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# Turf Times

Bi-Monthly  
Update  
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The newsletter from the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association

## President's Message

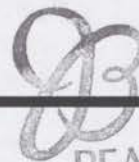
The NMTMA is looking for a few good people. A few good people who would like to become more involved in the NMTMA and the GCSAA

First, the NMTMA needs a chapter delegate to attend the 1997 chapter delegates meeting at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas. The meeting will be held September 5-7. The delegate would attend meetings and an open house with a chance to tour the GCSAA headquarters and meet the staff.

Also, this will be the only opportunity to meet and speak with candidates running for office in 1998. This is important information that the voting delegate for the NMTMA uses to make an informed decision during the 1998 elections.

This is an excellent opportunity for anyone wanting to become more involved in our organization. There is no cost involved. The NMTMA is responsible for round trip airfare and the GCSAA covers lodging, meals and transportation from the airport. Please contact me if you are interested.

Secondly, elections are coming up for the NMTMA board of directors. We are looking for members interested in being candidates for those elections. The board does the bulk of its work during the winter months. If you are interested in becoming a candidate contact Dan Bissanette at (616) 535-2373.



Brian Holmes

BEARD  
COLLECTION

## Scott Named Director of Agronomy

Jonathon L. Scott has been named Director of Agronomy for the PGA TOUR, Scott succeeds the late Allan MacCurrach. "Following in the footsteps of Allan MacCurrach is a unique experience, which I have had the opportunity to do twice, first with Golden Bear and now with the TOUR," said Scott, who served as Consulting Agronomist, Golfturf, Nicklaus Design, since 1988.

"Allan was both a friend and mentor to me in the second half of my career, and it is an honor for me to be able to carry on the tradition of excellence and dedication he demonstrated in all of his work."

In addition to his nine-year stint with Golden Bear, Scott worked for 15 years as a golf course superintendent and spent two years in the landscape maintenance management business.

"We are fortunate to have someone with Jon Scott's background available to take over for Allan MacCurrach," said W. William (Bill) Calfee, Executive Vice President of Competitions for the PGA TOUR. "Course conditioning is such a critical component of tournament play, and Jon is the ideal person to shepherd this phase of our game."

The 48-year-old Michigan native served as the first golf course superintendent at Key Biscayne GC in Miami from 1972-73. He later worked as superintendent at CC Aventura (now Turnberry Isle), North Miami, FL; Montclair CC, Dumfries, VA; Andrews Air Force Base GC, Camp Springs, MD; and Valhalla GC in Louisville, KY site of the 1996 PGA Championship. He also served as Director of Maintenance at Se Pines, Hilton Head, SC, and Grand Traverse Resort, Traverse City, MI.

A 1972 graduate of Michigan State University, Scott also attended Ferris State University in 1967-68. He will relocate from Grand Rapids, MI to PGA TOUR Headquarters in August. He and his wife, Anne, have three children.



# The perfect shot shouldn't mean the perfect lie.

By Denis Griffiths

Years ago, when the links courses of Scotland and England were laid out in and around the natural dunes and land forms, man moved minimal earth to provide contiguous golf holes. Everything on the links was adapted to fit existing conditions. You might say that Mother Nature was actually the builder, and the course designer was merely the one who discovered routing.

This use of nature often provided courses that were testing and frequently offered imperfect lies, blind shots and unmanicured turf. Part of the enjoyment of these courses, however, resided in having to respond to these challenging circumstances, often through creative shotmaking.

But somewhere along the line, the American perception of the game strayed from its European roots. That perception, which has been a major influence on course design around the world, applauds wonderfully maintained, impeccable golf courses. It also encourages complete fairness in design, and is skeptical of "unusual" design measures such as the occasional blind shot.

TV, golf magazines and the PGA Tour have all had a hand in furthering this perception, particularly in setting expectations that are often mistaken for standards. Announcers banter on about how players are penalized for anything less than a perfect lie and touring professionals complain about course conditions.

Meanwhile, we nod in empathy. But must a good tee shot always be rewarded with a perfect lie? Must every shot be hit to a clearly visible target? Must it always be possible to advance a ball from a sand bunker? Must every green hold approaches? Must the play area contain 100-percent turf coverage throughout the season, no matter what weather conditions exist?

I am the first to agree that these conditions can contribute to the game's overall enjoyment level. But I also feel this "Americanization" may eliminate many shots that are required on the traditional Scottish and English courses... shots that add to the game's challenge and finesse. In discussions with other members of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, I find that most strive to meet these Americanized expectations. As a result, today's course architecture may best be described as a study on how to best modify terrain to create the desired golfing experience.

With sites containing more and more limitations – whether they be related to size, terrain or environment – designing to this American style of golf often involves extensive earthwork to reform the ground, especially to prevent blind shots and provide level play areas. It also requires green construction methods, irrigation system design and grass selection that have reached a level of sophistication almost beyond comprehension. All in the name of perfect playing conditions.

While meeting golfers' expectations, these designs have and will continue to drive course construction costs higher. The dramatic upswing in maintenance costs is likely to continue as well. (It is not uncommon for the average annual maintenance cost of a 25-year-old facility to exceed the original cost of construction for the same course!) All of which has led to an overall rise in green fees

It is my belief that the quality of a game of golf should be judged more on the integrity of the course's design than its condition. The goal of the golf course architect is to create variety, demanding that players use every club in their bag. Less-than-perfect turf conditions provide an additional variable that should not necessarily be considered a negative.

When playing older courses where the condition of the turf is determined by the most recent weather cycle, golfers are required to adjust their game to the specific conditions every time they play

I believe we should consider changing our expectations and returning more to the original concept of the game. In this concept, the ball is played as it lies, and there is not always a reward for a perfect shot. In doing so, we will expand the opportunity for more affordable golf. We will also obtain a better appreciation of what the game has to offer.

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## 1997 Calendar

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|--------------------|---|
| <b>September 9</b> | <i>NMTMA Fundraiser</i><br>Belvedere G.C., Charlevoix |
| <b>October 8</b>   | Mistwood G.C., Lake Ann                               |



## Safety Message

### Eye Protection

Loss of eyesight is probably one of the most traumatic experiences a person can endure. It is your responsibility to ensure personnel always use adequate eye protection. If you don't have the required eye protection for a job, don't start the job! This may sound rather basic, but how many times have you seen someone doing a job without eye protection just because it was only going to take a minute? It only takes a second for you or others to lose eyesight forever.

*Make sure the eye protection provided is usable. If it is scratched and cloudy, people will generally not use it since it makes their work more difficult.*

## Farmers Almanac Forecast

October 1997

The late seasonable weather of September will carry through until October 11-12.


For the month temperatures will be 49.5° - about 2 1/2° below normal. After that there will be a 3 day cold snap after which a period of Indian Summer with some showers will mark the southern Great Lakes. Indian Summer will also occur in the northern and western portions of the region. They will end there around October 24 and about three days after that in the southern portion. By October 27 the region will be gripped in a cold wave.

## "End of the Summer Laugh"

*The following funny bone was in the Professional Engineering newsletter and was taken from the Meat & Poultry magazine "Feathers" of the California Poultry Industry.*

It seems the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has a device for testing the strength of airplane windshields. The gunlike device launches a dead chicken at a plane's windshield at approximately the speed the plane flies. If the windshield doesn't crack from the carcass impact, theory has it, the windshield will survive a real collision with a flying bird.

This interested the British, who wanted to test the windshield on a brand new, high-speed locomotive. They borrowed the FAA's chicken launcher, loaded a chicken, and fired. The ballistic chicken shattered the windshield, went through the engineer's chair, broke an instrument panel, and embedded itself in the back wall of the engine cab. Stunned, the British asked the FAA to check whether everything had been done correctly. The FAA reviewed the test thoroughly and had one recommendation: "Use a thawed chicken."

 Do you have an address change, or do you need some information on NMTMA, or do you need to call in your reservation for a meeting?

You can do all of this now by calling  
Kay Patrick at:

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in very handy!

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International Sports Turf  
Box 10065  
College Station, TX 77842

**NMTMA Executive Committee**

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Doug Kendziorski - *Vice President*  
Jon Maddern - *Secretary/Treasurer*  
Tom Reed - *Executive Secretary*  
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