



COURSE Conditions

Issue #46 - Q1 2020

Quarterly Publication of the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association



FEATURE SUPERINTENDENT

Jeremy LaPratt
Bay County Golf Course

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Feature: Solid Tine or Core Aeration?

Industry Partner: A.J. Rings, Spartan Distributors
Commercial Sales

Kyle Schierlinger, Assistant Superintendent at
Orchard Lake Country Club

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Profile interviews conducted by
Greg Johnson, Greg Johnson Media L.L.C.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, APRIL 1 -
2019 Match Play Championship Opens

SUNDAY, APRIL 5 - SUNDAY, APRIL 12 -
The Michigan House at The Masters
(Augusta, GA)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29 -
Spring Opener (Railside Golf Club, Byron Center)

SUNDAY, APRIL 26 - MAY 10 -
Tee Times for Turf Online Auction Live

MONDAY, MAY 11 -
Wee One Fundraiser
(Point O' Woods G.C., Benton Harbor)

MONDAY, MAY 18 -
Can-Am Tournament
(Forest Lake C.C., Bloomfield Hills)

MAY 25 - 31 -
Rocket Mortgage Classic (Detroit Golf Club, Detroit)

MAY 31 -
Northern Fundraiser
(Arcadia Bluffs - South Course, Arcadia)

MONDAY, JUNE 1 -
Northern Fundraiser
(Arcadia Bluffs - Bluffs Course, Arcadia)

THURSDAY, JUNE 4 -
Legislative Golf Day (Capitol Building, Lansing)

JUNE 8 - 14 -
Meijer LPGA Classic (Blythefield C.C., Belmont)

THURSDAY, JUNE 18 -
LaFontaine Outing (Coyote Preserve, Fenton)

Please visit www.MiGCSA.org for all of the latest and most up to date information. You can quickly and easily register for events, view past issues of Course Conditions, browse and post items for sale, post and browse classifieds, and so much more. If you need help logging in email us at info@migca.org

President's PERSPECTIVE

I am currently reading a book by Mark Manson, and a quote that really hit home with me is "Certainty is the enemy of growth". I read the quote a few times to really unpack the meaning; basically, if you are certain you have it all figured out, you stop learning. I looked back over my short time on this earth and realized there were many things I was certain of as recently as yesterday. Not to mention five, ten or even twenty years ago, but as I learned and grew, the certainty faded, and I grew as a person. It's okay not to be certain about things, and it's a really good way to go through life. If you aren't certain, you continue to ask questions to learn and to grow. Before you dismiss this idea, I'm not saying you should go through life being indecisive or change direction every time you learn something that you didn't know before. What I am saying is you need to look at things with an open mind and be willing to listen to opposing views or ideas. What you do with the views and ideas is up to you, but if you approach it with an open mind, you have the ability to grow.

Twenty years ago, I was certain that rolling greens more than a couple times a week would cause compaction and poor playing surfaces. Through the research from Dr. Nikolai and MSU, I, along with many other Superintendents, realized that frequent rolling could produce exceptional playing conditions. If I was close-minded and held onto my beliefs, I would be stuck in the 90's and well behind everyone else in the state.

What if fifteen years ago Superintendents were certain that having four chapters covering different parts of the state was the only way to operate? What if John Fulling, Steve Hammon, Ron Dahlin, Jay Eccleton and Dan Bissonette (if I left anyone out, I apologize) didn't see the value in a statewide association? These gentlemen may not have been certain that it would work, but they were open to pursuing the idea, and worked their tails off to help it succeed. Through their vision and many others, the MiGCSA is one of the strongest associations in the country; an association that I am very proud to represent and be a part of. We have well attended events, top-shelf educational opportunities, great networking, and the strongest industry partner program in the country. All things that the founders of this association should be proud of, and we, as a membership, should build upon. There is always room to grow and improve. We can't be certain that what we do today is what we should do tomorrow. I can assure you that your board is constantly working to improve our association and our profession. If you want to help improve the association, join a committee, attend events, and be involved.



As my term as President of the MiGCSA ends, I want to thank you for providing me the opportunity to serve. Thank you to my wife, Melissa, and daughters, Alexis and Ava, for their continued love and support. Also, thank you to Bucks Run Golf Club, Craig McKinley, Jon Conklin, and the strong staff we have, which gave me the ability to be away from the course to fulfill my duties as President. Another thank you to the Fisher Companies, Bud Fisher, Kyle White, Aaron White, and Doug Moore for supporting me and encouraging me to serve. I also want to thank our industry partners, because make no mistake, without them, we would not be as successful as we currently are. We are in good hands with Rob Steger, CGCS as our new President, and I look forward to his leadership in 2020. As always, make it a great day!

Thank you,



Jeff Sweet, CGCS

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Solid Tine or Core Aeration?

January 2020

BY: BRIAN MAVIS, MAVIS CONSULTING, LTD.



The responses from my cultural practice presentations starting in 2014 have been encouraging to say the least. The continued comments from turf managers indicating their willingness to evaluate new practices/ technologies at their site is exactly the reason I started organizing the data and sharing. My intent is not to say that every facility has to utilize solid tine aeration and abandon core aeration, but to give confidence that alternative methods can be successful. Five years later superintendents across the country continue to share their experiences with me about how they have improved their operation by implementing different cultural practices. The following article is an attempt to share updated information regarding these cool season turf management strategies.

The goal of any subsurface cultural program is to maintain or reduce soil organic matter (OM), silt/clay content and compaction to improve turf health and playability. There are many tools that help to accomplish this, but it is up to the turf manager to determine what practices are best suited for their site based on many factors (budget, labor, existing physical conditions, weather, turf varieties, demands on playability, etc.). Superintendents should utilize representative samples and data to evaluate current practices and better determine future needs.

First and foremost, solid tine aeration only on putting greens has not worked everywhere to prevent organic matter (OM) accumulation. The main reason for this seems to be limited annual surface area disruption that allows for sand incorporation (<15% per year). Another reason for increased OM levels has been due to higher annual Nitrogen applications (>4 lbs./ 1000 sq.ft.). The final reason for increased OM appears to be due to insufficient sand application prior to solid tine aeration. If there is not enough sand applied prior to punching, then the





The data listed for greens 2 and 18 is from the original course I worked with that implemented solid tine aeration only fifteen years ago. Unfortunately, the physical testing was not conducted from year one, but the data from this year continues to rank among the lowest in silt/clay and organic matter content and among the highest in playability. These are sand based greens seeded to L-93, which has shown to be a very aggressive organic matter producer. A combination of conventional solid tine and deep-tine solid tine aeration disrupting >20% of the surface annually has worked to achieve these results. Three inches of sand has accumulated in the past 15 years on these green which equates 0.2" per year on average. Thank you to Matt Cielen for allowing me to share his data.

traffic from additional sand application can result in holes being partially closed before completely filled as pictured on page 7.

One of the most interesting things to me is the ingenuity of superintendents to incorporate sand into greens. Applying sand prior to solid tine has proven to be extremely effective, and the next step is to brush or blow the rest of the sand into the holes. Anything that can be done to minimize traffic on open holes is a step in the right direction. The use of brushes or a drag directly behind the aerator is another piece of this puzzle.

The averages for the upper root-zone in some of the highest maintained greens remain at approximately <1% Clay, 2-3% Silt, and 2.15% OM (360 LOI) utilizing USGA/A2LA accredited testing at Brookside Labs. These are results for samples with the turf removed (top 1/8"), and they are not the same as samples tested that include the turf like the newer 360/440 testing. The 360/440 method is being conducted to help determine what portion of the organic matter is humus.

Date	Sample ID	Clay (%)	Silt (%)	Sand (%)	Organic Matter (%)	Fine Gravel - 2 mm (%)	Very Coarse Sand - 1 mm (%)	Coarse Sand - 0.5 mm (%)	Medium Sand - 0.25 mm (%)	Fine Sand - 0.15 mm (%)	Very Fine Sand - 0.106 mm (%)	Very Fine Sand - 0.075 mm (%)
	<i>USGA Guide</i>	<=3	<=5			<=3	<=10	>=60	<=20	<=5		
11/5/19	2G (0-2")	0.4	2.1	97	2.2	0.2	7.4	28.9	45.3	12.2	2.7	0.8
11/5/19	18G (0-2")	0.2	2.6	97	1.7	0.3	7.9	31.5	43.2	10.9	2.5	0.9
9/14/16	2-G (0-2")	0.8	2.3	96	2.4	0.7	6.4	30.1	41.5	12.9	3.9	1.4
9/14/16	18-G (0-2")	0.8	2.5	96	2	0.5	5.6	30.9	42.2	13.1	3.2	1.2
5/15/12	2-G (0-2")	0.4	2.8	97	2.5	0.3	4.2	33.1	44.3	11.5	2.4	1
5/15/12	18-G (0-2")	0.2	3.2	97	2.1	0.1	3.7	35.5	43.8	10.6	2.1	0.8

The cultural practices that seem to be most successful are those that disrupt 15-25% of the surface area each year that allow for sand incorporation. This can be a combination of solid tine, coring tines, vertical tillage (Graden, Sisis, VC-40, etc.), Dry-Ject to name a few. The availability of dry sand allows the vertical tillage to be effective as well as smaller coring or slid tines (0.3"). The smallest holes I have seen filled with wet sand were .375", but the ability to fill even smaller holes may allow for monthly aeration that has minimal effect on playability. If using 0.3" tines on 1.5" x 1.5" spacings, that would disrupt 3% of the surface area. Most that have been utilizing solid tines are using .625-.75" tines on 2" x 1.5-2" spacings to disrupt 7.6-11% of the surface each time.

Desired depth to aerate needs to be determined based on



existing conditions (layers, compaction, etc.). Some situations need sand incorporated as deep as possible while others may only need sand concentrated in the upper inch. There appears to be two new options for incorporating wet sand into the root-zone as well with a modification to Dry-Ject and now S-Tec Top Changer. The amount of surface area disrupted seems to be 5% or less for each machine which suggests a need for additional aeration unless using these machines 3-5 times per year.

Whatever practices you are utilizing, I recommend monitoring the physical conditions with representative samples. Do not be the blind man heading towards the edge of the "Cliff". Utilize the data to get out of your comfort zone and evaluate new practices for your site. Maybe you will stumble on the next practice or combination that helps improve turf management for everyone.

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- Ian Daniels,
Superintendent, Teugega Country Club



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2020 Event Calendar

All events are subject to change in date and/or location.

Please check www.MiGCSA.org for all the latest event information



MTF Events in Green

GCSAA Events in Silver

Wee One Event in Blue

Volunteer Opportunities in Red

February, 26 & 27 - The Spring Meeting (Greektown Casino, Detroit)

Sunday, April 1 – 2019 Match Play Championship Opens

Sunday, April 5 – Sunday, April 12 – The Michigan House at The Masters (Augusta, GA)

Wednesday, April 29 - Spring Opener (Railside Golf Club, Byron Center)

Sunday, April 26 – May 10 – Tee Times for Turf Online Auction Live

Tuesday, May 5 - Can-Am Tournament (Forest Lake C.C., Bloomfield Hills)

Monday, May 11 – Wee One Fundraiser (Point O' Woods G.C., Benton Harbor)

May 18 - 24 - Senior PGA Championship (Harbor Shores G.C., Benton Harbor)

May 25 – 31 - Rocket Mortgage Classic (Detroit Golf Club, Detroit)

Sunday, May 31 – Northern Fundraiser (Arcadia Bluffs - South Course, Arcadia)

Monday, June 1 - Northern Fundraiser (Arcadia Bluffs – Bluffs Course, Arcadia)

Thursday, June 4 – Legislative Golf Day (Capitol Building, Lansing)

June 8 – 14 – Meijer LPGA Classic (Blythefield C.C., Belmont)

Thursday, June 18 – LaFontaine Outing (Coyote Preserve, Fenton)

Wednesday, June 26 - Construction Tour BBQ (Oakland Hills C.C., Bloomfield Hills)

July 13 – 18 - Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational (Midland Country Club, Midland)

July 27 – August 6 - The Ally Challenge, by McLaren (Warwick Hills G&C.C., Grand Blanc)

Wednesday, August 12 – MTF Field Day (Hancock Turfgrass Center, East Lansing)

Wednesday, August 26 - MiGCSA State Championship (Timber Ridge G.C., East Lansing)

August 27- 31 - 66th U.S. Senior Amateur, Country Club of Detroit

Tuesday, September 15 - Tuck Tate Championship (The Loop at Forest Dunes, Roscommon)

Wednesday, September 16 - Tuck Tate Championship (Forest Dunes Golf Club, Roscommon)

Thursday, September 17 – MSU Student Welcome BBQ (Hancock Center, East Lansing)

Monday, September 21 - Western Golf Day (Kalamazoo Country Club, Kalamazoo)

Wednesday, September 30 – Assistant Superintendent Championship (TBD)

Monday, October 12 - The Big Event (Indianwood Golf & Country Club, Old Course, Lake Orion)

Friday, December 4 - Detroit Holiday Party (The Lodge at Keego Harbor, Keego Harbor)

Thursday, December 10 - Northern Holiday Party (Buffalo Wild Wings, Traverse City)

Friday, December 11 - West Holiday Party (Big E's Sports Bar, Grand Rapids)

Friday, December 18 - Mid Holiday Party (Goodrich C.C., Goodrich)

Tues-Thurs, Jan. 5 - 7 - Michigan Turf Conference (Kellogg Center, East Lansing)

Tuesday, Jan. 5 - MiGCSA Annual Meeting (Kellogg Center, East Lansing)

Wednesday, January 22 - Curling Fundraiser for Ice Research (Detroit Curling Club, Ferndale)

Mon-Fri, Jan 30 - 4 - Golf Industry Show (Las Vegas, NV)

Wednesday, February 3 – Michigan Gathering (TBD, Las Vegas)

Thank You 2020 Industry Partners



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MSU Turf Participates in 2020 GCSAA and STMA National Conferences

BY DR. JOHN N. ROGERS, III (TREY)

The month of January is cold and snowy in Michigan, and the turfgrass and practitioners are taking a rest. However, January is traditionally a busy month for tradeshow and education for MSU turfgrass students and faculty, and this year was no exception. Over the last three weeks, twenty-four students participated in the two National shows – Sports Turf Managers Association, STMA, and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, GCSAA.

The first show was the STMA Annual Conference, held in mid-January in West Palm Beach, FL. Eight IAT Sports and Commercial Turf students attended and participated in the annual Student Challenge. Pitted in 4-person teams, MSU placed 4th and 8th out of 14 teams from around the country. The students networked with Groundskeepers from all over the US.

Two weeks later, the Golf Industry Show, GIS, was held in Orlando, FL, January 27-30. Eighteen IAT Golf and CSS turfgrass management students (two students made it to both shows), made the trip, and 5 teams (two 3-man teams) participated in the turf bowl (54 teams). MSU

placed 3 teams in the top 20 and had a 6th place best finish. In the essay portion of the exam, an MSU student had the overall best score of 95%! Additionally, these students have a booth in the University section of the tradeshow floor. The booth attracts many alumni over the 2-day exhibition and generates heavy interest in our education and research programs.



Front row (l-r) Jerry Pell, Alex Scott, Kyle Lake; r2 Spencer Cole, Steven Bowers, Jarett Weirich, Colin King, Nancy Dykema, (MSU staff), Zach Reid, Brennen Kuhn, Nick Worley, Evan Miller; r3 Devin Bilek, Bob Mandrink, Jon Siler, Connor Paul, Ty Barschdorf.



Front row (l-r): Clayton Hoekwater, Cam Wyatt, Seth Storm, Joe Stosio; Back row - Steven Bowers, Josh Olrich, Karscen Sutliff, & Joe Trautner.

The students are to be congratulated on their hard work and overall representation of the Turf Program, Department, College, and University. Also, a special thanks should be extended to MSU personnel Thomas Green, Ryan Bearss, Thomas Nikolai, and Nancy Dykema as well as superintendents Kyle Barton, Rob Steger, Jason Zimmerman, and John Nachreiner for their efforts in preparing the students for their respective quizzes. Finally, we recognize financial support of the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation and MiGCSA for student travel to the conferences. Work begins tomorrow for 2021!

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Equipment Managers, GCSAA, and The Golf Industry Show

THE WRENCH

BY: SAM HOLYSZ

EQUIPMENT MANAGER AT GULL LAKE C.C.

As an equipment manager I am a tool-centric kind of guy. I am always on the look out for new tools, methods, ideas, and continuing education. I have become part of some very cool networks within the golf industry and it is great to have growing support and ever-increasing opportunities in front of me. In 2015 GCSAA absorbed the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association (IGCEMA) and introduced the Equipment Manager classification for membership.

The GCSAA President in 2015, John J O'Keefe CGCS said at the time "We recognize that equipment managers are an integral part of our membership and a vital part of the successful golf course management team." He followed with "We hope all facilities will encourage their equipment managers to become a valuable part of the association."

This EM classification has opened up many learning and networking opportunities both on the national level and within our local associations. Gaining access to some amazing resources from online learning tools and education, to career resources, even a certification program. The Job board, membership directory, and an opportunity to become part of the GCSAA Equipment Manager Task Group are a few more benefits.

One other benefit that changed my path within this amazing industry was a complimentary one time full-package registration to the Golf Industry Show (GIS).

This afforded me the opportunity to attend GIS18 in San Antonio. It was an eye-opening experience to say the least, the education being offered, the networking opportunities I had, and experiencing the trade show floor, wow. After that experience I decided I wanted to help grow EM education and take on a bigger roll in our industry. This evolved into writing an article in Course Conditions, presenting at GIS19 in San Diego, joining MiGCSA's equipment managers committee, and presenting again at GIS20 in Orlando.

I want to share with you what I have seen at GIS as an EM.

Education:

Over the last three years I have seen a steady growth in educational opportunities focused on the equipment manager. The paid seminars are a great opportunity to learn and to network, but the free session education is taking off. The shorter format of the free session seems to have reduced conflicting classes and having to miss one because you had to be to another. These sessions have also encouraged more and broader topics to take hold. This in no way diminishes paid seminars like Jim Nedin's understanding mowing technology and its effects on quality of cut and after cut appearance, probably the best paid class I have attended to this date.





This article will be in every issue of Course Conditions featuring a new idea and author. If you have a helpful tip and would like to provide a contribution please contact the MiGCSA at info@migcsa.org. Is your Equipment Manager an MiGCSA Member? They can be for only \$25 a year.

Equipment Management Session III: Hot Topics Round Table is one of those new ideas. Trent Manning presented the idea to GCSAA and six of us were picked to facilitate the session. I was able to get two more EMs on board to help moderate when we had too many tables filled. Most of the attendees were EMs but we had a nice mix of Supers and Assistants in the room as well. The way it was set up allowed for everyone to be comfortable in a smaller group but still able to be part of the whole process. This was my favorite session hands down, and generated a lot of very good Q&A.

Inside the Shop is a new look at education at GIS. R&R Products partnered with GCSAA and Hector's shop in San Diego, it was so well received that it did it again in Orlando only in a bigger way. Hands on in your face quick hitting education presented by Hector Velasquez and more than 8 other equipment managers over two days on the trade show floor.

Networking:

The opportunities are everywhere.

During education, between classes, grabbing a bite for lunch, and hanging out wherever you are staying. The shorter format of the free classes, at least for me, has made networking easier with more opportunities to run into fellow EMs and make new contacts.

R&R Products puts on a great equipment manager networking reception Wednesday

after education wraps for the day. Awards, recognition of completed GCSAA certifications, and the chance to meet other EMs in a low-key relaxed environment.

The Trade Show. This is a very cool experience, it offers you the chance to get hands on, to take pictures, talk to engineers in person, and a chance to put a face to all of those names. The addition of Inside the Shop to the floor was a great catalyst for meeting new equipment managers as well.

In the end, I have built stronger networks thanks to my GCSAA membership and the experience of GIS. GIS reinvigorated my passion for the industry and changed my focus. Yes, there are still parties put on by manufactures and vendors, plenty of the wine and dine treatment, and that is part of the experience but it is so much more than that. The golf industry as a whole has embraced the role of the equipment manager, GCSAA is on board and giving EMs the tools, they need to succeed. The Golf Industry Show has become inclusive and our industry will only benefit from this move. If you have the opportunity to attend GIS someday the benefits are well worth the price of admission, it will give you a whole new perspective.

Membership makes a difference, the Equipment Manager membership for GCSAA is only \$95.00 a year, and MiGCSA's EM membership is only \$25.00 a year.





Two days of thrilling alpine skiing

BY DAVE MAKULSKI, INDIANWOOD C.C.

On February 11-12, MiGCSA skiers made a return visit to Caberfae Peaks Resort for 2 days of thrilling alpine skiing. Everyone enjoyed carving turns on the challenging pistes complemented by a full range of apres-ski activities. Great people, great snow and bluebird skies made for another great ski trip.

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Short Grass: The Great Equalizer

BY MIKE DEVRIES, PRESIDENT DEVRIES DESIGNS, INC.

Modern golf course designs are often obsessed with multiple heights of cut that show off the turfgrass with various types of mowing operations, striping patterns, and grass varieties. Frankly, those things aren't really important to how we play the game. Golf is played on turf and the grass type or treatment of it is not defined in the rules of golf. So, what should we consider important with our turf from a maintenance and playability viewpoint?

In the early days of golf, there were no mowers to present a clean swath of turf with perfect conditions. Instead, rabbits and other grazing animals cut down the grass depending on how tasty it was and then golfers chose to play to the most advantageous area that would allow them to get to the hole in as few strokes as possible. Once mowers began to be used, turf maintenance provided more consistent conditions throughout a course and for comparison with other courses.

Turf managers wanted to mow as efficiently as possible and large pull-behind gang mowers were used to mow wide fairways that allowed golfers to easily find and play their ball. Good players were looking for the best angle to play in from to gain an advantage on their opponents. Hence, early 1900's golf courses had wide fairways with one height of cut and putting greens with a lower, smoother cut. Outside of those maintained areas, grass was scruffy and unkempt.

So how does that relate to short cut turf in today's game? Think about how a smooth fairway over undulating ground looks: it has an amazing character that demands to be shown. A nice fairway cut tightly and covering a generous area has many positive ramifications:

1. Shorter hitters have a bigger, wider area to hit their drives.
2. The ball runs out more on the lower trajectory shots that are typical of novice golfers.
3. Better players will still try to hit certain parts of a fairway to gain an advantage on the next shot.
4. The character of the land is shown off. Undulating turf really comes alive when it is shaved tightly. The ripples of the ground show what will happen to a ball that is played along the ground.

With firm turf conditions, a well struck ball will run out further but also have more potential to get into trouble, too. Big hitters who are wild will still hit it long but their wildness might also move the ball really offline and into a position that is not advantageous. Shorter, straighter hitters can gain lots of length by keeping the ball on the correct line and using the fairway contour to their advantage.

Where short grass really shines and makes the biggest difference is around a green complex. Tight turf permits the execution of all types of shots: putts, flop shots, pitches, bump and runs, chips, and any imaginable way to get the ball closer to the hole. Longer grass and thick rough usually only allows for one type of recovery – a wedge shot that requires the strength and skill to really do well. Better players are very adept at performing such shots while less-skilled golfers struggle to consistently play from such difficult lie.





With short grass around a green, golfers can attempt whatever shot is comfortable for them instead of being dictated what shot to play. If there is a steep bank to overcome, a high handicapper might opt to putt the ball up to the green, since there is less margin for a big error in that execution; he can "hedge his bet" and keep his score competitive. Someone with a deft touch might nip a lob wedge over the bank and make the ball check near the hole, but he would chance skulling the ball over the green or into worse trouble.

Short grass on the upper side of a green can be used as a backstop and to bring the ball back to the flagstick. If the bank was rough grass, a golfer would not be certain the ball would release and come back down to the pin. Smart players, no matter their skill level, will recognize the opportunities that shaved turf can give them and use it to their advantage.

A short height of cut helps to equalize players; the bigger target area and shot recovery options are more friendly to higher handicap golfers while the lack of specificity of which shot is required sheds doubt on the better player as to what is really the correct attack. This makes holes easier for the unaccomplished player and harder for the top golfers, levelling the playing field and bringing out the best in a golf course and its combatants.

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Scholarship Committee Chairman Gene Davis with committee members Seth Britton and Jesse Scholl with 2019 MSU Scholarship Winners Collin Randall and Jerold Pell IV.

2019 Heritage Scholarship Winners

The winners of the 2019 Heritage Scholarship have been chosen. The Heritage Scholarship is an award of \$1,500 that is offered every fall. The award is available to the children of current members who are enrolled in a post high school education curriculum.

Funding for this scholarship is provided by the proceeds from the 2019 Fundraisers, the Northern at Arcadia

Bluffs Golf Club, Western Golf Day at Point O' Woods Golf & Country Club and the Big Event at Barton Hills Country Club.

Thank you to the MiGCSA Members, Staff and Club Members at these host facilities and our generous Industry Partners for making this award possible.

The applicants are asked to submit a 750 word essay along with evidence of their scholastic and extracurricular achievements. The scholarship committee then grades each applicant based on their submission and the highest scores are awarded the scholarship. The submissions are graded anonymously and based on the content of the essay followed by the applicant's scholastic achievements and community involvement. These awards will be presented at 3:30 PM on Wednesday, January 8th at the Michigan Turfgrass Conference in East Lansing.



**This year's winners
in alphabetical order are:**

Catlin Dahlin daughter of
Ron Dahlin, CGCS
The Meadows at GVSU

Emily Jotzat daughter of
Steve Jotzat,
Lost Dunes Golf Club

Caleb Keilen son of
Andy Keilen,
Knollwood Country Club

Trevor Roznowski son of
Jason Roznowski,
Red Hawk Golf Club

Alayna Seaberg daughter of
Colin Seaberg,
Barton Hills Country Club

Anna Traver daughter of
Rob Traver, J.W. Turf

Normally there are only 4 Heritage Scholarship given each year, however due to the volume and quality of applicants the MiGCSA Board has approved an additional \$3,000 in scholarships paid out from the investment account.

I would like to thank all 16 applicants for their time and efforts applying for this award. I find it extremely pleasing to be able to get to know these young adults through their submissions. I would encourage each applicant to continue to apply for this scholarship as the scores were very tightly grouped. An additional thank you to the 2019 Scholarship Committee Mike Rosen, Jesse



Scholarship Committee Chairman Gene Davis with committee members Seth Britton and Jesse Scholl with 2019 MSU Scholarship Winners Collin Randall and Jerold Pell IV.



Sholl, Seth Britton and Jim Priebe for their help in choosing the recipients.

Gene Davis
Elk Rapids Golf Club
MiGCSA Board Member
Scholarship Committee Co-Chairman

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JEREMY LaPratt

Jeremy LaPratt

has lived in the same house in Vassar, MI for 40 years. The home was constructed in 1979 and the family moved in just before Christmas that year. The home was later purchased by Jeremy from his mother where he and his wife and daughter still reside. He is currently the superintendent at Bay County Golf Course in Essexville, MI where he has worked for two full seasons. LaPratt, 48, and his wife Jennifer have one daughter, Jacqueline, 11. He has a bachelor's degree in Leadership and Recreation Management from Ferris State University and a two-year Turfgrass Management degree from Michigan State University.



1 HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS? I was in school, my second year at Ferris and I wanted a job that was recreation oriented. Paul Emling worked at the Vassar Golf Course on the maintenance crew and he told me to go talk to Kevin Hamilton, the general manager slash superintendent there. Working in the pro shop was my first choice, but they only had an opening on the maintenance crew. I worked with Paul that summer and came back the following summer. That's how I started working outside, kind of by default.

2 WHEN DID YOU DECIDE YOU WANTED GOLF TO BE YOUR CAREER? While I worked at Vassar that couple of summers, I thought my goal with my recreation degree was to become maybe a general manager at a resort. My dad passed away after I graduated from Ferris and circumstances at that time warranted me being around home. I worked for an environmental company for about

a year and a half and realized I missed working at a golf course. Paul was pushing me to apply to Michigan State for the two year turf program where he was already enrolled. I decided to go back to school, applied and got in. I went to Crystal Downs (Country Club in Frankfort) on an internship. Ironically, Paul was already the assistant there

3 WHAT ARE SOME OF THE COURSES YOU HAVE WORKED AT? Vassar, Crystal Downs, then at The Captain's Club at Woodfield in Grand Blanc. I worked for Steve Kolongowski there for three years as an assistant and then went to The Sawmill (Golf Club) in Saginaw. I was superintendent there for 18 years and the last two I've been at Bay County.

4 WHAT PART OF YOUR EDUCATION DID YOU USE THE MOST? I don't think I can pick out one specific thing. I feel like I gained a little something from all the various classes I took at MSU. However, I had a great





internship at Crystal Downs. I learned so much during that time there. That was probably the best education for me. Mike Morris, superintendent at Crystal, was great at letting you get hands on experience in all aspects of golf course maintenance.

5 HOW HAS YOUR JOB AT YOUR CURRENT COURSE PROGRESSED?

I've kind of always had what I would call working superintendent jobs. I've had some assistants and mechanics over the years, but a lot of the time I'm the super, but also the mechanic, the spray tech, irrigation tech, etc. Other than Crystal, they've all been public courses that are kind of similar to one another. My current job involves working with the county. This has been quite a change for me compared to the others because of having to follow all the processes and rules of working for a municipality. It's just a new mindset. Things don't move as fast at times as they would at other courses. An example here would be it can take up to two weeks to hire a normal seasonal college

student because of the county system and rules. Overall, I've been really pleased with working here. Having the county benefits is a plus and they allow me to do pretty much what I want to out on the golf course. You don't have 10 people questioning everything you do. The budget is good. I don't know if I want the country club life. This is a really nice place to work. It's been a good fit for me. You have a good work and life balance here. Last summer for the first time for me in 23 years my wife and I took a week off in July. Yes, I said July. We went to the U.P. I felt good about my assistant and my crew and we were able to go. With the age of cell phones, I could address any situation if needed.

6 WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?

You do a great job of keeping us up to speed with things going on around the country. Keep that up.

7 WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE MICHIGAN TURFGRASS FOUNDATION?

I think they have always done a great job. This year was the first time I went to the MTF Conference in seven or eight years. It seems like they always come up with the research we need. It's a great foundation to have.

8 DO YOU HAVE HOBBIES OR SPECIAL INTERESTS AWAY FROM THE GAME?

I play in a golf league, but I'm not a huge golfer. I like to hunt, pheasants, partridge and deer and I'm an avid fly fisherman. I used to play a lot of fastpitch softball, and I played hockey growing up all the way through college, but now it's trout fishing, ice and fly fishing, snowmobiling, hunting, that stuff.

9 WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN YOUR JOB?

Like a lot of people say, the biggest challenge right now is staffing. It seems like we have 27 things we have to get



5 THINGS PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ME

1. I played college hockey. Ferris State had a Division 1 team in the CCHA and a second team that played in the American Collegiate Hockey Association. I played on the second team. We finished third in the nation my senior year.
2. I've had three dogs named Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego. I'm not a Bible scholar by any means, but they are three names from the Bible.
3. I have been the treasurer for our local school board – Vassar Public Schools – for five years.
4. I do public address announcing for Vassar school sports, football, basketball and others.
5. I'm an avid trout and fly fisherman.



done and I only have six guys to help me do it. There are a lot of things you want to do, but you don't always have the time or the staff to do it. Plus finding the right individuals that are capable of doing what you need them to do is a big challenge these days.

10 WHAT IS THE MOST SATISFYING PART OF YOUR JOB? I think it's the sense of accomplishment when people notice your work, not that I need a pat on the back all the time. But when they tell you the greens are nice or the course is in great shape, things like that, that's satisfying. Over the last two years we've changed a few things and people have noticed. I appreciate it when they do.

11 WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING GOLF? People being concerned about playing for as cheap as possible. They don't realize what it takes to have a great place to play. I'm concerned, also, about the lack of loyalty that golf courses have towards their superintendents. I don't like hearing stories about supers getting let go over simple things. Also, I don't know if you call it golfer etiquette or not but it sure seems these days that a lot of golfers look at their round of golf as if it's all about them. They have no concern about the next person playing. They do whatever they want because they paid their money. I see it in people from all ages.

12 WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS? I probably won't be retired yet but getting close. I might still be here. You never know.

13 WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST IN YOUR TURFGRASS CAREER? Kevin Hamilton at Vassar back in the day. He just passed away from cancer, sad to say. Him, Mike Morris, Steve Kolongowski and Paul Emling. Those four have all really influenced me, not just one. I learned things from all these individuals.

14 WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU PERSONALLY? My parents. My dad was a police officer for 21 years and my mom worked for the postal service for 28 years.

Middle Class Americans. They went to work and worked hard. When I was 15 my dad told me "next year you are getting your driver's license and I'll be damned if everytime I need my truck you've got it out driving around somewhere! You better get a job." He helped me get a job at a lumber company, helped me create a work ethic and I bought my own truck.

15 WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU'VE LEARNED THAT YOU USE ALL THE TIME? When I got my job at The Sawmill, the one thing I was told by another superintendent was always remember you have a family and it is still just a job. Don't forget your family. Being a superintendent is demanding and you know when you need to be there. Otherwise, make sure you make time for yourself and take time to spend with your family. I tell people I don't want to miss seeing my daughter grow up. If it's a place that they expect you to be there 24/7 it's probably not for me. Another thing is have fun with the job - laugh as much as you can.

16 WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE ROLE OF AN ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT? My assistant is Wes Riddle and to me he is extremely important to the job. Wes is a little bit older but has worked out well so far in the assistant role. I go back to that work and life balance, if you don't have a good assistant, it's tough to balance work and life. With Wes, he's an assistant with some limit to how many hours he can work in a year but we've adjusted to make it work. He had already worked here eight years on the crew and he knew the golf course and where things were at. It was huge for me to have him early on, and I teach him a lot of things, but he is also just a great fit and has that older general work mentality. Want him here at 3 a.m., he will be here. He's that other set of eyes for me. I can go away and know he will handle things. He loves being here and having him is an absolute must. Along with Wes, all my crew that I inherited has been a great help for me getting adjusted here. They're all extremely dependable and I appreciate that.



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17

DO YOU HAVE A HUMOROUS OR INTERESTING STORY YOU CAN SHARE FROM YOUR CAREER?

This is from way back when I worked on a crew with Ron Betts and Paul Emling at the Vassar Golf Course. On the weekends one guy on each day in the morning had to come in and rake bunkers and change cups by themselves, so I asked if we could come in and change cups in the evening the night before and then just have to rake bunkers in the morning. Well it was a Friday night, my night for changing cups, and Paul and Ron pulled into the maintenance barn with a few beers. They tell me they will drive me around while I change the cups that night. Sounds good but the only thing we have that will get three guys around is an old four-wheel Cushman with zero brakes. You get where this is going. We

get all the cups changed and we were going back through the woods to the maintenance building. Paul is driving and clipping along and he decides we're going to take the old trail that runs behind the maintenance building and comes around the corner of the building on a two-track that has just enough space to get a truck through between the corner of the building and an irrigation pond. We're pretty much going wide open when we realize someone has moved a one-ton dump truck into the space between the pond and the building and blocked the trail. Remember, no brakes, our options are bail out of the Cushman, turn into the building or turn into the pond. We bailed into the weeds, shoving each other out of the cart and the Cushman proceeded to slam into the front of the dump truck. I wish I had

a camera on our faces. Our eyes had to be as big around as horse turds. It busted the frame on the Cushman. Smashed in the bumper on the truck. It was a mess. Needless to say, there was no more changing cups in the evening after that.



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THE 2020 MICHIGAN SKINS GAME

BY DAVE PAWLUK, CGCS



The Michigan Skins game was back in sunny Orlando Florida before GIS 2020 with sixteen golfers. The first day we played the Hunters Creek Golf Club with nice sunny skies and temperatures in the low 70's then the skies clouded up and entire back nine was in a steady drizzle, but all the groups made it through the tough conditions. The competition was close and after all the soaked players dried off, we sat in the club house to have a few refreshments to warm everyone up. Thank you to Doug Middleton for sponsoring the drink tickets and Adam Garr for Sponsoring lunch. The closest to the pins were won by Gary Stadnek from Canada and Kevin Frank from MSU. The long drive was won Joel Johnston from Canada. In third place was team #3 Gary Thommes, Al Bathum, Scott Rettmann and Dave Dewitt (a new player who works at Walnut Creek CC) with a score of 65, second place was the team #1 Phil and Ann Owen, Joel Johnston and Matt Coburn had a score of 63 and the first place team was team #4 Kevin Frank, Greg Brown, Scott Heron and Dave Pawluk with a score of 61. The skins on the course were won by team #1 on hole 17 with a birdie, Team #3 won with a birdie on hole #3 and Team #4 (Kevin, Greg, Scott and me) won skins on hole #6, #11 and hole #18.

Day two was at Southern Dunes Golf Club and the weather was just perfect for golf. We had a few more new players join the Michigan Skins Game this year, Dave Dewitt, Steve Hammon, Jason Steadwell and Matt

Coburn. We also had a returning player from the original skins game from Montana join us this year, retired MiGCSA Member Tim Dark. The second day started off with new GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS hitting one right down the middle! The next 4 groups followed suit and had a great day of golf and comradery. Everyone enjoyed the course and once again we would like to thank Adam Garr for sponsoring the beverages and box lunch on the course for the day. Team #4 of Brandon Horvath, Matt Coburn, Scott Rettmann and Ann Owen won everything! Scott won closest to the pin on hole 14, Ann won the closest to pin on hole 6 and closest to line on hole 16, way to go Ann! Plus, their team won low score with a 60! Second place went to team #2 Gary Thommes, Greg Brown and Phil Owen with a score of 61, they won the tie breaker with team #1 Gary Stadnek, Bob King, Scott Heron and John Fulling. Day two skins winners were team #4 with a birdie on hole #3. On hole #8 with a birdie was team #2, Gary, Greg and Phil and team #1 had two skins with an eagle on hole #16 and a birdie on hole #18. After the round we had enjoyable evening in the clubhouse talking about the golf over the last two days and planning for next year's skin game. The beverage cart girl Megan came over and thanked everyone for the awesome day she had serving us and meeting us on the course, she said the Michigan Skins group was by far the funniest golf outing that she has worked with in her 5 years working at Southern Dunes!

The 2020 Michigan Skins game was a success with a good number of people from around the country. Thank you again to 2020 Platinum Industry Partner Adam Garr with Syngenta. Also thank you to Doug Middleton from Ocean Organics, Dave Herman from Hermann & Associates, Derek Carroll from FIP Irrigation Services and the MiGCSA for the donation of logo golf balls and ball repair tools that everyone received on their cart. Thank you to the golf professionals from Hunters Creek, Matt Zarbeck and Kevin Woodard at Southern Dunes. Each of them received a hat and ball repair tool from the MiGCSA for hosting us this year.

Planning is already underway for next year with the conference in Las Vegas and GCSAA tournament in Palm Springs, CA. I will send out a survey and see what the golfers would like to do.

Till next year!
David Pawluk, CGCS



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2020 Annual Meeting



*President Rob Steger, CGCS,
Saginaw C.C.*

EAST LANSING – Rob Steger, CGCS, the Class A Golf Course Superintendent at Saginaw Country Club has been elected as the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association (MiGCSA) Chapter President for 2020.

The MiGCSA held its 12th annual meeting and elections on Tuesday January 7th at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing during the Michigan Turfgrass Conference.

Other officers elected to the MiGCSA board include Vice President Doug Ware from the City of Livonia and Secretary/Treasurer Ryan Moore of Forest Lake Country Club.

The election marked the end of board service for Past President (2018) Dan Dingman, Superintendent at Birmingham Country Club. Our deepest gratitude for his service to our industry.

New members elected to the board include Jared Milner from Meadowbrook Country Club and Adam Garr with Syngenta Professional Products. Also reelected to a second term was Scott Pulaski from Walloon Lake Country Club and Jesse Shaver from Gull Lake Country Club.



*Vice President Doug Ware,
City of Livonia*



*Secretary Treasurer Ryan Moore,
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The 26th Annual Golf Course Hockey Challenge

Team Michigan Hockey met some stiff competition this past February in Niagara Falls in the 26th Annual Golf Course Hockey Challenge. A total of 14 teams from Canada and the USA participate in this tournament with the only requirement being that all of the players must work in the golf industry. It is a tradition for Michigan to send a team that competes for the championship. Unfortunately, Team Michigan came out slow on the first day, losing to London, Ontario and eventual Champion Team Toronto. We were able to come back and defeat Team Niagara, last year's champion on the final day. Team Michigan played strong all three games but didn't accumulate enough points to advance to the finals.

Team Michigan had two rookies join a seasoned team of veterans this year. Andy Gilroy (Harrell's), who took home team MVP honors, and Scott Rettmann from Walnut Creek Country Club. The tournament is setting up new age groups and skill levels. If you have an interest joining our trip, please send a message to team manager John Nowakowski at jnowakowski@phgc.net

The Team Michigan players would like to thank our many sponsors who made this event possible: Syngenta (Adam Garr), Harrell's (Andy Gilroy), Ultimate Reel Grinding (Steve Campolong), Advanced Turf Solutions, (Joe Singles), as well as Great Lakes Turf and Spartan Distributors. We appreciate your support!

*Andy Gilroy from Harrell's
Was selected as the M.V.P for
Team Michigan Hockey in
The 26th Annual Golf Course
Hockey Challenge in
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A.J. Rings



A.J. Rings has worked in commercial sales for Spartan Distributors for 16 years; the last 14 in his current position. He holds a two-year turf management degree from Michigan State University. A. J. is 46, a native of Grand Rapids, and lives in the Grand Rapids suburb of Comstock Park; just two miles from where he grew up. His sales territory is roughly the western half of the state from Saugatuck to Petoskey. He and Sherry, his wife of 21 years, have two daughters: Shaylin, 17 and Leah, 14.

- 1 HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?** My high school golf coach (Jeff Hoag) owned Scott Lake Country Club where the team played and practiced. To get free golf, we were all employed as cart kids. I did that through high school then moved to the grounds crew for about eight years total. During that time, Jeff and Paul paid for my tuition to MSU. I was there when they built new holes and helped with that for two more years after finishing at MSU. I then went to Kent Country Club as an assistant to Keith Paterson for 5 years. While working there, I was recruited to do irrigation for Spartan Distributors. I was in service and sales for two years, mostly service, before moving into my current position.
- 2 WHO WAS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCE IN PERSONAL LIFE?** My wife and a close-knit group of friends. We have all learned from and helped each other throughout the years.
- 3 WHO WAS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?** I have three of them. Paul Hoag (co-owner and grounds superintendent at Scott Lake) taught me about work effort and work ethic. Keith Paterson became a real good friend and mentor. And Gabe Ross (former Spartan employee) got me hired in my current position and taught me everything I know about the sales world.
- 4 WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY?** Finding and keeping employees.
- 5 WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS WHEN WORKING WITH THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?** I expect them to provide social and educational events to bring everybody together with their peers. They do a good job of it. I attend many of the events.
- 6 DO YOU HAVE AN EMBARRASSING CAREER MOMENT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?** In 1991, I was on the first mower that I was ever taught on – a 1989 84-inch National. I was mowing tee banks and, as I was going around, I noticed the rear unit wasn't cutting and it was starting to smoke. I waved the super over. Without a word, he pulled my sweatshirt I had just taken off from the cutting unit. He handed it to me, all in pieces, without saying a word. Then he took off on his merry way.



7 WHAT IS YOUR BEST ADVICE TO DECISION MAKERS WHEN DOING BUSINESS? Besides only working with the purchase price of the product, evaluate the total cost of ownership for a product. Figure out what the situation will be after five years and what has to be put into it. I always say give me five years and I can justify the price. Look beyond the budget right now.

8 WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF BEING IN AN INDUSTRY SUPPORT ROLE? Building relationships, being there, and coming up with solutions when they need it most.

9 WHAT IS YOUR BEST SUCCESS STORY? Every once in a while you get a new mower issue and then it will linger. It goes away, comes back again, and eventually you find it was nothing but a piece of metal or plastic in the system that messed things up. I had a machine that I kept bringing back, then take it back, then the problem would change from one side to the other. It didn't make sense. Eventually spent four days making changes on it and finally found the

major problem. It was in the hydraulic block and it moved on its own. It was great to finally figure it out.

10 WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR POSITION? The variety and the freedom of being in a position to help people with their greatest needs when they have their biggest problems. It is nice to be the go-to guy when they have an issue.

11 DO YOU HAVE SOME TRAVEL TIPS? Leave early; there are less people on the road. Supers start early on the job. Get there before they start putting out fires and be ready to show them something.

12 HOW MANY DAYS OF THE YEAR ARE YOU ON THE ROAD? 200-plus

13 WHO HAS THE NICEST SHOP YOU CALL ON AND WHY? Walloon Country Club. It is one of the newer ones in my territory and I don't think they spared any expense on the set-up.

14 WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE BEST PRODUCT YOU OFFER AND WHY? The Toro ProCore 648. It's a 48-inch aerator. It has been out for 16 years and I still don't think there is anything comparable for what it can do. You don't see many used ones. They just work. It's the only one wider than its tires and it is so fast you don't end up putting many hours on it.

15 WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ITEM TO SELL/ DEMONSTRATE? The Toro Groundsmaster 7200 Polar Track. It is a zero-turn mower in the summertime and then you convert it to a track machine with a cab. Add a snow thrower, brush, or powered blade to the front and it is a riot to do snow removal.

16 WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GOLF COURSE TO PLAY? Too many choices here. I won't go there.



17 IF YOU HAD A DIFFERENT PROFESSION, WHAT WOULD IT BE? I've always wanted to own a bar or pub. It would be fun creating an atmosphere to entertain people in.

18 DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE GOLFER AND WHY? Tiger Woods – his personal issues aside. Professional golf is more interesting when he is in it.

19 DO YOU HAVE A NICKNAME AND IS THERE A STORY BEHIND IT? My nickname is A.J. It's also my initials (Allen James), but I'm told when I was little riding scooters and tri-cycles that I only cared about going fast. So, they called me A.J. after A.J. Foyt, the race car driver.

20 HAVE YOU EVER HAD A HOLE IN ONE? Not even close.

21 WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES OR ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM GOLF? I like hunting, fishing, camping, the normal outdoor guy stuff, and yard work.

22 WHAT ELSE DO YOU ENJOY DOING OUTSIDE OF WORK? I spend a lot of time with our daughters at their athletic events. Lacrosse is it right now. I also like attending beer festivals, concerts, events like that with friends.

23 IF YOU COULD TRAVEL TO ANY TIME IN GOLF WHEN WOULD IT BE AND WHY? It would be the 70s. Back then, a Toro salesperson only had a handful of pieces of equipment to sell; it was a much smaller selection to choose from. Now, there are so many.

24 WHO HAS THE BEST MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT DOG? Harbor Shores used to have one. I believe his name was Jimmy. It was the dog of the super that used to be there, Brad Fry. The dog did some neat things. He was unique.

25 HOW MANY CONFERENCES AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS DO YOU ATTEND PER YEAR? 10 to 15 each year. It's important for me.

26 WHICH ONE IS THE BEST TURF CARE PROFESSIONALS CAN ATTEND? In Michigan, it's the MTF in Lansing. Great event.

27 HOW MANY ROUNDS OF GOLF DO YOU PLAY IN A YEAR? Around 25ish. I'm about a 12 handicap

28 HOW DO YOU THINK THE INDUSTRY WILL BE DIFFERENT IN 10 YEARS? With all the staffing issues, the difference is going to have to be with autonomous machines or other machines that can take the place of multiple people. Machines that can do more than one job. It's going to be interesting to see.

29 ARE THERE ANY NEW PRODUCTS ON THE HORIZON? I think everybody is spending big money on autonomous mower research.

5 THINGS PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ME

1. Although I've been married for 21 years my wife was my HS sweetheart and we've been together for 29.
2. I enjoy concerts and my group of friends make it a point to attend 5-8 a year.
3. When I graduated HS I wanted to be a doctor so I went to college pre med, YEAH that lasted about 2 trimesters then that was dropped.
4. I've lived in the same town 40 of my 46 years.
5. Believe it or not I wasn't always bald I used to have a very thick big wavy head of hair.





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ELK HUNTING IN WYOMING

BY SETH BRITTON

There are so many things in life that can bring us joy, and in an ever changing and more complicated world, it is more important than ever for us as individuals to find those things and latch on to them with everything we have. Hunting is that “thing” that brings me joy. It brings me closer to the people I love and keeps me grounded in this drastically advancing technological world. With every year that passes I become more eager to put wild harvested meat in my freezer and have developed such a deep appreciation for the wilderness and the animals that call it home. The famous bow hunter Fred Bear once said that hunting cleanses the soul and I believe, and feel it every time I step into the woods. I recently had the opportunity to travel to Clark, Wyoming, accompanied by my father, brother and brother in-law to embark on our first elk hunt. We stayed with my brother’s wife’s family who are cattle ranchers in Clark and are some of the most caring, loving and hospitable people I have ever met. They housed us, fed us and treated us like family. We would sit up late into the night all around the kitchen island sharing stories while my brother Levi played his guitar. I was beyond thrilled to be there and to be able to share that experience with my family.

I had never hunted in the mountains before and I was shocked at the challenges and differences from what I was used to. At home, you are typically hunting out of a blind or tree over a few acres, out there we were staring at thousands of acres and trying to cover as much of it as we could. We would hike for miles at a time before stopping and glassing in the hopes of spotting an elk. The first day, after climbing and descending over multiple hills and valleys my brother and I came to a ridge, and out of nowhere stood a massive bull elk 325 yards out. Our hearts were racing, not only from seeing the animal, but from the miles we had just covered. We were not able to target the bull as we had cow tags, meaning we could only harvest a female elk, but the thought that there must be cows close by this bull was haunting us. After a few minutes, the bull moved on and allowed us to make a move and get over the next ridge. Just as we had expected, we came up on a herd of elk a hundred strong. It was an incredible sight. There were cows and bulls mixed in the herd and the sound of the bulls bugling was like something out of a *Lord of the Rings*



movie. Unfortunately, this herd was over 600 yards away, which was out of range for us. The wind was not in our favor and our only likely plan to get within range required us to backtrack down around the ridge we were on which could easily take 30 to 40 minutes. As we contemplated our next move we noticed the herd starting to move up the mountainside. They caught our scent. It was amazing to see how easily these animals move through this terrain as it was so difficult for us. There was no way we would be able to catch up. We sat and watched as they climbed out of sight.

The next three days we spent glassing the same area hoping we might catch the herd moving up or down from feeding ground to bedding ground. However, we could see that they had found a safe place a few thousand feet

higher than us and it was clear they had no intention of coming down. Sitting on the mountainside, the faint sound of bugling elk off in the distance I look at my Dad and think to myself, "this is one of those moments I will never forget." It was so quiet, so calm and the scenery was like a beautiful painting.

We had one day left to get the job done. My brother in-law and I devised a plan to start before daybreak, climb to a point above the elevation where the elk herd had been and approach them from there. Morning came and we started our ascent. It took us three hours to climb from 6000 feet of elevation to 9000 feet over the toughest ground I've ever hiked. Rock spills and down trees were everywhere. Every hundred feet or so, we would stop to catch our breath. We were sure our plan was coming together perfectly.

However, when we reached the area we had seen the herd for the last three days, they were gone. All that was left was the evidence of a big herd of elk bedding down for multiple days. The smell of elk was still in the air. They had moved out the previous night.

As we sat exhausted and wondering where the herd had gone, I stared out at the mountains in amazement. The vastness of that country is incomprehensible and the beauty is like nothing I had ever seen. I couldn't even feel disappointment. It never entered my mind. I was just in awe at where we were and what we were doing. That is the beautiful thing about hunting. It's not just about harvesting an animal it's everything that surrounds the hunt: The challenges, the wilderness in all its glory and the respect you have for the animal you are after. It's the comradery you share with other



hunters and experiencing those moments with the people you love. Spending that time in the mountains with my family is something I will always cherish and I dream about the day I will have the opportunity to take my children on an adventure just like this one.



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KYLE Schierlinger

1 HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS? It really started with the love of the game. I golfed for a very long time. Originally I went to Central Michigan University for hospitality management. After that and being in the workforce, I realized I didn't want to travel. My first golf job was a half season at Tam O'Shanter Country Club (West Bloomfield) where I learned a lot about what goes into running a golf course. I was thinking I would like to be a general manager in golf, but that changed immediately once I got outside. I saw the changes every day and just fell in love with it. Kyle Barton (Tam O'Shanter superintendent) could see it in me and two others who were working there. He showed us what was available in turfgrass at Michigan State. All three of us jumped on the opportunity, and the rest is history.

2 WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB IN GOLF AND WHAT WAS A KEY THING YOU LEARNED FROM IT? I guess that it was really what I wanted to do. Even though turfgrass seems like a huge thing at first, once you gather the skills it is not quite as daunting as a layman would think. It was not the first time I ever dove into something, but it was probably the most impactful time because I took a big risk and made a change. I learned that first summer that a career in turfgrass was doable.

3 WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THAT FIRST JOB? First and foremost, it was being able to work outside all the time. Then it was learning how you move up in the business if you are willing to take on tasks. Like edging cart paths. By the time you get done, it seems like it is time to start

Kyle Schierlinger,

31, is starting his second full season at Orchard Lake Country Club. The Michigan native earned his two-year turfgrass degree from Michigan State University and last September was married to Haylie.





over. It comes down to attitude. Others made it obvious they didn't like doing it, but I put my head down and got it done and that attitude I think led to other tasks that are regarded as more entertaining and satisfying.

4 WHAT ARE YOUR CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES? My main responsibility is essentially being the spray tech. Andrew Christesen and I are both assistants. When not on sprayer, we split the crew management. Weed management and the fairway sprays all fall on my plate though.

5 ON THE JOB, WHAT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE IN YOUR ARESENAL FOR GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT? I can see autonomous mowers eventually in widespread use, at least in the next 10 to 20 years with the

advancement in technology. Water/moisture scanning, drones, GPS also gets me excited.

6 WHAT IS THE OLDEST PIECE OF EQUIPMENT STILL BEING UTILIZED IN YOUR FLEET? Our driving range tee and short game fairway mower is 10 to 15 years old. She still cuts good, good enough for the range. It fires up every time.

7 IF YOU HAD A MULLIGAN ON A DIFFERENT CAREER CHOICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE? If I could take a full mulligan right from graduation from high school – I always wanted to be a dentist. It is what my dad did, and what my sister does now. I attribute not making that choice to being younger and dumber, and not putting in the time in recognizing that. If I had to go back, I think being a dentist


would be my dream job. I know, it's not super exciting.

8 IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANY GOLF HOLE ON YOUR COURSE WITHOUT REPERCUSSION, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE? I wouldn't change a thing with the design, but at No. 9 and No. 1 we have a shared low point on the course and draining is a nightmare down there. If I had it my way, with unlimited money, I would dump a lot of dirt in there and lower that water table. It would be less headaches moving forward.

9 WHAT IS THE CULTURAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICE YOU COULD NOT DO WITHOUT? It has got to be verticutting and top-dressing with sand. I think it just makes a world of difference in green quality. Now if you go to any course you know right away if they don't have the budget to do it all the time. Doing it often makes a huge difference.

10 WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FROM THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION? I really like the way they organize and share information between clubs. I know it has not always been as much of a tight-knit industry as it is now. There seems to be less competition between clubs and course conditions are now more of a team effort. I think we want golfers in our area to have quality conditions, and that is due in part to state and national groups sharing information. It's one of the important things the association does.





11 HOW HAVE YOU GIVEN BACK TO YOUR PROFESSION? One thing I want to do as I get more time is work with First Tee in growing the game. It all starts with kids. Detroit has a great history with golf, and a huge population of young people who have to chance to try the game. If you can get them to try it and fall in love with it before the frustration of the game kicks in, it will pay dividends in the future for the game.

12 WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY? Acting as that bridge between the superintendent and the crew and getting all you can out of the crew is the toughest dance. You have to maintain authority, but also motivation. I don't bash on the millennial thing, but the work force is different these days. You have to learn the way to give orders and explain to get people to buy into what the superintendent wants.

13 WHAT IS THE PART OF THE JOB THAT YOU DISLIKE? Finding the balance to be still be involved in the day-to-day while in the sprayer for full days and full mornings. It's hard to find that balance and time just to take a quick drive around the course and maintain the knowledge of what is going on.

14 WHAT IS THE EASIEST PART OF THE JOB? The easiest part is getting up every morning the summer. In the winter, getting out of bed is not exciting, but in the summer getting out of bed with a list of things to do is great. If you had told me at Central that I would enjoy waking up at 4:20 in the morning one day I would have laughed in your face. But honesty, getting up and getting ready for the day is easy now.

15 WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS? I definitely want to be a superintendent by that time at a private club in the Detroit area. I really do love Michigan for the long haul, but if it can't be here than somewhere out west in a mountain region. I tend to like the forest over the beach. I should be well into starting a family and all that good stuff, too.

16 HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED IN THE FUTURE? Having the best greens ever? I don't know. I guess as someone who made it a point to provide a quality product and made sure the game itself prospered. Coming up with something cut costs and give golf course better opportunities usually reserved for a higher budget would be ideal and impactful, too. I would like to be part of that.

17 WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST ABOUT TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT? Kyle Barton gave me a great start and John Nachreiner at Shady Canyon (Irvine, Calif.,) gave me some really cool opportunities as an intern. He put a lot of trust in me and I appreciated it out there. I didn't realize how much I appreciated it until I heard what other interns got to do on their jobs. My experience was beyond what it has been for others. I was able to run his crew of 40 people for a two-week period, do full green sprays, fairway sprays, and all the cultural stuff we did on a regular basis. It was a really cool summer. I appreciate that he trusted me, let me make mistakes and then do my best to fix them.

18 WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU HAVE LEARNED? That mistakes happen. We are around fairly dangerous things each day and you need to use your best judgement.

If something goes wrong, know that is always grows back, that machines are fixable and that it is really important to take the time to do it right and get it done safely. If something goes wrong, don't make the same mistake again.

19 HOW DO YOU RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE? I think it is huge. I find it very interesting position because you are still learning all the time. The superintendent has a completely different job. As an assistant you do all the things the superintendent wants, and most importantly try to learn while carrying out what the superintendent envisions. You make it happen and learn along the way.

20 WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE EQUIPMENT MANAGER? They are some of the most important people, especially in trying to learn and understand what a club wants and what a superintendent wants. It's valuable to spend time with them because in my experience they have been there a while and have the inside scoop. It is a valued relationship in simply having the equipment ready on time and running well and a good Equipment Manager does that, but also they can offer advice on things they have seen before. It's the if-the-walls-could-talk thing. They are a wall and they can talk. They know how the club and the superintendent work.

21 WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PET PEEVE CONCERNING GOLF COURSE ETIQUETTE? Golf cart driving practices for sure. I'm not a fan of putting stakes everywhere. I would rather trust that the golfers will make the right choices on where to drive the cart. It doesn't always happen.

22 WHAT ARE YOUR OPINIONS OF GREEN SPEEDS AND THE GAME OF GOLF TODAY? I think green speeds are a point of contention. You have to look at both sides, but first and foremost your green speeds have to match the design of the golf course. I understand you have players who want it like the pros, and they have some number in mind. I know at the Hancock Center (Michigan State University) they showed us surfaces at 10 and 12 on different designs and asked us to putt them. You couldn't tell the difference. It tells me to get the number out of your head and match the design.

23 AWAY FROM GOLF, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SPORT? Snow skiing - I love going out west. Jaded now. You go out to Tahoe and you really get your money's worth.

24 WHAT TYPE OF HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE AWAY FROM GOLF? Camping and backpacking. My wife and I do some backpacking when we can. We are taking a late honeymoon to New Zealand in February to do a whole bunch of hiking and stuff like that. Camping is big for us, too, and boating on weekends at the family's house.

25 DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE GOLF COURSE? I like whatever one I'm playing.

26 DO YOU HAVE A BUCKET LIST COURSE? Bandon Dunes. I'm still trying to finagle a way to make a trip out there some type of bachelor party.



5

THINGS PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ME

1. I've walked the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival.
2. My dog, Hondo, is named after a John Wayne movie.
3. Enjoy time spent in the back country mountains, whether its skiing or backpacking.
4. Been to every US state west of the Mississippi River, except for both of the Dakotas. (Alaska twice)
5. I was born on Christmas Day and it really has never been that bad, so everyone can stop asking.

- 27 WHAT IS THE FAVORITE CLUB IN YOUR BAG?** The 4-iron. I hit it pure all the time, it's my favorite recovery club from under trees. I can pipe it down the fairway, bump and run with it – it has quite a bit of utility for me.
- 28 WHO IS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?** My wife. We dated for seven years prior to getting married, dated though college and we have kind of grown up together, and gone through a lot of life changes together.
- 29 DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE FOOD OR RESTAURANT?** It has to be some sort of barbecue. Doesn't need to be fancy and generally the best ones aren't fancy. I like a barbecue brisket, something off the smoker. Salads are my day-to-day favorite, but for a special favorite it is barbecue.
- 30 WHAT VEHICLE WOULD YOU DRIVE IF YOU HAD A MONEY TREE GROWING IN YOUR YARD?** I have too many, but money tree, then a 1969 Camaro resto mod, Forest Green.
- 31 WHAT IS YOUR DREAM SCRAMBLE TEAM?** Tiger, Phil, me and one of the guys from by Sunday foursome – Adam. That would be entertaining.

THE MIGCSA AT GIS



*John Fulling, CGCS and
GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans*

The 2020 Golf Industry Show has been an important one for a very long time, this is because our very own Past President John R. Fulling, CGCS was elected as the 84th President of the GCSAA! Congratulations John! We look forward to your vision on a national and global level with the GCSAA. With this momentous occasion our Platinum Partners from Site One Lee Collins and Steve Rebhan, CGCS took it upon themselves to get a few shirts made to commemorate the election. For the first time in the history of the GCSAA the incoming president was late to the next chapter party because of autograph signings.

On Wednesday evening more than 200 Golf Industry Show attendees came by the Michigan gathering at the very new (this was their very first night being open!) Rodizio Grill in Pointe Orlando including many from the Tennessee chapter. We paired up with the TGCSA three years ago in Orlando after they had a change in their management and needed a place to get together at GIS. We had a good relationship with Shelia Finney the previous Executive Director of the TGCSA who went to work for GCSAA and she had put us in touch with Melissa Martin the new ED in Tennessee and our board approved a joint gathering in Orlando. It went so well the Board approved this for future GIS gatherings. This grouping together provides us the ability to

reserve some larger spaces and provide drink tickets. Already some good friends have been made between memberships and we plan to continue this partnership in 2021 in Las Vegas. Thank you to the TGCSA and both of our Industry Partners for making evenings like this one possible. Thank you to all the current and former members, families and friends who came to this event. Work is already under way for 2021.



The shirt makers Steve Rabhan, CGCS and Lee Collins from Site One.



Sam Holysz, EM at Gull Lake got the autograph train out of the station, the line formed behind him.





A Message From

BY CAREY MITCHELSON, MTF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



MTF Conference Update

On behalf of the MTF Board of Directors I would like to thank all those who attended the 90th Annual MTF Turf Conference. This year's event held January 7th – 9th was well received, attended and financially sound.

As with all conferences there are crucial leaders that work diligently to ensure attendees are offered a variety of topics and speakers. **Dr. Kevin Frank** is MTF's lead individual regarding our conference subject matter, speakers and collective organization. His efforts are always appreciated but not always fully recognized. The MTF is fortunate to have his work ethic and dedication to ensure our conference always produces a quality product. Thank you, Kevin, for all your hard work and how you represent the University. Dr. Frank starts planning for the 2021 Conference before this one completed and as always is open for suggestions on content and speakers. The MTF always considers suggestions from its membership regarding items that may be of interest at the Conference. For

those with thoughts on improving our 3 days of conference they can be directed to our gmail account at: miturfgrass@gmail.com.

Also, to be acknowledged is our re-elected **Vice President and Conference Chairman Mr. Curt Boak**. Curt has completed his third year as Conference Chairman, and has constantly worked to improve and coordinate the event to make it informative and enjoyable for all attendees.....no small task. The time commitment involved requires a dedicated individual and Curt has always delivered.

During our 3 days at the Kellogg Conference Center there were many moments that should be acknowledged.

Congratulations to Michael Rabe, Jerod Pell IV and Alex Scott all MTF Scholarship awardees. All annual awards are held in the Auditorium and it is always a remarkable moment for family, friends and all those involved with the students.



MTF Scholarship Chairman Dan Lucas presents award to (Lto R) Micheal Rabe, Jerod Pell and IV Alex Scott



Mr. Fritz McMullen was selected as recipient of the **2020 MTF Meritorious Award**. Fritz was recognized during the Founders reception held in the Cedar Room on Tuesday

evening. **Mr. Charlie Scott** offered the introduction of Fritz to those in attendance and Fritz did a wonderful job acknowledging all those who made his well-documented career so successful.

The MTF is also pleased to acknowledge 3 new individuals who requested **Double Diamond Founder Society Status** at this year's Conference. **Mrs. Kathryn Hilbert, Mr. Randy Rogers** and **Mr. Harry Schuemann** all showed their support of the Endowment that provides items required to continue research at the Hancock Turfgrass Research Center. They join **Mr. Mark McCoy** and **Mr. Jay Eccelton** who requested **Diamond Founders Society Status** at last year's conference. Thank you to each MTF member who has chosen to be a part of this great Endowment. Also, a thank you to **MTF President Doug Johanningsmeier** who has spearheaded revitalizing the Founders Society efforts.

Our **Halftime Show** was once again a popular gathering place and we thank all the vendors for their participation. **Board member and Secretary, Mark Wildeman**, once again took on the responsibility for ensuring the success of the **Silent Auction**. Thank you to all those who helped Mark make it a success by contributing items as well as bidding and purchasing those items. The \$4,500 raised will go directly to the **MTF Graduate Student Assistantship Fund**. The **MTF GSAF** is a combined effort of the past 4 years of organizing finances, preparing investments and working with the University to provide Grad Students on a **yearly basis** for our Turf Team. Last year was our first release of funds and both **Dr. Kevin Frank** and **Dr. Joe Vargas** were awarded **Grad Students** to help carry out their respective research projects.

The annual meeting held on the opening day afternoon included the election of our Board of Directors. Our

The **90th MTF Conference** is in the books

and we look forward to the day when we can celebrate the 100th. Save the date for the 2021 conference Jan. 5-7 at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing. Thank you to all that attended the education, vendors that attended the halftime show and all companies that sponsored the conference. I couldn't do this without you! I would also like to thank Kevin Frank for putting together another top notch group of speakers. Would like to thank the conference committee consisting of Mark Wildeman, Scott Rettmann, Dan Mausolf, and Eric Davey. Finally I would like to thank our Executive Director Carey Mitchelson for all his behind the scenes work that he does for conference and the MTF in general. Your heart and soul is in this foundation. Planning for the 2021 conference has already begun and we look forward to seeing you all there next year!

CURT BOAK- MTF CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN

current board remained unchanged with the re-election of all incumbents. Congratulations to **Mr. Dan Mausolf, Mr. Matt Gaver, Mr. Brad Lazroff and Mr. Doug Johanningsmeier** for their re-election and for all their previous work on the Board of Directors. At the Board meeting following the election the **Executive Board** was also kept intact from the previous year. **Doug Johanningsmeier – President, Curt Boak – Vice-President, Mark Wildeman – Secretary and Dan Mausolf – Treasurer**. Each of these individuals should be congratulated on their commitment to the MTF and the dedication they exhibit to in coordinating the Foundation operations and effort to constantly involve themselves with the Foundations operation.

Once again, thank you to all attendees, vendors, sponsors and volunteers who made this year's conference a success. Next year's Conference returns to the Kellogg Conference Center and will be held January 5th – 7th. Hope to see you all there.



Dave Wilbur shared some very personal and insightful information on mental health and proper communication.



Dr. Jim Kerns from NCSU in the hot seat for the talkshow discussing his presentation on Fungicide Program Development & Soil Borne Diseases.



GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans filled the 24th hour with an inspiring message about relentless focus.



The largest Spring Meeting ever with 158 registered attendees.

Spring Meeting, The Best 24 Hours in Turf, Year Two in Detroit

The first ever Best 24 Hours in Turf was held last year in downtown Grand Rapids at the Amway Grand Hotel on March 5th & 6th. In order to better accommodate our members schedules these meetings begin at 1:00 on day one and concluded on day two at 12:30 pm. In 2019 we had 130 attendees and in 2020 that grew to almost 160 registered, thank you to all who attended.

Again, this year the MiGCSA has made a large investment of Industry Partner dollars to keep the cost as low as possible. The entire event was only \$75 for class A, B and AFF Members and \$25 for all other classes and employees of class A & B Members. Hotel rooms for \$147.00 minus a \$40 discount per room bring the cost down to \$107.00 including beverage tickets for the cocktail reception & raffle with a full hot breakfast in the morning on day two. These prices would simply not be possible without the support of our Industry Partners. Another reason to support those who support you when making purchasing decisions.

Day one featured The Turfgrass Talk Show, Hosted By: Dr. Thom Nikolai with GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS and his Equipment Manager Heath Bronkema of the Bronk Brothers band out of Kalamazoo on guitar. Dr. Nikolai is the Senior Turfgrass Academic Specialist at Michigan State University. Thom gave everyone an update on the Michigan GCSAA BMP's with our Field Staff Representative Shane Conroy, these are in the process of review at MSU and will be available in 2020. He also interviewed Dr. Trey Rogers on the history and future of the MSU Turf Program and a wide variety of thought-provoking topics. Next up was Dave Wilbur, of Wilber Turf and Soil Services flew in from



GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans in attendance for the reception for GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS the 2020 GCSAA President.

Colorado to share his very personal story about Mental Health and Effective Communication. Dr. Jim Kerns presented on Fungicide Program Development & Soil Borne Diseases. At 5:00 the entire group moved down the hall to the cocktail reception for GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS with comments from GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans that included beverage & raffle tickets with passed appetizers again thanks to our Industry Partners. A few MiGCSA Titleist golf bags and swag package were up for raffle along with a \$50 gift cards from Cabela's and Amazon.

The next morning the hot breakfast buffet was a welcome sight for many after a great evening with their fellow members. Dr. Jim Kerns kicked off day two with Turfgrass Microbiology. He was followed by Golf Course Architect Ray Hearn who covered Practical Renovation Projects that are Affordable. Rhett Evans the CEO of the GCSAA closed the show with an invigorating presentation on Relentless Focus. Thank you to every person who helped plan this meeting and to all of the support of members attending and our industry partners. We look forward to Boyne Mountain in 2021 to continue to build on the best 24 hours in turf!



Ray Hearn, ASGCA spoke about Practical Renovation Projects that are Affordable.



The Turfgrass Talkshow hosted by Dr. Thom Nikolai with GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS on the drums and Heath Bronkema on guitar.



EQUIPMENT MANAGERS MEETING

at Walnut Creek Country Club

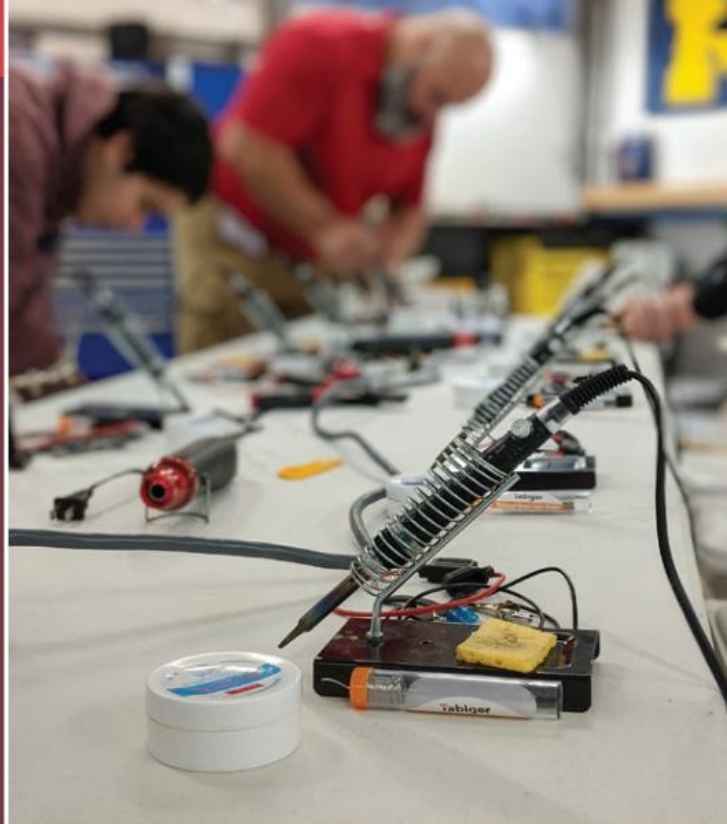
When we set out to “revive” the equipment managers committee, we had one goal in mind. That goal was to provide great education to our members and create opportunities not only to share their tips and tricks, but also allow them to network with their colleagues. With an ever changing industry that continues to evolve, it is imperative that we as technicians evolve with it. To best suit all of our members, regional EM meetings will be held, providing education ranging from hands-on demonstrations to round-table discussions.

This past December we held the Metro-Detroit meeting here at Walnut Creek, where we were hosted over 30 MiGCSA members including Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and Equipment Managers. The well-received keynote speaker was Hector Velazquez, his topic was a hands-on demonstration about proper soldering practices. This was a topic that both the seasoned veteran and the newly established technician walked away with more knowledge than they came with. Hector has done great things for this industry, provided education to technicians all across the United States, we were extremely lucky to have him!



The second half of the meeting, I personally gave a demonstration about the correct way to install LED lighting on your equipment, followed by hands-on electrical diagnostic. We ended the meeting with a round table discussion with various topics ranging from balancing home and work life to grinding techniques.

As a committee we plan on having meetings in the Western and Northern regions, making it more convenient to all members no matter where they call home. Knowledge is power and we want to continue to pass that knowledge to not only Equipment Managers but to all MiGCSA members.



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BY SHANE CONROY AND GCSAA STAFF

Fulling elected as 84th President of GCSAA

30-year GCSAA member and past Michigan GCSA president John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS was elected as the 84th president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association on January 30th in Orlando, Fla. during the GCSAA Annual Meeting. I have had the pleasure to know John for nearly 15 years and am proud to call him a mentor to not only me, but countless others in the industry.

"Thank you to the membership and the delegates for their trust. I will do everything in my power to not let you down," Fulling said. "We have a lot of great initiatives going forward to serve members, advance the profession and bring young people into the game. That's our mission. That's what we are going to do."

Fulling has served as the superintendent at Kalamazoo CC since 1993. Previously, he served as superintendent at Berrien Hills Country Club in Benton Harbor, Mich., and as a course superintendent at Medinah Country Club in Medinah, Ill.

He has a turfgrass management degree from Kishwaukee College in Malta, Ill., and previously studied music performance at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb.

Other elected officers were Mark F. Jordan, CGCS and natural resource leader at Westfield Country Club in Westfield Center, Ohio, as vice president, and Kevin P. Breen, CGCS and golf course superintendent at La Rinconada Country Club in Los Gatos, Calif., as secretary/treasurer.

Board member Kevin P. Sunderman, CGCS, director of grounds at Isla Del Sol Yacht and Country Club in St. Petersburg, Fla., once again was elected to the board, and Douglas D. Dykstra, CGCS, golf course superintendent at White Mountain Country Club in Pinetop, Ariz., was elected to serve for the first time.

Continuing their board service are Jeff L. White, CGCS and superintendent at Indian Hills Country Club in Mission Hills,

Kan.; T.A. Barker, CGCS and superintendent at Fore Lakes Golf Course in Taylorsville, Utah; and Paul L. Carter, CGCS, at Bear Trace at Harrison Bay in Harrison, Tenn. Rafael Barajas, CGCS and the director of golf course operations at Boca Grove Golf and Tennis Club in Boca Raton, Fla., will remain on the board as immediate past president; past president Darren J. Davis, CGCS and golf course superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, Fla., steps down from serving on the board.

Other exciting revelations made at the Golf Industry Show included the announcement that GCSAA has now partnered with Association Health Programs, an insurance broker, to offer health insurance access as a membership benefit. The program will be available to GCSAA members beginning April 1. Additional information will be shared regarding this exciting member benefit; please reach out to me with any questions.

GCSAA also welcomed its 100th affiliated chapter. The Caribbean Golf Course Superintendents Association has been established. The Caribbean GCSA is the third international chapter of GCSAA. International chapters have always had a strong presence within GCSAA, as the Ontario GCSA was one of the original chapters when GCSAA was formed in 1926. Mexico GCSA became an affiliated chapter in 2017, and there are 98 countries across the globe that have individual GCSAA members.

Michigan State University had another strong showing in the Turf Bowl. Team 54 from MSU finished in sixth place in a competition which hosted 56 teams from 31 schools and composed of over 200 students. Congratulations to all the MSU teams that competed!





Make a Plan for 2020

Unless you have **definite, precise, clearly set GOALS,** you are not going to realize the **maximum potential** that lies within you.”

– Zig Ziglar

In this issue of Course Conditions we have included the insert of our 2020 calendar. These events and meetings are the result of the board doing the best they can to provide opportunities for everyone reading this. There are 33 planned events in 2020 and there will likely be another 6 to 12 that will pop up due to need or from a member who wants to host on a topic. The cost of these events is run at a breakeven every year in order to keep the costs low for you to be able to attend. Our Industry Partners make this possible. The timing of these events is set for the least busy time of your year with no planned meetings from mid-June to the end of August. Now is the time to make a plan to take advantage of these opportunities.

So often in today's world we say I don't have time. I know I do, too often. But really there is always the same amount of time we have always had; it is about how you prioritize things. Saying I do not have time for anything is really saying that is not as important as other things. To decide what is or is not important to you is how you decide to use your time. It is very easy to say I can not attend an event because there are so many priorities on the golf course, I have been there I understand. However, this time of year it is easier to step back from the urgent and see the larger picture. What can happen from attending a meeting? What are the possibilities? Who can you make a new connection with that may help you and your facility? What casual conversation can lead to a game changing bottom line benefit to you and your facility? The

possibilities are almost endless from attending an MiGCSA event.

There will always be something “more important” at the course, this will never change. This year consider the overall outcome from the urgent priorities on the course and compare them with the unlimited upward potential of spending a day with your fellow members, exposing yourself to new ideas and concepts. Is there really anything that should be a larger priority? Of course, there are schedule conflicts but with all of the dates in your hand now is the time to plan, to set your calendar to take advantage of these opportunities. I will also encourage you to take this opportunity to plan on attending as a single. Playing with your industry friends is great and keeping those traditions alive is important but add one more event you normally have not attended and register as a single. I will set you up with a great group and you will walk away with new connections and ideas I guarantee it.

So now is the time as you plan out the fertilizer and pesticide applications, the mowing routes and patterns, the staffing and so much more. Take the time to plan for yourself, to decide to take the steps needed to bring even more value to yourself and your facility. See you soon!

Adam Ikamas, CGCS
MiGCSA Executive Director



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