



# Turf Times

Bi-Monthly  
Update  
Mar / Apr 1998  
Vol. 27, No. 1

The newsletter from the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association

## President's Message

It's hard for me to believe that it's already March - this winter seems to be passing much quicker than last. On the other hand, I hope winter doesn't end too quickly, as I would hate to be behind schedule before the golf season even starts.

The event that signals the start of spring to me is the GCSAA Conference and Show. It was held in Anaheim, CA., during the first week of February. The big news this year is Jon Maddern being elected to the GCSAA Board of Directors. Congratulations to Jon. I'm certain he will have a positive influence within the GCSAA, just as he has in every organization he is associated with in the turf industry. Good luck to you, Jon, in all your endeavors, "Michigan for Maddern".

Northern Michigan had two superintendents who were honored with GCSAA Environmental Steward Awards, Mike Meindertsma, from Grand Traverse Resort, received the GCSAA national award for resort courses. Dave Faucher, CGCS from Shanty Creek Resort, received a regional award in the resort courses category. Congratulations to Mike and Dave and their staffs for a job well done. Also honored by the NMTMA was C.E. "Tuck" Tate, CGCS. Tuck was instrumental in the creation of the NMTMA and was the driving force during its initial years. The NMTMA owes a great debt to him. Many thanks for your hard work, Tuck.

Education has always been a priority within the NMTMA. This came to light at the conference when Paul Holmes, CGCS, from the Gaylord C.C., made a presentation during an educational session. Paul spoke about community involvement and did a fine job.

As you can see the NMTMA has involved members who are dedicated to their profession. I'm proud to be associated with the members of the NMTMA, and of the turf industry in Michigan.

A note of interest, mark April 8th on your calendar. This is the date of the mini-conference to be held at the Grayling Holiday Inn. See you there.

Brian Holmes

## THANK YOU

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors and you the members of the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association for all of your help and support during my campaign this year for director of GCSAA. You can be very proud of your efforts as I was successful in winning a seat on the board. I could not have done it without your help and support. We put Michigan back on top.

I would also like to let everyone know, that another of our members did us proud. Paul Holmes CGCS, from Gaylord C.C. gave a talk on his experiences of being involved in various community activities and organizations at the "Innovative Superintendent Session". He explained how it not only helped the community, but more importantly how he is respected in the community and at his club. Paul was very nervous, (who wouldn't be, getting up in front of over 2,000 of his peers) but he did an outstanding job, particularly for his first time. I received a lot of compliments about him.

The GCSAA Conference and Show showed everyone what NMTMA has and is all about. You each should be proud. I and my family are indeed honored and privileged to represent you the members in this next step. This organization is exciting and going places. Your board is dedicated and hard working and it has been a privilege to work with them and become closer friends.

Thank you just does not say enough to express my gratitude. Your calls, letters and e-mail have been touching and humbling. The work and travel has already begun, but it is fun. I hope to be able to thank most of you in person sometime this season.

If I can be of any help with regards to a GCSAA question, comment, concern, or problem please do not hesitate to call me. I'm still a golf course superintendent in northern Michigan.

  
BEARD  
COLLECTION

Sincerely,  
Jon D. Maddern



## Random Ramblings

First let me explain the reasoning behind the title for this article. I have the habit of taking off on tangents as I discuss practically anything but, given time, I usually return to the original topic. The Random Ramblings gives me the literary license, if you will, to continue this haphazard means of communicating because, yes, I'm too old to change, dammit.

In the beginning there is the Mechanic's Association. I volunteered for the position of director knowing only that my mechanic was interested and I felt that the "networking" among mechanics could add to their knowledge in the area and save us all time and money ( which could be redundant because I've been told that time is money ). While browsing through the NMTMA directory last Fall, I discovered that there is a class M, for mechanics! I decided to browse through the directory to find out just how many class M members we have. After going through the list several times to make sure I had the right count, I came with the total- 0!!! You may be asking why in the hell we have a Mechanic's Association!?! Good question - no answer. Since I've heard a lot of grumbling regarding attendance ( or lack of ) at our regular NMTMA meetings, I cannot imagine putting effort into an association without members ( although I would be proud of the 100% attendance at each meeting ). When the numbers are up at both the regular meetings and the number of class M members, then I would support a "sub" association.

I am as guilty as most when it comes to attending the NMTMA meetings. I intend to attend-but at times have been known to space it out. Because of this I have decided to have my mechanic join the association and at least one of us will attend each meeting. Twin Birch will survive a day without one of us and the turf topics will make my mechanic more valuable to me since half of

this time is spent on course maintenance. As a superintendent/mechanic/grunt, I would like to see a few mechanic-oriented topics addressed at our meetings; Hydraulics; original parts vs. Brand X; asordid ( I know the spelling may seem wrong but that's how I feel about irrigation ) irrigation subjects, etc..

Now that I'm talking about irrigation, water-quality testing just seems to flow ( I'm sorry ) into the article. I have tried to find a reliable, semi-low cost, punctual water-testing lab. I started with Greg Lyman at MSU and they were fine- I was the weak-link. I ended up with a lot of little frozen bottles in the fridge that never made it to Lansing. Since then I have dealt with labs in the Grand Traverse area with no luck. I've been considering starting a car-pooling system for the water samples. In its rough stage- we would drop off our well marked, frozen samples at a central location and take turns doing the up-north to Lansing run. If we have 200 members at 5 monthly trips per year, ideally, one member would have to drive every 40 years! Such a deal.

This last ( promise ) paragraph will really be disjointed. Like, what do you think of the Casey Martin golf cart issue? Tough call. It won't affect me for several years since the U.S. Open isn't coming to Twin Birch till 2007. You heard it here first-all the snow will be off your course by April 20 this year--or not. Any questions, comments, ideas,- communicate with a board member. Have a good season- enjoy the ups and deal with the downs. In the words of the late, great Doc Payne, "don't take your self too seriously".

Mike Ver Hage  
Twin Birch G.C.



**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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Broyhill Grainsbush with mounting kit for Toro, \$1,500.00  
Ideal Reel Grinder, model 800, \$200.00  
Vicon spreader, \$500.00  
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## Safety

A golf course is a place where people come to enjoy themselves, get a little exercise, and socialize with friends. Most don't think of it as a place of potential danger. The superintendent can do much to enhance the safety of those on the course, both employees and players.

Eighty percent of all heart attacks give the recipient an identifiable warning. Heavy sweating, chest pain or pressure, numbness or tingling in the left arm, jaw pain or a feeling of indigestion; any combination of these symptoms can spell heart attack. These symptoms alone do not mean a person is having a heart attack at that moment, just that one may be on the way soon.

Always alert the Emergency Medical Services nearest your course. Have their phone number available at several locations, and, if you have a mobile phone, keep this and other key numbers handy.

In the EMS; they are the patient's best hope. You now have three to five minutes to make a difference between life and death. Encourage the person to sit down right where he is. Do not try to move him unless it is essential. Make the patient comfortable and give him oxygen if available. Loosen his collar and belt and encourage him to relax. Anything you can do to keep the patient calm will help.

Finally; if the person loses consciousness or passes out, you should start CPR immediately. The victim has only two to six minutes once the heart stops beating to avoid a life threatening injury. You will make a difference if you start CPR right away. As part of your spring safety training, get several employees certified in CPR.

## HeadLines

- Police begin campaign to run down jaywalkers
- Drunk gets nine months in violin case
- Iraqi head seeks arms
- Prostitutes appeal to Pope
- Lung cancer in women mushrooms
- Eye drops off shelf
- Teacher strikes idle kids
- Squad helps dog bite victim
- Enraged cow injures farmer with ax
- Plane too close to ground, crash probe told
- Miners refuse to work after death
- Two sisters reunited after 18 years in checkout counter
- If strike isn't settled quickly, it may last a while
- Cold wave linked to temperatures
- Red tape holds up new bridge
- Deer kill 17,000
- Typhoon rips through cemetery; hundreds dead
- New study of obesity looks for larger test group
- British union funds dwarfs in short supply
- Local high school dropouts cut in half
- Man minus ear waives hearing

Courage is a quality of mind that is both moral and physical. Physical courage is a quality which enables you to face danger.

Your moral courage enables you to stand up for your beliefs, to call things as honestly you see them, and to admit mistakes.

*This is one of the most important traits of a good leader.*

## 1998 Calendar

<b>April 8</b>	<b>Mini Conference Grayling Holiday Inn</b>
<b>May 14</b>	<b>A-Ga-Ming G. C. Kewadin</b>
<b>June 8</b>	<b>MTF Fundraiser The Dream West Branch</b>

**Hey**, you computer junkie's call Kay Patrick or E-mail her with your E-mail. You can reach Kay at (517) 327-5474 or E-mail at [mtfturf@msn.com](mailto:mtfturf@msn.com). Look forward to seeing you on the web.

# ACID INJECTION SYSTEM

Greetings from Petoskey, my name is John Mastenbrook and I am taking a break from preparing for my seventh season at Petoskey-Bay View Country Club to write an article for this newsletter. My purpose for this is twofold: One is so that Pete doesn't have to write about his pet gold fish (and scrounge for other articles). The other is to attempt to explain my reasons for purchasing, results of using and other thoughts of the pHairway acid injection system. This is based on research and two and a half years use experience.

The system is simply a pump, pH monitoring and metering device attached to the pressurized line at or near the irrigation pumping plant. It uses a solution (pHairway) that is a compound formed from the reaction of urea and sulfuric acid - Monocarbamide dihydrogensulfate.

After working on courses in Grand Haven, Lansing, and Grosse Ile, I was thrilled to get a job in Northern Michigan where growing grass is a "piece of cake." It didn't take long to realize it wasn't that easy. While fungus and insect problems are less, I had turf that was off color, thin and weak. Soil test were performed and a wide variety of fertilizers were used with poor results. My greens are less than ten years old and have two different types of a sand/peat mixture (2NS, 2MS). About half way through the summer the soils would seal off and puddling would occur with as little as ten minutes of irrigation, especially on the greens. The greens were crusty and very firm, it was difficult to cut the hole for the cup. A physical soil analysis was performed with everything being at or near the acceptable ranges. Compaction was not a problem. The deep drill, hydroject, soil cultivator and conventional types of aerators were used frequently with short term results. Large quantities of various wetting agents were used and helped very little with water infiltration.

In the fall of 1994 tech rep Sam Stimmel recommended a product called pHairway that was being used in the Chicago area. With the help of Tom Brogger (Grounds Superintendent at Birchwood farms CC) who was experiencing similar problems, we spoke with company reps and other superintendents who were using this system. Irrigation water suitability test were using this system. Irrigation water suitability test were performed which showed a very high level of bicarbonates and an elevated pH. The bicarbonates tend to bond the soil particles together and ruin soil structure. The elevated pH limited the plant uptake of many nutrients. My irrigation water comes from two wells that pump from a limestone aquifer.

In late May 1995 both Tom and I were able to purchase these systems and were the first in the state to do so. I waited until late June when my turf was declining and my soils were becoming sealed off again before I began using my system. The results were amazing, within two days my water infiltration rate improved and within a week the turf improved and continued to do so through out the season. If I wanted to, or needed to, I could irrigate the greens for thirty minutes with out any puddling. The cup cutting became much easier and the surface held a golf shot better.

The pHairway product is injected into the irrigation water and reacts with the minerals, primarily the bicarbonates and lowers the pH to the desired level. When the treated irrigation water comes into contact with the soil, it breaks the bicarbonate bond between soil particles which improves soil structure and infiltration. It also helps avoid or reduce alkalinity and improves fertility.

There are many people who think this is just a fancy "Snake

Oil" injection device. (I disagree) The following are some of the statements I have heard, followed by my thoughts.

"The acid will damage the pumping plant, metal pipes and fittings"

•In its undiluted form it will and it will also damage the rubber gaskets in fittings and PVC pipes. There is no reason that the undiluted solution should be in the irrigation system. In its diluted form I don't believe any significant damage will occur. If perhaps it does shorten the life of metal pipes or fittings by a year or two, I would consider it worth it for all the good it does. The system is set up to run only when the main pump is operating, when the main pump cycles off and the jockey pump takes over and the area around the injection point is flushed with clean water.

"It will do nothing to change soil pH"

•Soil test showed a .1 - .3 (different greens) drop in pH in the 0 - 2 inch depth in one season without using any acidifying fertilizers. The use of this system along with acidifying fertilizers will bring the pH down much faster. I prefer to reduce the pH slowly to help avoid a severe black layer problem. The use of this system has actually reduced the amount of black layer in my greens due to better water infiltration and soil structure.

•My turf is healthier, greener and I use less fertilizer.

•I think this system also lowers the pH of thatch, but I haven't had that tested yet.

"It's too expensive"

•The cost of the system has dropped to approximately \$6,500 and the solution has dropped to \$7.50 per gallon. I use approximately 1 gallon of solution to every 30,000-35,000 gallons of irrigation water to change the pH from 8.1 to 7.0.

•I rarely use wetting agents anymore and I don't need as much fertilizer. (pHairway has .44 lbs N per gal). These savings are used to purchase the pHairway product.

•My spray rigs are filled from the irrigation system and I think having water with a pH of 7 helps with the efficacy of the chemicals.

•With pHairways water infiltration capabilities I can also over water from time to time to make up for sprinkler coverage deficiencies when labor isn't available (affordable) to hand water.

•I only have to aerate spring and fall now which is much less disruptive to golf play.

This system isn't for everybody, but more courses are seeing the benefits of using it. If you are experiencing any of the problems that I was, and you think your irrigation water may be the problem, then it may work for you. It should not be thought of as a "cure all", but as another (valuable) tool in the quest of healthy turf.

If you have any questions or would like more information, feel free to call Tom Reed Sr. at Tri-Turf ( Distributor of the pHairway system) or myself. If you would like to see how my system is set up, I would be glad to show you.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and good luck this 1998 season.

John

## Notes . . .

### *Effective Listening*

Listen to understand rather than refute. Refuting is proving a person to be wrong or in error. Sometimes we tend to be too critical of the other peoples ideas. Critical listening is not achieved by criticizing the speakers thoughts before he/she has finished. Without honestly giving a speaker a chance to get his/her message across, you cannot understand enough of the message to intelligently evaluate the speakers ideas. A good listener:

- Listens and waits
- Tries to understand first and evaluate second.

Ideas may deserve to be questioned and tested, but the testing should be done only after a person has stated his/her ideas or finished what they have to say.

### *Maddern Elected*

Jon Maddern, CGCS, was elected to the GCSAA Board of Directors at GCSAA's national conference in February. Jon has been living in Gaylord and been the Superintendent at Elk Ridge G.C. since 1990.

Jon has been a tremendous asset to our own association and we are excited about having one of our own helping to guide GCSAA in the coming years.

Way to go Jon! Keep up the good work!

### *Members Receive Environmental Awards*

Northern Michigan is in the lime light again thanks to the efforts of Mike Meindersma and Dave Faucher.

Mike Meindersma, CGCS, of Grand Traverse Resort was named the national winner of the Environmental Steward Award in the resort course category. Dave Faucher, CGCS, of Shanty Creek Resort won the award at the regional level. He won in the resort category for the north central region of the U.S. . Features were done on both Superintendents in the February issue of Golf Course Management.

In recognition of the winners, program sponsors Novartis Turf and Ornamental Products, Rain Bird, Jacobsen Division of Textron and Pursell Technologies Inc. will donate nearly \$23000.00 to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Foundation.

### *Plan Now for Scholarship*

The NMTMA Member Scholarship is available to any members son or daughter who is studying in a field unrelated to golf course management. The topic this year will deal with the student discussing their parents (grandparent or setp-parent) involvement with the NMTMA and golf. Describe their own perceptions about the profession and the impact their career as golf course superintendent or sales representative has had upon them. This essay must be the original work of the applicant. The winner will be awarded \$1000.00 to help pay college tuition. More information will be given at the April mini-conference.

### *Educational Scholarship Awarded*

The NMTMA is proud to announce Ed Simon as the winner of the NMTMA Educational Scholarship. Ed is currently a student at Michigan State University who will be graduating from the two-year turfgrass program this spring. Ed did his summer internship at Crystal Downs working for Mike Morris, CGCS.

Below his letter of appreciation follows.

Dear NMTMA Board of Directors,

I am writing you today to express my joy and pride in receiving the 1998 Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association's Award presented to me at the Awards Banquet during the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation's annual conference.

Words can not describe the feelings I have in being associated with the great people of northern Michigan. I found all the representatives of your organization professional, courteous and helpful. These characteristics, along with others, are admirable and I look forward to considering myself a part of your family of superintendents. With the NMTMA scholarship award, I have received recognition for my efforts in school, and it has also helped to fund my last semester, allowing me to concentrate on academics and career opportunities.

I believe hard work and faith in my dreams will direct me to the best location. With the support of all the fine people I have met from northern Michigan, I feel fortunate and confident in my future, and am proud to associate myself with your organization. I believe one day I will get the opportunity to work with you; to help strengthen and promote the area, and learn from a valuable source of knowledge within your association.

I trust that this will not be the last we meet, and that I will be able to live the dream of working and residing in northern Michigan. I hope to always be a part of the Northern Michigan Turf Manager's Association, and the pride I feel as the recipient of this award will not diminish. Thank you again for this honor and I hope we will always have favorable relationships in the future.

Sincerely,  
Edward G.Simon



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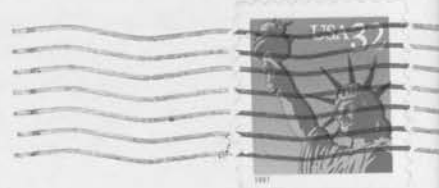
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### NMTMA Executive Committee

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Doug Kendziorski - Vice President  
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