappointment wash over you, speak out loud (if only to yourself), and honor your emotions. “Experiencing your feelings will allow you to make a cool-headed decision about what to do next,” she adds. *If you were told by the club, course or company these words, “we’ve decided to move in a different direction...” this might have been your “wallow” moment.*

## 2. Do a reality check—is it really that bad?

After feeling the first blows of disappointment, step back and assess. It can seem like the biggest, most horrible thing that could possibly happen—but humans tend to dramatize, too. “Feelings are real and are important to recognize, but thoughts are not always the truth,” says Psychotherapist [Sarah Mandel](#), R.N., L.C.S.W. When the initial upset is over, she says, “Try to look objectively at your problems to help separate fact from fiction and reduce negative self-talk.”

## 3. Go high when hit with low blow.

“Though we don’t get to choose the situations about which we feel disappointed, we have a lot of choice regarding how we respond to disappointment,” says [Tricia Andor](#), MA, LPC. “We can choose what we do, say, and think about any given situa-

tion.” She says it’s important to head disappointment up at the pass before things turn to into irritation, anger, resentment, jealousy, or bitterness.

## 4. Don’t stew in negativity.

Like any other emotion, disappointment has a spectrum, says licensed counselor and life coach, [Monte Drenner](#), LMHC, CAP. “The secret to dealing with disappointment is to not let it grow into stronger emotions like discouragement and depression,” he says. “The longer I stew in disappointment the more likely I will allow myself to become discouraged which is even more difficult to get through. The longer I’m discouraged the greater the chances of getting depressed.” Turn the emotional tables on disappointment and always look for ways to grow from it. “Turn this negative emotion into a positive emotion like determination,” he says, because is it a way to restore peace of mind.

## 5. Avoid anxious reactions by lowering stress.

Find a sweet spot for fast anxiety relief, such as meditating, walking, listening to music, or watching a comedy. Your general state of stress and anxiety can add an extra layer of sensitivity and make you more prone to agitation. “Stress is on a continuum from 0 (no stress at all) to 10 (the most stressed out you have ever been),” says [Elizabeth R. Lombardo](#), PhD, MS, PT, author of [Better than Perfect: 7 Strategies to Crush Your Inner Critic and Create a Life You Love](#). “When we are at a seven or higher out of ten, we tend to “negative filter”—focus almost exclusively on the negatives—and catastrophize.” Find things to do every day that keep you calmer so that you don’t feel it is the end of the world every time you are disappointed by an outcome.

**Atlantic**  
golf & turf

## 6. Put things in perspective.

Sports journalist [Sam Weinman](#), author of [Win at Losing: How Our Biggest Setbacks Can Lead to Our Greatest Gains](#), has interviewed many public figures and mental health professionals about disappointments. “The psychologist Dr. Jim Loehr talks about ‘framing’ events in our lives in a constructive way,” says Weinman. “His point is that our interpretation of what happens is in many ways more important than what actually happens. If that’s the case, Loehr says, in any disappointment we need to find something useful that we can build on, or that at least lets us see even the smallest positive.” The more we can learn to frame in a way that’s constructive and positive while still being honest, the better we are able to process disappointment.

## 7. Try not to take other people’s reactions and opinions to heart.

Differing points of view are not, in themselves, insults. “Some people feel attacked when someone disagrees with them or implies that they’ve done something wrong,” says marriage and family therapist, [Jill Whitney](#), LMFT. “Wise people know that every person has a unique perspective, and that’s okay.” Not every person we deal with in life or in social media is wise, but we can all work on becoming secure in our own points of view so that others do not rattle us with theirs. And we can also lighten up about some of our own views. “Be open to new ideas and facts,” she said. “Don’t feel a need to be right all the time.” It is also important to own our mistakes and apologize when called for. *This might be difficult for many of us to deal with. For me, it’s difficult to not get agitated when listening to other people’s opinions that seem so counter to what I believe is a sensible way of looking at a situation. It looks like I should be paying increased attention to dealing with this aspect of disappointment.*

## 8. Limit others from dumping their disappointments.

While sharing and being heard is important, try to stay clear from people who make a big deal out of everything that goes wrong. “You may know someone who takes everything as a personal affront,” says Whitney. “He’s sure that the other driver cut him off on purpose, that his boss has it in for him, that his spouse forgot to buy milk because she’s being passive-aggressive or because she doesn’t care about him.” People who put a negative spin on everything often spew the negativity on the people around them, she says. Sometimes you have to limit contacts and when exposed, let negative news go in one ear and out the other. Especially when trying to process your own disappointments.

**9. Write down your distress.** This can help get it out of your system. “One way to cope with disappointment is by writing down our feelings,” says [Diana Raab](#), PhD, creativity expert and author of *Healing with Words and Writing for Bliss*. “Journaling is a good way to start because it can help you express concerns and emotions about your disappointment in a non-threatening way. The journal is non-judgmental and will listen.” She says to ‘free write,’ not even lifting the pen from the page, until everything flows out. It can be a great way to grow, learn and transform from your disappointment.” Writing can be used to release pain and to also help us rebuild strength.

## 10. Develop positive thinking muscles.

When we get stuck focusing on bad news we lose sight of what is right in our lives and the world around us. “Our brains are fundamentally wired to focus on the negatives in our lives. It is part of our self-preservation to look for potential threats in the world around us,” says [Louise Aspden](#), a life coach specializing in positive thinking and emotional intelligence. “That wiring is old and in today’s world doesn’t always serve us when we are pummeled with negativity at every turn.” Our brains are also neoplastic, meaning we can rewire them to look for what is right in the world, she says. A gratitude list of 10 to 20 items every day can help reset your mind. She suggests you list everything from that new job to that delicious morning coffee and you will see your knee-jerk reaction to negative news transform.

## 11. Breathe your way to a clear mind.

The emotional center in our brain can take over our ability to think straight in stressful situations, says Aspden. “It can send stress hormones through the system, increase your heart rate and blood flow so that you can ‘fight or run,’ as well as narrowing your thought process,” she says. “The simple act of taking a few deep breaths will dissipate the cortisol (stress hormone) through oxygenating your blood and will get you back into thinking mode instead of reaction mode.” Breathing can literally help you increase feelings of wellbeing and peace. Remember, while we cannot always control the disappointments that come our way, we can seek to alleviate and counteract their impact on our daily lives. But if the burden is too heavy to carry alone, reach out for a friend to talk to or professional support.

The advertisement features a central image of a white golf ball on a green grass background. The Winterberry logo is in the top left corner. The text 'Wireless Control Solutions' is prominently displayed above the golf ball. Various smart irrigation components are listed on the golf ball, including Valves, Soil Moisture Probes, Green Fan, Lighting, Flow, Pond Aerators, and Wireless Pump Start. Small images of these components are placed around the golf ball. At the bottom, the text 'Unique, Cost Effective, Reliable' is displayed.



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- Master Planning
- Project Design
- Wetland Science

Sarah Stearns is a Professional Wetland Scientist with B+T and part of the family-owned Southers Marsh Golf Club in Plymouth, a longtime member of the GCSACC.



Sarah has 20 years of public and private golf club experience as well as a unique understanding of the challenges of balancing course maintenance with member/player management. Contact Sarah today! [ssstearns@bealsandthomas.com](mailto:ssstearns@bealsandthomas.com)

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- Needing to control lighted features, etc.

We have seen many of the projects listed above were rejected not because of the material cost but the labor cost. These projects would need construction/destruction that Board of Directors and members, and golfers do not like to see, especially during the golfing season.

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# Scholarship and Benevolence Committee Prepares for 26th Annual Tournament at Kernwood *By Bob Healey*

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The S&B tournament committee is finalizing plans for the 26th Annual Scholarship and Benevolence Golf Tournament to be held September 24, 2018, at Kernwood Country Club in Salem on the Donald Ross gem that overlooks the Danvers River on three sides.

For those not familiar with this year's venue, Kernwood has a long and distinguished past in both Massachusetts golf and our own Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England.

Established in 1914, work began on nine holes in mid-1914, under the direction of golf architect Donald Ross. The opening of the first nine was marked by an exhibition on August 28, 1915, featuring future multi-time PGA champion and Mass Open champion Walter Hagen, host pro Jack Shea, U.S. Open runner up and future Mass Open champion Mike Brady and Tom Kerrigan, golf pro at Dedham Country and Polo Club, a future four time winner on the PGA tour, who would finish third at the 1921 British Open Championship at Saint Andrews. Francis Ouimet, the 1913 U.S. Open and 1914 U.S. Amateur and future Mass Open and five time Mass Amateur champion, served as referee.

Kernwood opened the second nine on August 30, 1918 with an exhibition match, where Army Lieutenant Francis Ouimet and future U. S. Amateur, Mass Open and three time Mass Amateur champion Jesse Guilford defeated Donald Ross and host professional Jack Shea 5-3. The true winner that day was the America Red Cross as the Kernwood membership raised \$5,010 for the Red Cross Fund, helping establish Kernwood's enduring philanthropic mission.

A mere four years after Kernwood's expansion to eighteen holes, Kernwood hosted the 1922 Massachusetts Amateur where Francis Ouimet lapped the field winning the 36 hole final 12-11 and set a record in the qualifying round by posting a course record 70. It was Ouimet's fifth Massachusetts Amateur in nine years.

Over Kernwood Country Club's 104 year history the club has hosted seventeen State and Regional Championships including: the Massachusetts Amateur three times, the Massachusetts Open four times, the Massachusetts Woman's Amateur three times, the NEPGA four times, WGMA Keyes Cup one time and the Massachusetts Junior two times.

The Kernwood Country Club membership is appreciative of the devotion displayed by the men most responsible for creating and sustaining the beauty of the property over these past 104 years—the superintendents.

**E. A. Crombie** the very first caretaker (1914-1919) brought

the new course from its original nine through construction and completion of the second nine in 1918 during the war years.

**R. C. Becker** (1920–1922) groomed the eighteen-hole course to prepare for hosting the 1922 Massachusetts Amateur—its first Championship event.

**Robert A. Mitchell**, Superintendent for twenty-three years (1923-1946) guided the course through the great depression and the Second World War. This period began the long association of Kernwood Superintendents with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England. Robert Mitchell a long time GCSANE member served on the Board of Directors and as the Association President in 1937-1938.

**Albert "Lester" Allen**, Superintendent for thirty-one years (1947-1978), brought Kernwood into the modern era of grounds maintenance. He was introduced to Kernwood as a caddie at the age of twelve. After completion of high school he became a full-time member of the grounds crew under Robert Mitchell. Lester was a long time GCSANE member, served on the Board of Directors and as Association President in 1959 -1960. Lester also served as President of the New England Turf Council, taught courses in agronomy at UMass-Amherst's Stockbridge School from 1950-1967. Lester's two sons-in-law also worked on the staff. Ray for 31 years and Bob for 45 years before they retired.

**Dean Robertson**, Superintendent for thirty years (1978–2007) who had known Lester Allen as a teacher at UMass/Stockbridge was a natural selection to follow Lester. Dean is a long time GCSANE member, served on the Board of Directors, was NEWSLETTER editor and as Association President in 1978 -1979. Dean's many accomplishments at Kernwood include re-construction of all eighteen greens, the oversight of the Algonquin Company gas line through the course in 2004. "We shut down the front nine starting November 2003, the pipe runs from the grass bunker next to #3 green, under the river to the Danvers side. On the course, it runs under #4 tee, under the #5 fairway, up #3 fairway, under #3 tee and under the parking lot, past the Arch, across #18 and #8 fairways, under Kernwood Street to the connection in the river near the Kernwood bridge. They used the practice fairway and #1 and #2 fairways for staging areas for the pipe." Today you are hard pressed to see or know where any of that work was done. He is also proud of hiring John Eggleston as his heir apparent in 2004.

Our host for the 26th annual tournament is **John Eggleston**, Superintendent for twelve years and counting (2007-present). John was officially hired on October 27, 2004. If that date sounds familiar it's the same day the Boston Red Sox won their first world Series in eighty-six years. John, a member of

the Association since 2002, continues the legacy of Kernwood Superintendents with impressive success. Since taking over in early 2007 his major projects include: Rebuild of #17 tee and #17 green, adding championship tees #1 and #6, along with providing an immaculately conditioned course when Kernwood served as co-host with Salem for the 2012 New England PGA championship and doing the same when Kernwood Country Club hosted the 2014 Massachusetts Amateur during their centennial. John always gives generous credit to his entire staff. "We couldn't be successful as a team without the great job they all do."

The Committee recently met with our host John Eggleston, Lorelei Judge, clubhouse manager and Steve Bramlett, assistant golf professional to finalize the September 24th S&B tournament. The staff at Kernwood is looking forward to hosting our special event and making it a memorable day for all.

Over the past 25 years, our Association is privileged to have 19 different clubs host this annual event. Through 2017, the committee awarded scholarships to 96 individual students totaling \$140,750.00. Additionally, the committee quietly disbursed to members and their families, in times of medical or personal

issues, benevolent aid totaling \$147,200.00 over the same 25 years. This is what our Scholarship and Benevolence Fund is about.

Affiliate and Friend members should note that solicitations for sponsorship options are in the works. Contact the Association's Executive Director, Don Hearn for specific details.

Look for details in future NEWSLETTERS and mailings, circle the September 24th date and make the commitment to support your scholarship and benevolence fund.

Get involved, plan on playing Kernwood CC, or donate your time at the day of the event if you cannot play, attend the dinner, donate a round of golf or a special prize or become a sponsor.

If you have not participated in the past, get off the sidelines; plan on this year as your personnel stepping off point. This tournament supports all GCSANE members and your families.

See you at Kernwood, for a special day.



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# Playing Defense Is a Strength, Not a Weakness

Sometimes knowing what NOT to do is most important!

BY KEITH A. HAPP



*Weather is, by nature, unpredictable and many times one must react to how turf responds to adverse conditions.*

**G**olf course superintendents try to prepare for every possible scenario when conditioning turf for play. However, the weather is unpredictable and we often find ourselves reacting to how the turf responds to adverse environmental conditions. It is impossible to prepare for all potential weather factors. Dealing with the unexpected and reacting to turfgrass response is a big part of golf course maintenance. Playing defense is essential at times to successfully maintain the course in a consistent manner.

For the golf course superintendent, playing defense begins with a good offense. Implementing that offense

means having the time and resources to strengthen turf health and prepare it for play. Doing the right thing at the right time, or backing off and not doing something when environmental conditions warrant, can make all the difference in turf performance as the season unfolds. Written golf course maintenance standards should define the criteria for turf performance. The scheduling of aeration, mowing frequency, and where and when water is applied to each playing area are examples of important practices included in written maintenance standards. It may seem like an oversimplification, but aeration stimulates root

growth, timely irrigation allows roots to be maintained and well defined, and reasonable course maintenance standards help ensure that turf health is not compromised by an irrational conditioning request or demand.

All too often, agronomic programs are compromised because necessary procedures are not prioritized to achieve the healthiest turf possible. The golf course is there for golfers, and plenty of play provides the revenue needed to support maintenance costs. Yet, there must be a level of cooperation between golfers and the superintendent to achieve the level of consistency desired throughout the playing

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*Know the actual mowing height in the field, and this can be accurately determined using a prism gauge. A mower's bench setting is just a starting point when adjustments in the field are needed in response to environmental conditions.*

season. That might mean golfers tolerating a little inconvenience while defensive measures are put in place to prepare for worst-case scenarios. Core aerating during the fall or spring in advance of summer stress is the most obvious example.

Most courses look and perform well during mild spring weather, provided that turf survived the winter unblemished. Turf performance during the dog days of summer, however, is another matter. The dynamic nature of turfgrass management dictates that turf managers must react to uncontrollable weather variables come summer, no matter how well he or she prepared in the spring. Those reactions can be as complicated as adjusting fertility plans to ensure the turf thrives, e.g., switching to a fertilizer with a different nitrogen source, or as simple as **not** performing a common task such as vertical mowing because of adverse weather conditions.

### SOME GAME PLAN DOS

**Schedule aeration** when it will be most beneficial for the turf and not based on when it will be least disruptive to play. There have been many articles written about aeration, and

all focus on managing the balance between soil, water, and air. Properly managing this balance is an important defensive measure for turf performance and is especially critical to turf survival during stressful weather.



*Topdress more or less in response to the turf growth rate, and be willing to adjust or even suspend certain procedures should environmental conditions become too stressful.*

Superintendents now have more options than ever to aerate golf course turf, especially putting greens. Standard aeration and linear aeration injection of sand or water can be used for both short- and long-term benefits. Treatments may be conducted to achieve the desired effect while minimizing surface disruption. However, some level of disruption is unavoidable when completing aeration that is needed to defend against turf decline during summer weather conditions. It is unrealistic for golfers to expect that the turf can perform consistently well without aeration procedures.

**Know the actual mowing height** in the field, not just the bench setting in the maintenance facility. Do not assume mowers will perform the same in the field during all weather conditions. If the turf swells from humidity, for example, it is more susceptible to scalping and the height of cut may need to be raised to avoid turf injury. Quality of cut is more important than height of cut in the field, and to minimize damage to turf it is necessary to make adjustments. If mowers are cutting too close in the field, then it is only a matter of time before turf damage occurs. Surface performance



*Rolling can be a key defensive strategy for putting surface preparation. Operators should exercise caution when traversing back and forth over putting surfaces, and wear damage can be further minimized when starting and stopping points are frequently altered.*

is not solely dependent upon mowing height.

**Topdress more or less in response to the growth rate** of the turf. Know what needs to be accomplished every time topdressing is applied. While the focus early in the season is to dilute organic matter, later in the season the same amount of sand could damage leaf blades rather than protect them. Some topdressing is good because it helps to maintain water infiltration while creating a smoother and firmer playing surface. Too much topdressing can wreak havoc with mowers, require more brushing to move the sand into the canopy, and result in bruised turf that is predisposed to weather stress. The amount of topdressing applied at any one time can be controlled, but the weather cannot. If the turf is bruised or weakened by topdressing at the wrong time, decline during difficult weather can be an issue. Be willing to limit or suspend topdressing operations during stressful weather conditions and you will save grass.

**Roll to complement mowing procedures.** The use of rolling as a

key component of putting surface preparation is a very effective defensive strategy. Instruct operators to change directions in different places as they traverse back and forth across each green. For example, if rolling is performed four days a week, the spot where the roller stops and starts to change direction should not be in the same location each time. Stopping or starting abruptly can bruise the turf. A defensive sequence for example, would be to roll through the collar the first day, stop and transition on the collar the second day, transition on the green the third day, and target roll near the hole location only on the fourth day. Or, if operators are trained carefully using side-to-side rollers, many can start and stop safely on the putting surface so as to never add mechanical traffic to putting green cleanup laps, collars, or green surrounds. Make every effort to control even the smallest degree of stress from rolling practices.

**Putting surface conditions can be improved** by brushing, grooming, and vertical mowing. However, use

these techniques with discretion and good judgment, because they remove more grass from the greens compared to regular mowing. Do not allow the vocal minority of golfers to dictate what they think should be done for a short-term effect. It is never bad to have plenty of healthy grass on a putting surface. Ball roll can be managed by implementing timely procedures, and the focus should remain on the long-term benefits a practice provides. For example, vertical mowing can be used to promote upright growth by stimulating new tillering, but this practice can be harmful if grass is already under stress or if stressful conditions are predicted in the immediate future. Predisposing turf to environmental stress is never beneficial, and weakening the grass is never good. On many occasions we hear golfers say, "Don't you think there is too much grass on the greens? Shouldn't we verticut them to thin the stand of grass?" And we have heard equally often from superintendents, "I wish I had not verticut when I did." While timely vertical mowing is very productive, overusing the strategy

can push turf over the edge. Being able to politely say “no” is part of playing defense.

**Fertilize the grass.** Grow healthy grass first and then condition it for play. Turf will better tolerate stressful weather, disease activity, and other

pests when it is growing at a controlled rate. Research has shown that stress-related diseases such as anthracnose cause less injury to turf when the grass is properly fertilized. Additionally, the first line of defense against weed encroachment is a dense stand of turf.

Fertilizing in a regimented manner, as dictated by soil test results and root health, makes a difference. Timely applications of nitrogen stimulate uptake of other essential nutrients. Be willing to make adjustments that allow nutrients to be applied as frequently as needed. At times, smaller amounts of fertilizer applied more frequently allow turf to better tolerate harsh weather and provide more consistent playing conditions

**Set up mowers to limit mechanical stress.** If using grooved front rollers on mowers, change to solid rollers sooner rather than later in the season to limit mechanical stress on the greens in preparation for summer. In fact, many superintendents now use solid front rollers on their mowers year-round and still provide excellent playing surfaces.

Monitor equipment operators to ensure that baskets do not become too full when mowing greens. The added weight of grass clippings in mower baskets can cause turf injury or result in a poor quality of cut. Empty the baskets more frequently when grass is growing aggressively in the spring and fall. Mow early in the morning when temperatures are lower, and reduce double cutting if a sharp, well-adjusted mower delivers the desired effect after a single cut. Superintendents now have the option to use mower reels with 11, 14, or 15 blades. Mowers equipped with these new blade options offer a greater level of mowing efficiency without having to rely solely on multiple mowings to achieve desired surface quality.

**Golf course equipment managers** are an important ingredient for success. They are responsible for setting up mowers that are sharp and properly adjusted before use each day. This is a Best Management Practice (BMP). If mowers are not well adjusted and sharp, the grass will be bruised and torn rather than cleanly cut. Bruises are potential infection sites for disease, and playing conditions are compromised when turf is ragged, torn, and bruised. It is no surprise that sharp and properly adjusted mowers are a key component to an effective defensive strategy that reduces turf stress.



Many superintendents use solid front rollers on putting green mowers year-round to reduce mechanical stress to turf while providing excellent playing surfaces.



Timely vertical mowing can enhance surface quality and turf health. However, doing so at the wrong time of year can result in catastrophic damage.

## SOME GAME PLAN DON'TS

**Don't mow too low.** We have seen a change in maintenance procedures on putting greens in recent years that aid turf health while producing the same or even better playing conditions. Most notably, combinations of mowing and rolling are now used in many instances instead of ultra-low mowing heights and increased mowing frequencies to meet expectations for green speed and putting surface smoothness. This is very positive, because rolling strategies are far less stressful alternatives that can produce the same ball roll effect without mowing too low or too often.

### **Don't topdress according to the calendar.**

When topdressing, first consider the rate of sand to be applied and the method needed to incorporate the sand into the canopy. The same procedures used during the spring may have adverse effects if performed in the heat of summer. Dragging sand on a low-humidity day may cause damage, so pay attention to daily environmental conditions when topdressing. Once again, being able to adjust or say "no" can save grass.

**Don't verticut too often or too aggressively.** Infrequent use can be productive, while overuse will be harmful. The same goes for grooming. A little at the right time of year works well, but excessive grooming is damaging. When golfers ask if there is too much grass on the greens, simply say "thank you" for the compliment. Having a lot of grass provides options to achieve the desired surface presentation. Having no grass only provides for the use of one option — CLOSED FOR RECOVERY! Superintendents must be able to say "no" when conditions warrant. This decision should be supported by the green committee



*Play defense and protect the grass from mechanical wear by using turning boards when regular mowing is performed. Why wait for turf damage to occur when it can be prevented through proactive measures?*

chairman, course owner, park administration, or other club officials. After all, you are protecting their primary asset.

Having a course setup statement contained within a course standards document helps when preparing for and defending against uncontrollable weather variables. The business of turfgrass management is dynamic, and adjustments, as dictated by heat, humidity, moisture, and traffic, need to occur throughout the growing season. In a perfect world, it would never get above 85°F, humidity would be 40 percent or less, it would rain only at night, and golfers would agree with everything the superintendent wanted to do. In an ideal world, once a game plan is in place, nothing would change and the grass would be perfect! In the real world adjustment is the norm.

**Don't wear out the grass!** Playing defense means that certain programs may be needed at specific times of the year. For example, as part of course maintenance, turning boards may be needed to protect turf on putting green collars when regular mowing is conducted. Using these boards requires

increased labor, but it could pay off later in the season if turf loss is avoided. At the very least, have the option to use turning boards on weak areas of the collars or where it is difficult to maneuver mowers.

### **Don't starve the grass for a short-term effect.**

Alter the frequency of nutrient applications to the grass to sustain growth. Uncontrollable factors may dictate that certain strategies or procedures need to be rescheduled because of the weather. For example, it may be necessary to vent, or lightly aerate, the turf more frequently because frequent rainfall causes saturated soil conditions. Venting will promote root growth, and adjusting the fertility program will maximize the benefit to

turf health. Supply readily available nutrients to maintain plant health and resulting surface quality. Don't wait until the turf declines to respond! Grow the grass.

Finally, communicate at every opportunity regarding care of the golf course. Make yourself available to answer questions, even if immediate answers are not available. Use the support systems you have in place to respond promptly and effectively. And when you do respond, avoid speaking in "turfease." Remember, a short period of slower greens is better than closure of a green for any length of time. Defensive management is about preserving turf health when environmental conditions dictate.

**KEITH A. HAPP** is a senior agronomist in the Mid-Atlantic Region, visiting courses in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Keith is a graduate of The Ohio State University and has a regional office in Pittsburgh, Pa., bringing him closer to golf facilities in the western portion of the Mid-Atlantic Region.



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***June 2018***



# GCSAA Update by Kevin Doyle



Golf courses are often misunderstood, tagged as hazards to the environment. Much effort is put into setting the record straight. One way to differentiate higher standards is through specifically designed environmental programs. Before GCSAA's 50 by 2020 best management practices initiative, some state and local programs were

already in place. One such comprehensive program developed in conjunction with Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is the Rhode Island Golf Course Green Certification, a collaboration with the Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association (RIGCSA).

In 2010 the RIGCSA, led by then president John LeClair, CGCS, worked hard to develop the voluntary point-based program and have touted the benefits ever since. With a score of 300 points need to achieve certification, and a further 350 points required to recertify, these totals are indeed lofty goals. More than simply turf, this program looks to touch all aspects of the golf facility and you are rewarded with points for practices or changes that are positive for the environment. As always, the benefits of environmental programs come from the resulting data, and I recently learned that the data does indeed impress!

GCSAA class AFC member Pat Hogan, government relations director for the RIGCSA, updated the group at a recent chapter meeting on RI DEM data. Ann Battersby, Senior Environmental Scientist at the DEM, compiled information from seven golf courses recently recertifying through the Golf Course Green Certification program. Here are some of the highlights:

Pesticide reduction: 32 pounds

Fertilizer reduction: 98,690 pounds

Water reduction: 243.8 million gallons

Hogan's employer, Sodco, is also a noted environmental business earning Sustainable Turf Farm Certification designation. Sodco's recertification numbers are stunning as well:

Pesticide reduction: 61 gallons

Fertilizer reduction: 103,455 pounds

Water reduction: 129.2 million gallons

As of February 2018, 13 courses in Rhode Island are Golf Course Green Certified:

Point Judith CC	Shelter Harbor GC
Agawam Hunt Club	Goddard Memorial Park GC
Potowomut GC	Alpine CC
Pawtucket CC	Rhode Island CC
Weekapaug GC	Sakonnet GC
Newport CC	Wannamoissett CC
Button Hole GC	

Whether by using your current or future BMPs, state sponsored programs (as RI has done), or utilizing lake/river friendly opportunities, the intrinsic or perceived value of environmental programs and their recognition is real. When voluntary efforts large or small can result in differences as noted above, it continues to prove the stewardship of our industry. Kudos to the seven recertified Rhode Island Golf Course Green Certification on their accomplishments and I look forward to the data 13 courses can develop in the future! Want to learn more about the program? Check out the Rhode Island Golf Course Green Certification workbook link here:

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/assist/grncert/pdf/rigolcer.pdf>

## GCSAA Resources and Deadlines you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already

### Class A toolkit

#### Tools You Can Use To Promote Your Class A Membership

Use this toolkit to share your great achievement with employers, golfers, and community members. You can share the news about your Class A status in a variety of ways.

#### Letter To Your Employer

GCSAA will send congratulatory letters to up to three employers announcing your Class A status. The personalized announcement will be mailed to the contacts and addresses provided and copies of each correspondence will be sent to you via mail.

---

## Class A Member Certificate

Display your achievement with a Class A member certificate. Complete this request form to receive your certificate in the mail, and please provide your name as you would like it to appear on the certificate.

## Class A Member Logo

Use the GCSAA Class A member logo on business cards, stationery, websites or other items.

## News Release

Create a personalized press release to share your Class A member status. To develop a press release, complete the news release form, either for new Class A members or renewed Class A members. The information provided will automatically pre-populate into a personalized press release that you can distribute to various media outlets.

## Newsletter Article

Highlight your achievement in your facility's newsletter. Two versions of the special Class A newsletter article are available for use, either as a PDF or Word version.

## Call for nominations

Nominations are due by June 30, 2018

Posted on behalf of Peter J. Grass, CGCS – 2018 GCSAA Nominating Committee Chairman

The following offices will be up for election for the GCSAA Board of Directors at the 2019 Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA:

- President
- Vice president
- Secretary/treasurer
- Director (three positions)

The deadline for nominations for the 2019 GCSAA Board of Directors is June 30, 2018. Click [here](#) for more information

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Christopher Thomas

June 30: [OSHA 101 How to Prepare for and Handle an OSHA Inspection or Whistleblower Investigation with an Update on the Agency's New Electronic Recordkeeping Requirements](#)  
[Matthew Linton](#)

## Upcoming FREE webcasts:

June 26: [Fertilización y Nuevas Tecnologías en la Nutrición de Campos de Golf](#)  
[José Ángel Sánchez Alcalá](#)

June 28 [ABCs of Algae 2.0](#)  
[Erwin McKone, CGCS](#)

Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

### **Kevin Doyle**

GCSAA Field Staff

[kdoyle@gcsaa.org](mailto:kdoyle@gcsaa.org)

Follow me on Twitter @GCSAA\_NE

# Divot Drift

## Welcome New Members

**Bill Bartels**

Affiliate, Tanto Irrigation

**Robert Grant**

Assistant, International Golf Club

**Lisa Golden**

Affiliate, MTE - Turf Equipment Solutions

**Wes Weyant**

Affiliate, Finch Services

**Jim Murray**

Affiliate, VGM Club

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Friend of the Association

**Jeffrey Tibbetts**

Superintendent, Quinnetis Country Club

## Welcome Back

**Fred Murray**

Superintendent, Chelmsford Country Club



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## Back Issues!



Past issues of the NEWSLETTER are available using this link: <http://bit.ly/GCSANEnewsletters>.

As in the past, *The Newsletter* continues to invite Affiliate members to submit a press release about new personnel, new products or a company bio. We will print each and every release **free of charge**. This is a great way to advertise for free. Who said nothing in this world is free? Free advertising to better your company, wow what an offer.

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*June 2018*



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