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President's Message



2020 recap. A year no one would want repeated. What seemed like the start to a great Spring and NERTCS, everything went downhill from that point. Drought conditions. One of the warmest Summers, well at least September. Luckily for those in this industry, we have had to adapt to different challenges daily. Staffing was altered, golfers were allowed, not allowed, walking only, 1 to a cart. 2 to a cart. No shotguns, shotguns allowed. No pins. Pins in, cup upside down. Ball lifter okay. I'm pretty sure that most of us will be happy to put the course to bed for the next 3-4 months. Possibly to a better 2021.

As many of you know, the challenges that the RIGCSA BOD has faced trying to continue operations with some form of meetings, have been numerous and have been changing weekly. We are looking into having some form of a webinar for our meetings in the direct future. Julie Heston has been investigating this option and talking with others that have done it this way.

Looking to 2021, hopefully with a vaccine available, we may be able to return to a pre-2020 schedule. We may be looking for host sites next year. We may not.

I would like to thank all who have hosted meetings, volunteered their course, their skills, or their time over the last couple years as I am down to my last couple months as President. I believe the meetings may be much shorter once I slide into the Past Presidents position.

Stay healthy and have as good of a Thanksgiving as possible.

Stay healthy and safe, respectfully,

Mike Varkonyi
RIGCSA President

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Kevin's GCSAA Corner By Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Field Rep.



Have you ever been to Europe? I haven't had the pleasure yet but hope to someday. I'd enjoy the opportunity to play golf there, too. Stories from colleagues have informed me that it is a wonderful experience. On the maintenance side, discussions with two U.S.-based BIGGA certified Master Greenskeepers, an assistant superintendent

from Ontario who worked for a year in Holland, and a presentation done by Irish native John Dempsey, Ph.D., educated me on the challenges of maintaining golf courses without many — if any — pesticides. That's how they roll in Europe, and if Senator Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO) have their way, we will all have plenty of experience too!

You may have received an Action Alert from GCSAA regarding S. 4406 and H.R. 7940. These bills would undermine the science-based standards contained within our nation's pesticide laws in many ways. It would:

- Immediately ban several classes of pesticides including organophosphates and neonicotinoids
- Ban any product currently banned or otherwise prohibited by Canada, the European Union, or any one country in the European Union
- Eliminate pesticide preemption laws in every state by allowing local governments to restrict pesticide products, thereby creating a patchwork of differing regulations from town to town

This legislation is not likely to pass this Congress, but the bill is a clear blueprint of how anti-pesticide groups want to amend pesticide laws in 2021 to significantly restrict your access to these products.

These pressures are nothing new to superintendents in Maine, who have no state preemption protection, and now they aren't alone. In 2019, the town of Barnstable, Mass., without proposing an ordinance or gaining much input from the general public, banned the use of synthetic fertilizer and pesticides on city property, including the golf courses. As I write this, the City of Philadelphia is considering doing the same for their municipal properties, including multiple golf courses. Think about it: One town meeting or the two Federal bills noted above get enacted, and just like that, we are in Europe!

35-year GCSAA member Bruce McIntyre, Director of Golf, Town of Barnstable, was at the Town Council meeting in 2019 when upper management announced that the town will no longer be able

to utilize synthetic fertilizer or pesticides on municipal properties, including the two golf courses. Just like that, McIntyre's world changed. Two days removed from the meeting that changed management of "Old Barny" and Hyannis Golf Course, McIntyre and superintendent Chris White unexpectedly jumped on the road to see a presentation given by Frank Rossi, Ph.D. Rossi consults with the poster child for all organic golf course maintenance just off the coast of Cape Cod, The Vineyard Club, and was beset with questions by McIntyre and White. Eventually, he signed on as a consultant.

McIntyre spent hours developing a budget and plan to attempt the transition including overseeders to deal with turf loss, increase staff for manual weed removal, and upgrading spray equipment to attempt to handle the harsher product now required. What he couldn't plan for was the impact declining course conditions would have on dismal 2020 season pass renewals. The result meant budget cuts, staff cuts, and no additional equipment allocations for the 2020 season.

On top of COVID-19 related challenges and the resulting traffic from single-rider carts, McIntyre told me 2020 brought more of the same. The variety and outbreak of weeds like you see in a textbook and so many insects it required additional cleanup after mowing. When discussing the current status of golf in Barnstable, McIntyre speaks about the experience and education of the staff while lamenting over the inability to keep the conditions from deteriorating further.

"To come to work every day and watch your turf die is depressing."

McIntyre has graciously offered to share his experiences with anyone in need of guidance. His contact information was forwarded to those in the Philadelphia area to assist in their advocacy work. If bills S. 4406 and H.R. 7940 manage to pass through the Senate and House respectively, I think McIntyre's going to be extremely busy connecting with all of you! Want to keep these bills at bay and advocate for the golf industry? Take two minutes and fill out the GCSAA Action Alert located here: www.gcsaa.org/advocacy/take-action. While I look forward to enjoying the expe-

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rience of playing golf in Europe someday, I'd prefer that happen in Europe, not here!

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

Las Vegas update

The 2021 Golf Industry Show is going virtual.

Amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, GCSAA announced that the annual education conference and trade show will be presented in a virtual format instead of the previously planned in-person event in Las Vegas.



Take a tour and see the amazing interactive capabilities at : www.golfindustryshow.com/home

Registration is now open!!

Upcoming webinars

Nov. 11 @ noon

How True Are Your Putting Greens?

Doug Linde, Ph.D.

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

Kevin Doyle

GCSAA Field Staff

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September 14, 2020, Championship Golf Tournament with tee times - Wanumetonomy Golf & CC



Photos by Michelle Maltais

2020 Chapter Delegates Meeting Key Messages

- **The President's Message** was provided by John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS. Mr. Fulling recognized the challenges in governing during a year like 2020 with a global pandemic and he highlighted GCSAA's success in the face of the multitude of challenges that presented themselves. The association was able to be successful due to the dedicated board, volunteers and GCSAA members who worked tirelessly to ensure golf facilities stayed open.
- **Association Report** – CEO J. Rhett Evans briefed the delegates on the state of GCSAA and the strength of GCSAA members. He highlighted:
 - Disaster Relief Funding - Fires, Hurricanes, Flooding, and COVID-19 challenges spurred GCSAA members to help each other by raising over \$50,000 for Disaster Relief Funding.
 - GCSAA/EIFG financial overview for the association – GCSAA is currently in a strong financial position to continue to provide member programs and services with investment funds totaling \$10.4 million for the EIFG and \$8.2 million for GCSAA. And though revenues have been negatively impacted somewhat in 2020 from the pandemic, GCSAA is projecting to surpass its bottom line 2020 goals through prudent reductions in expenditures.
 - GCSAA membership numbers remain strong.
 - 2019 – 18,125
 - 2020 – 18,602
 - Collaboration with the FFA and growth of the First Green program will also bring more students into the industry.
- **State BMP Implementation Update** – The delegates received an update of GCSAA's goal to have all 50 states with BMPs in place by 2020. Mark Johnson, Associate Director, Environmental Programs thanked the chapters and volunteers who have worked diligently to achieve this goal. Mr. Johnson is confident the state goal will be reached. Facility Adoption of BMPs is beginning to gain momentum as well. As of the meeting date:
 - 40 states with BMP's in place and the remaining 10 are nearing completion.
 - 9 GCSAA Workshops
 - 4 Self-Initiated Workshops
- **Government Affairs** – Government Affairs Director Chava McKeel addressed the delegates regarding the Grassroots Ambassador goal of all 535 members of Congress matched with a GCSAA Grassroots Ambassador. GCSAA currently has 98 open spots. The delegates were encouraged to help find qualified individuals to fill these positions.
- **Rounds 4 Research** – Mischia Wright, Associate Director, EIFG shared the outcomes of the 2020 Rounds 4 Research Auction and shared plans for the 2021 auction.
 - Strong chapter support for this year's auction as evidenced in outcomes of surveys that were sent out. \$263,000 was raised.
 - 2021 Auction dates are April 26th – May 2nd
 - Goals are 1,500 rounds and \$367,500 raised
- **Chapter Outreach** – Steve Randall, Director of Chapter Outreach shared the work of field staff in supporting chapters during the pandemic. The use of virtual platforms and safety protocols allowed GCSAA to stay connected with chapters and members. Mr. Randall briefed the delegates on several tools that are available to keep chapters on track – Chapter Pulse and Strategic Playbook and the Chapter Assessment Survey.
- **Member Dues and CPI Increase** – Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, GCSAA Secretary/ Treasurer, and Cam Oury, Chief Financial Officer. GCSAA follows a dues increase process which was created in 2006 with input and approval from chapter delegates. The process is tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). CPI is a tool to keep track of inflation over a period of time. Increasing the dues based on CPI equates to smaller and more frequent increases in dues rather than infrequent, but larger increases, which have a negative impact on membership retention. This year's proposal is the following:
 - 3.3% increase in CPI since over the last two years
 - \$15 increase for A and B (new dues amount of \$415) and \$10 increase for C (new dues amount of \$215)
 - Approval rate for dues increases using this process has ranged from 87% - 96%The delegates offered their thoughts on the dues increase to the board during small group breakouts. The GCSAA Board of Directors will consider delegate feedback as they discuss the proposal. Delegates are encouraged to communicate the proposed dues increase with their membership and provide chapter feedback to GCSAA.
- **Certification Program** – Jeff White, CGCS, Vice Chair, Certification Committee briefed the delegates on efforts underway to modernize the program. The program will celebrate it's 50th anniversary in 2021.
- **Golf Industry Show Update** - Robert Randquist, CGCS, GCSAA COO and Ed Several, Ensemble IQ shared highlights of the platform for the 2021 GIS virtual event that will support an interactive experience. Attendees will have the ability to network with colleagues, check out products on the trade show

“floor” and will have access to over 80 hours of education during the three-day conference. The demo highlighted the following:

- Ease of access
 - Lobby area highlighting the schedule of education
 - Basic and All Access Packages built for every budget and the entire facility
 - Mixer events that will encourage networking
 - An interactive virtual trade show that will be staffed
- **Town Hall Session** – The GCSAA Board of Directors and delegates participated in a town hall session. The session facilitated by GCSAA President John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS included questions surrounding the dues increase proposal, virtual GIS, and a potential bylaws amendment that would provide the ability for the Board of Directors to remain in place during times of duress.
 - **Candidate Breakouts** – the delegates had the opportunity to meet and question the candidates running for the 2021 GCSAA Board of Directors. The candidates are:
 - For President – **Mark F. Jordan, CGCS**
 - For Vice President – **Kevin P. Breen, CGCS**

- For Secretary/Treasurer
 - **Kevin P. Sunderman, CGCS**
 - **Jeff L. White, CGCS**
- For Director (electing three)
 - **T.A. Barker, CGCS**
 - **Paul L. Carter, CGCS**
 - **Jon M. Christenson**
 - **Christopher A. Reverie**
 - **Marc E. Weston, CGCS**
- There are three open positions for director. The terms of Barker, Carter and White are expiring. All three director positions will be for two-year terms. If White is unsuccessful in his bid for Secretary/Treasurer, his name may be submitted as a candidate for a director position from the floor. Sunderman is in the middle of his two-year term as director. If he is unsuccessful in his bid for Secretary/Treasurer he will remain on the board as a director. If Sunderman is elected Secretary/Treasurer a one-year director position will be open and voted on by the delegates to fill the remaining year of the two year term.

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Chilling Injury Affects Turf Across Region

November 9, 2020

John Inguagiato, Ph.D. and Vickie Wallace, UConn

Michelle DaCosta, Ph.D. UMass

Turf managers and homeowners have been puzzled by the sudden appearance of unusual tan, blighted patches that showed up last week between Tuesday and Friday (Nov. 3 - 6). Reports have been widespread throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

The symptoms appear as round to irregular-shaped patches of light-tan blighted turf (Figure 1 & 5). Patches are often uniformly distributed across affected turf areas. Density of patches may vary from one every 2 feet to as little as a few inches, with some patches coalescing into larger, irregular shapes (Figure 5). Early onset of symptoms appeared silver-gray to dark purple before turning tan (Figure 2). Symptoms appear to be limited to the upper portion of the turf canopy (Figure 3). Foliage lower in the canopy, stems and crowns do not appear to be injured in most cases.

All cool-season turfgrasses have been reported to be affected. Injury seems to be most severe on exposed, well-fertilized, irrigated lawns and fields. Symptoms on turf maintained at lower mowing heights (e.g., putting greens, fairways, some athletic fields), and newly established areas appears to be less severe.

Chilling injury is rare in New England on cool-season turfgrasses. Many experienced New England turf managers have commented in the past few days that they have never seen anything like this. Symptoms similar to these are more common in the south, on warm-season bermudagrass when exposed to sudden cold weather. However, chilling injury has also been reported in the desert southwest on overseeded perennial ryegrass (Moon et al, 1990).

The recent injury to turfgrasses throughout the region is likely due to a unique combination of environmental conditions impacting the physiological activity of turfgrasses. Cold tolerance of cool-season turfgrasses generally develops during November and December over an acclimation period of slowly decreasing temperatures. This acclimation period prepares turf to tolerate cold winter temperatures. However, turf has been actively growing, green, and photosynthesizing in many areas throughout the region this fall, indicating it has not yet acclimated to cold temperatures.



Figure 1. Chilling injury appears as tan patches of blighted turf uniformly distributed across athletic field.



Figure 2. Silver-gray to purple foliage are initial symptoms of chilling injury (photo D. Wallace).



Figure 3. Injury only affected upper turf canopy (photo S. Bousquet)

A Perfect Storm

Throughout much of October daily low temperatures were rarely below 40°F. However, a sustained period of cold to freezing daily low temperatures occurred from Oct. 30 to Nov. 3. (Figure 4). These cold temperatures also coincided with a very dry air mass (dew points approximately 15 to 20°F), and moderate sustained winds with gusts over 30 mph on Monday and Tuesday (Nov. 2 & 3). Moreover, Nov. 2 & 3 were particularly sunny days with high light intensity (solar radiation ~675 to 750 W/m²).

- Sudden onset of cold temperatures
- Dry air and wind (excessive transpiration)
- High light intensity

Similar chilling conditions have been demonstrated to impair the photosynthetic machinery of perennial ryegrass (Moon et al, 1990). When normal photosynthetic processes are interrupted under high light, damaging free radicals can be produced that can destroy important membranes within cells. Ultimately, the integrity of the cells is affected, foliage becomes desiccated, and blight symptoms occur.

Unique Patterns

The unique patterns associated with the chilling injury are more difficult to explain. It is not entirely clear why areas of the same turf are differentially affected. It is likely due in part, to how turbulent air moves across the surface, affecting where cold pockets of air settle to injure turf.

Recovery Outlook

Fortunately, in most cases the symptoms associated with this chilling injury appear to be superficial. Only the upper canopy has generally been affected. Crowns remain healthy, and therefore blighted foliage will grow out. It is possible that with continued warm weather, actively growing turf may fully recover this fall. However, in many cases it is more likely that symptoms will persist through the winter until spring when growth resumes, and blighted tissue is mowed off.

Fertilizing to encourage growth and recovery of the symptoms this fall is not recommended. Since a late fall fertilization can promote succulent turf growth, delaying acclimation and increasing potential for snow mold and other forms of winter injury.

References:

Moon, J.W., Jr. et al, 1990. Limitations of photosynthesis in *Lolium perenne* after chilling. J. Amer. Soc. Hort. Sci. 115:478-481.

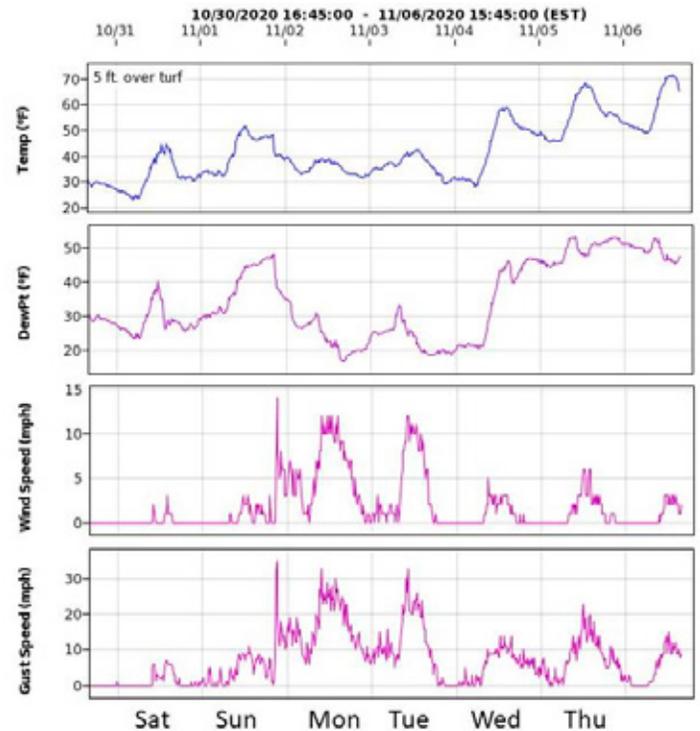


Figure 4. Weather observations prior to and following the development of chilling injury symptoms. Data collected from Storrs, CT.

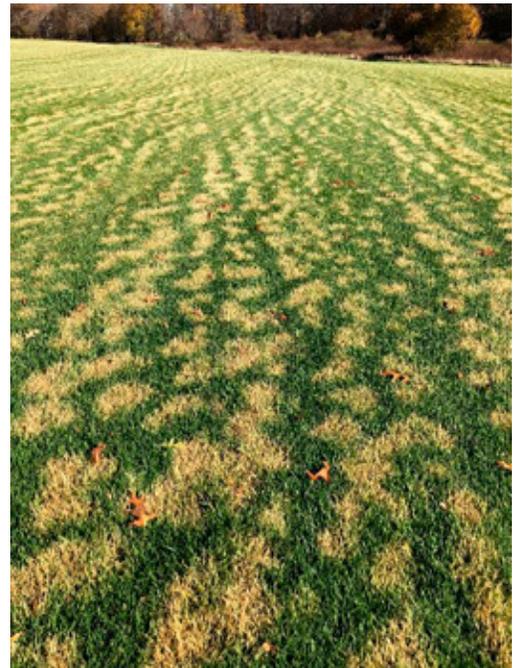


Figure 5. Patches of blighted turf coalescing into larger irregular shapes on a sod farm in RI.

RIGCSA Member News

Our condolences are extended to **Dave Mihailides** and family on the passing of Dave's mother, **Bess Mihailides**, on September 24, 2020.

Our condolences go out to the Golderesi family on the passing of **David Golderesi** on October 8, 2020. David was a recent member of the RIGCSA. He was the Equipment Manager at Potowomut Golf Club.

Our condolences are extended to **Mike Whitehead** and family on the passing of Mike's mother, **Lucy Whitehead**, on October 11, 2020.

Our condolences are extended to **Al LaPrise** on the passing of his wife, **Jane LaPrise**, on November 5, 2020.

Congratulations to **Michael Iacono**, CGCS on his recent retirement from Pine Brook Country Club in Weston, Massachusetts.

Wishing a speedy recovery to **Jim Santoro** on his recent knee surgery.

RIGCSA Scholarship applications are due by December 1, 2020. For more information, please visit <https://www.rigcsa.org/Scholarships>

If your club or company has received an award or distinction, please send a brief description to **Julie Heston** jheston@verizon.net or **Michelle Maltais** nonquitt687@cox.net and will list in the Member News section of the Surf 'n' Turf newsletter.

The Rhode Island GCSA is now offering an Equipment Manager membership for \$75 for the year. (\$112.50 to join which includes a one-time application fee)

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RIGCSA Member News

Tournament Results

September 14, 2020

**Individual Championship Tournament
Wanumetonomy Golf & Country
Club Host: Shaun Marcellus**

Superintendent Division:

1st net & Superintendent Champion:
Joe Oliveira
2nd Net: Mike Varkonyi
3rd Net: Richard Lombardi
4th Net: Frank Vollaro

1st Gross: Shaun Marcellus
2nd Gross: Mike Whitehead

Affiliate Division:

1st net & Affiliate Champion:
Pete Jacobson
2nd Net: Mike Cornicelli
3rd Net: Drew Cummins
4th Net: Greg Misodoulakis

1st Gross: Jason Dowgiewicz
2nd Gross: Dan St. Laurent

Skill Prizes

Harris Schnare won the long drive on 11th hole. Pete Jacobson won the closest to the pin on 5th hole at 1 foot 1 inch.

Thank you to the September Meeting sponsors!



October 26, 2020

**Newport Country Club
Host: Chris Coen
Superintendent/Assistant Tournament
with Other Division**

Superintendent/Assistant Division:

1st Gross:
Jeffrey Tibbetts & Matthew Levesque
1st Net: Matt Emond & Tom Hemingway

2nd Net: Bill Sansone & Ryan Babcock

Other Division:

1st Gross: John Bresnahan & Andy Drohen
1st Net: Matt Jankowski & Peter Lund
2nd Net: Scott Gabrielson & Pat Hogan

Closest-To-Pin:

#8 - Dave Antunes
#13 - Matt Levesque



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