

TEE TO GREEN

June 2012



The Official Publication of the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association

Summer Starts in Galveston!

There is no better way to start the summer than at the beach! Our June 11th meeting at Galveston Country Club is a great way to combine your monthly meeting with a little family fun time! You and your family can come down and enjoy the sea and sand the day before the STGCSA meeting which is on June 11th.

This is the first weekend of summer, so book your rooms early if you're planning on spending the weekend. [Click here for a great range of hotels in the Galveston area.](#) The meeting is scheduled a little different than normal in order to allow everyone extra time to get off the island in the afternoon.

Registration will begin at 7:30 am and golf will start at 9:30 am. Jeff Smelser has set up for Galveston Country Club to sell breakfast tacos and Bloody Mary's outside the pro shop in the morning from 8:00 to 9:30. Following golf, our host has arranged for a wonderful lunch buffet. Those of you that will be coming for the meeting and lunch only, plan to arrive by 1:00 pm. The cost for lunch will be \$20.

The speaker for the meeting will be Chris Brown, CFP. He will be speaking about: "529 plans for College Funding. Is it the right solution for your situation?" This topic is relevant to those with young children as well as those with older children nearing college age. He will also address alternative funding methods, estimated college expenses and will touch on the estate planning benefits available through 529 plans.

Meeting Schedule

June 11-Galveston CC

[Google Map to Galveston CC](#)

July 16-Redstone GC

Supt/Pro Tournament

[Google Map to Redstone GC](#)

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF NEW DATE AND LOCATION!

October 15—Brae Burn Country Club

Annual Meeting

[Map to Brae Burn CC](#)

December Awards Banquet-TBA

[Register Now for Any Meeting!](#)

President's Message By: Mark Haven



Congratulations to Doug Browne, Kent Knowles, Jerry Takushi, and Cody Skarpa, our champions for 2012. The course was fantastic and really showed us who has control of their game right now. A big thanks to Johnny Walker and his crew for making us feel welcome. Please send me your feedback on the schedule. Did you like having the golf first? Would you like to see that more often, never again, only for this event, etc.?

Our next event is at Galveston Country Club. Jeff Smelser has us set up for a similar schedule with a little later start. I haven't seen the course in some time so I'm sure it will be a treat. Our association covers a rather large area, from Lake Jackson to Bryan, from Sealy to the Louisiana border, even into the deep woods of east Texas, so I think it's nice to occasionally be the travelers and visit the courses that aren't the most convenient. Jeff has made the trip up to see us quite frequently the last couple of years. Let's make a good show in Galveston. Get your RSVP in early and make Marian's job a little easier as well.

We will be taking the association through a strategic planning exercise on August 21 at Falcon Point golf club in Katy. All members are welcome to attend. This will be a 6 to 8 hour planning session that will go a long way to setting the direction for our association over the next 10 years. Brian Cloud our field representative with GCSAA will be taking us through the process. This is a fine example of your membership dues at work. It doesn't mean we are changing anything but it will give you the opportunity to voice your opinion.

As the summer starts there are several items coming your way for your consideration. Your opportunity to let us know if you are interested in hosting a meeting next year, if you want to serve on the board or on a committee, if you need a scholarship for you or your child, and/or if you want to nominate a fellow superintendent for Superintendent of the Year is just around the corner.

As always, I want to say thank you to those who have offered assistance and guidance. Don't hesitate to let me know how we can better serve you. mhaven@rec.tamu.edu. Twitter— @bcsgreenkeeper cell 979-224-0184

Golfdom Insider

April 26, 2012: Court issues injunction blocking changes to H-2B

District Court Judge M.C. Rodgers on Thursday night issued a preliminary injunction blocking the implementation of the H-2B program rule, ensuring the golf industry will be able to rely on its H-2B workers for the foreseeable future. The program rule, which would require employers to hire any qualified U.S. worker up to 21 days before an H-2B worker is scheduled to begin, was to have been implemented by the Department of Labor nationwide on April 27. The judge's Thursday ruling also should impact the DOL's plans to implement the H-2B wage rule, which is currently blocked by Congress from taking effect until September 30, 2012.

"GCSAA was not directly involved as plaintiffs, but we supported it," said the GCSAA's Chava McKeel. "We've been working for many years to protect this program — it's an important program for golf courses across the country." She added, "We directly lobbied on this issue as a part of National Golf Day (in Washington, D.C.). We were able to talk to the House Small Business Committee. We shared our concerns about the preservation of this program."

The judge's ruling gives the golf industry a welcome reprieve. That's because, under the program rule, employers would have to hire Americans even if the employer already has offered a job to an H-2B worker, assisted with that worker's visa process and paid for the worker's transportation, housing and other fees. The program rule also would involve labor unions in the hiring process.

The Department of Labor almost certainly will appeal the judge's ruling, but it could be until November that a final decision is made. Meanwhile, golf courses can continue to operate as they have been.

"We believe that an available, legal and trained workforce is vital to the success of the golf industry," McKeel said. "This program is vital to have a legal way to obtain seasonal workers when American workers are not available. The emphasis is on the word 'legal'. It allows superintendents to get workers when there is a labor shortage."

Links in Tee To Green may only be available for 30 days



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Treat the Pest and Not the Symptom by Bart Fox



Most of you have heard me preach the title of this article for some time now. Whether it is disease control, weed germination or insect damage, many of these issues have seasonal climatic timing. How hard it is to overcome Bermudagrass Decline (*Gramanomyces granomis granomis*) once the symptoms show up in the heat of summer or how hard is it to get rid of those fairy rings once they appear in late spring / early summer. It is much easier to control these pests in the spring before the diseases explode underground.

Killing weeds are no different. I use the analogy of trying to remove an oak tree. It's much simpler to pull up a young sapling with the acorn still attached than to use a chainsaw and stump grinder to get rid of a large tree. It takes more money, effort and time to control mature weeds. Using pre emergent herbicides are very effective because they are controlling the weeds at the youngest, most vulnerable stage in the plants life cycle. With the spring conditions we experienced this year, did you move up your pre emergent application or stared at the calendar waiting for the date that was circled to appear?

We are very fortunate that there are not many bugs that like to eat or inhabit Bermudagrass in our part of the world. Cutworms, Armyworms, Red Imported Fire ants, molecrickets, white grubs / billbugs and occasionally when it gets hot with drought-like conditions we could see Bermuda mite damage. Yeah I know about nematodes but they are not an insect. Nematodes are an entirely separate beast in their own right.

I am amazed by the number of phone calls I get in October by superintendents in regards to damage from skunks, armadillos and hogs. The damage is the symptom but the pest has been around for months. The reason for my article during this issue is to remind everyone to treat for grubs now if you had problems in the past. We are fortunate that there are many good choices of control products to choose. In our part of the world, most beetle species have mated and laid eggs by mid to late May. Most of these grub insecticides perform best from egg hatch to second instars.....which is now. I can tell you that very few products work well or at all when these pest reach third instars, does chainsaw and stump grinder ring a bell?

In a normal year, the threshold for white grubs maybe around 12 per square foot but in a drought year it could take only 6 per square foot to reduce turf quality. On a side note, I mentioned white grubs and billbugs together. The adult insect looks nothing like each other but the larvae stages of these two pests look very similar at first glance. The billbug will look like a small "C shaped" first instars grub but there is one key difference; it will not have any legs.

I will close with one of my favorite saying "I can get algae to stymp 15, but it's hard to look at". Here is to a great summer.

Bart Fox



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Jobs are posted for free! Email the office with your job description and it will be posted on our website immediately!

Welcome New Members:

Julie Pospesch of FMC Professional Solutions

Doug Wright, Asst. Supt. at Houston Oaks CC

Scott Miller, District Sales Manager for the Central USA—Rain Bird Corporation

Bryan Jackson, GM/Pro/Superintendent at Belle Oaks GC in Beaumont

Members on the Move: Keith Watson is now at Turf Material

Cody Newman is now the Superintendent at Wedgewood GC

Cody Skarpa is now the Assistant Supt. at Blackhorse GC



Jeff Smelser, CGCS
 Superintendent
 Galveston Country Club
 Host of the June 11, 2012
 Monthly Meeting



Jeff Smelser was born and raised in Hoopeston, Illinois a population of approximately 5,000 people. It is located about 30 miles north-east of Champaign/Urbana and 100 miles south of Chicago. It is a small farming community known as the "Sweet Corn Capital of the World". Because of this "status", the Hoopeston Area school mascot is known as the "Cornjerker". Check out Wikipedia and read the story behind the name.

Jeff began his career as a cart boy and night waterman at Hubbard Trail CC. He attended Danville Area Community College and played on the golf team while taking golf course management courses. Jeff also attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and worked at Champaign CC, Urbana CC, Golf Club of Illinois and Jackson CC before heading to Texas.

In 1989, he became the assistant at Northshore CC in Portland Texas and was promoted to superintendent in 1991. In 1994, he moved to Playa del Carmen, Mexico and grew in Playacar Club de Golf. He was then transferred to Palm City, Florida to renovate Cutter Sound Golf & Yacht Club. In 1997, he moved back to Northshore CC and served as Director of Golf. During his time at Northshore he served on TTA and the Lone Star Board as well as having served at every position on the TGCSA board. Jeff moved to Galveston CC in June of 2007

Jeff has been married for 20 years to his wife Kellie and they have a daughter (Karlie) that will be a freshman next year at Clear Falls High School. In his time away from work, he loves playing golf and watching his daughter play soccer, volleyball, and basketball.



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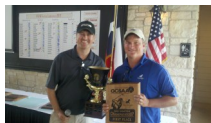
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Blackhorse Chapter Championship Golf Results

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2nd Place-Brian Buckner	2nd Place-Blayne Sparks	2nd Place-Bobby Holt	2nd Place-Scott Sipes
3rd Place-Paul Tessman	3rd Place-Tracy Samuelson	3rd Place-Johnny Walker	3rd Place-Vince Gallegos

Contest Holes

CTP #4—Tracy Samuelson	CTP #13—Clark Webb
CTP #17—Brian Buckner	LD #9—Paul Tessman
CTP #6—Johnny Walker	LD #11—Scott Sipes

2012 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE NOW ON THE WEBSITE!



Deadline for new scholarship applications is September 1, 2012

The Scholarship Committee made a few minor changes this year.

It was decided that 80% of the proceeds from the Scholarship Tournament will be given out in scholarships. The remainder will go back in to the fund in hopes of making the fund a perpetuating account that will fund scholarships far in to the future. There will be one \$2000.00 Legacy Scholarship Winner (as usual) and the remaining funds will be divided by qualifying applicants based on merit with the maximum amount being \$1000.00 and the minimum award being \$200.00.

Selection methods may include (but will not be limited to) personal interviews, transcripts, essays, overall quality of application/neatness as well as member participation. Scholarship awards will be determined by an independent committee.

All applicants must submit an official sealed transcript proving that they have a minimum 2.0 GPA either through high school or at an institute of higher learning. (Note: Official transcripts from a University may take up to 6 weeks to arrive.) Your transcript can be sent directly to the STGCSA office and must arrive at the office by October 1, 2013. Any transcripts arriving after that date will not be accepted. No copies or faxed transcripts will be allowed

The Board of Directors must receive applications on or before the deadline set and published for that year. Any applications received after the deadline will not be considered as valid applications. There will be no exceptions to this rule

Congratulations to The Texas Cup Winners! Champion goes to one of our Own!!!

See all the winners in the upcoming Lone Star Links

1st Gross and Texas Cup Champions:

Doug Browne, and Bob Browne—64



1st Net: **Chris Webster, Sean Wilson**—62



A Big Announcement!

STGCSA Member and Superintendent of the Year 2009 will be running for a GCSAA Board Position in 2013. Walker has served on on the Lone Star GCSA Board for over 8 years and is currently the Vice President. He also served on five GCSAA national committees.

Congratulations, Johnny Walker



Central Texas GCSA (Danielle Shimkus)—512.297.7619 www.ctgcsa.org

Lone Star GCSA (Karen White)-972.307.8162 www.lsgcsa.org

North Texas GCSA (Lori Goodrich)— 817.377.4552 www.ntgcsa.org

Texas Gulf Coast SA (Darlene Curlee)-877.448.9944 www.tgcsa.org

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CONTAMINATION OR MUTATION-PART 1

By Bud White, Director, USGA Mid-Continent Region

The development of off-type patches of grass in bermudagrass putting greens has been a problem since the existence of hybrid bermudagrass for putting greens. This goes back to the 1950's when Tifgreen (328) was first developed by Dr. Glenn Burton for putting surfaces. Tifdwarf was later discovered in the early 1960's as a patch of darker green, finer textured turf in a putting green at Florence Country Club, Florence, SC. Monty Moncrief, former USGA SE Director, identified this as a superior grass and took a plug to Dr. Burton at Tifton. This patch of grass was grown out and later became Tifdwarf bermudagrass.

Some areas of off-type grasses, such as the example above, actually develop through a natural mutation selection and can be superior to the base grass. The market currently is fortunate to have Champion and Mini Verde from the same mutation phenomena. However, most mutations are not of good quality and have poor characteristics. The picture below shows a typical Tifdwarf bermudagrass green which is several years old and has the inconsistent "patch quilt" look. These off-type grasses have a tendency to scalp worse than the base Tifdwarf in addition to dropping their leaves and becoming very 'stemy' after verticutting. Thus a quality putting surface has become impossible to maintain and the aesthetics are quite poor. This type green is definitely a candidate for resurfacing.

The superintendent must first determine whether the problem is mutation or contamination from invasion of other grasses, as there is a difference. This also determines the plan of action. Many contamination problems have been accused of being mutation to mitigate a possibly poor effort to rogue greens and keep their purity intact. Contaminated planting stock can also be blamed as mutation. If a green looks similar to the above photo but is only one to three years old, this is not mutation. Contamination comes from either introduction of off-type grasses from adjacent areas, which includes collar encroachment, or the planting of an impure sprig stock onto the greens initially. This is why purchasing certified sprigs of a particular variety is so critical.

When surfaces become so inconsistent due to contamination or mutation, the club will need to decide what action to take based on its intentions, be it resurfacing, repairing, or managing the current surface due to lack of funds for repair or resurfacing.

In part 2 we will discuss further how to decide whether a poor putting green is contaminated or mutated and the options for improvement. (Continued on page 12)



Heavily mutated TifDwarf green 16 years old

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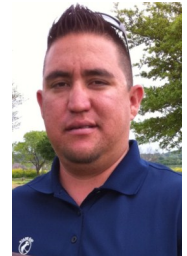
Get to know your fellow Members.....

Les Hill and Mike Perez of VM Golf Services



Les Hill was born and raised in Texas. Les graduated from Texas Tech University with a B.S. in horticulture/agronomy. Upon graduation, Les began an irrigation/landscape company and operated it for a number of years before entering the golf business. In 1972, Les obtained his Texas Irrigator's license, #285, which he still maintains today. Les installed his first golf course irrigation system in 1974, and designed his first golf course irrigation system in 1979. After successfully operating the irrigation/landscape business for over 12 years, Les decided to concentrate on his irrigation consultant business. Les functioned as an irrigation consultant for two years but ultimately decided that it was a little too sedate and went in to the golf construction business in 1983. Les operated Southern Golf Construction for 18 years before deciding to retire in 2002. During his career, Les designed over 30 golf course irrigation systems, installed almost an equal number of golf course irrigation systems, and built or remodeled over 47 golf courses. During this time, he worked with numerous golf course architects including Jack Nicklaus, Johnny Miller and Gene Bates. He completed several high profile remodels such as TPC of Connecticut, Arrowhead GC in Colorado and Mayacoo Lakes CC in Florida. By 2009, Les had decided that retirement was not for him, and in 2010, Les met Mike Perez and they became partners in VM Golf Services Inc.

Mike Perez was born in El Paso, TX. Mike's father was in the golf course construction business, so Mike was literally raised on golf courses. Upon graduation from high school, Mike decided to stay in the golf business, applied for and received a job as an equipment operator with SEMA Golf. During that time, Mike moved up from equipment operator to supervisor, and worked on projects in Texas, Nevada, Montana and California. Mike left SEMA Golf to work with Total Golf Construction where he was put in charge of numerous projects, including golf course projects in Nigeria, Florida and Louisiana. In 2009, Mike decided to leave Total Golf and start his own company, VM Golf Services. In 2010, Les Hill joined Mike and VM became VM Golf Services Inc.



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[Click here for a full list of training workshops](#)



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~ Bobby Jones



Spring 2012

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CONTAMINATION OR MUTATION—PART 2

By Bud White, Director, USGA Mid-Continent Region



In Part 1, we identified the problem of contamination or mutation, the differences between the two, and the actual source of the problem. Now let's consider the options for correcting this problem and how to prevent the contamination into the future.

Hybrid bermudagrass greens can stay pure for many years, but a routine and regular rouging operation must be carried out once per week during the growing season. This is a two-step process by (1) hand removal of any off-type spot of bermudagrass spotted in the putting surface, and (2) an aggressive and continuous edging program to reduce the tendency for encroachment of the collar turf into the putting surface.

What are the options to reduce the chance of mutations? This is beyond the control of the superintendent and has not been scientifically identified to be dependent on management practices. However, there are some theories that harsher growing environments, poor water quality, or excessive use of growth regulators or conditioning extremes may be contributing factors. On a positive note, the ultradwarf bermudagrasses have shown very good physiological stability over the years in the field, and have remained uniform when greens were planted from a pure source. Oftentimes mutation is blamed for inconsistency in the greens when instead the greens are contaminated. Mutation does not happen in one to three years after planting. But if an inconsistency has developed within this time frame, this is likely contamination from an impure sprig source or if greens were not fumigated and some of the existing material remained. This is one of the major concerns about the no-till method of resurfacing.

As mentioned in Part 1 (page 8), the course's decision to take action to deal with inconsistency and contamination is determined by available funds. The most permanent solution is to fumigate the putting greens prior to resurfacing to eliminate all the existing material. If resurfacing is the chosen route, then collars should also be fumigated and replaced so maximum uniformity is reestablished on the putting complex. Now, the collars become a pure turf source which helps minimize encroachment issues over the years. This approach has many other assets such as the opportunity to lower collar buildup problems and reestablish positive surface drainage off the putting surface.

If repair is the chosen approach, then the best solution is to establish a quality putting green nursery onsite and let that be the source of the sod and plug repairs. A nursery grown and maintained onsite exactly like the other putting surfaces is the sod that will most rapidly conform to existing turf around it and blend in as quickly as possible. It is already at the management style and cutting height of the existing greens, so its "shock" time is minimized versus sod purchased from a sod grower and installed into the putting greens. Spraying areas to be removed with glyphosate/fusilade prior to patching is the most common practice. This nonselective spray needs to be applied 10-14 days before patching to give time for translocation to growing points.

If the course decides to manage the current situation due to an inability to resurface or complete an extensive repair, the first rule of thumb will usually be to slightly raise the cutting height to a level that all the 'off-types' of turf can tolerate. Verticutting typically has to be done on a lighter basis and therefore grooming is accomplished more with groomers, brushes, and light topdressing than with more aggressive vertical mowing. This, of course, leads to a tendency for greater thatch accumulation over time, and additional small tine core aerations will have to be incorporated into the management program to keep thatch accumulations minimal.

Hopefully this two-part series has given a brief background on the differences between contamination and mutation, and some of the options available for correction as well as options available for management. If in the future, you have other questions about this issue, or if I can be of any other help in this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me. budwhite@usga.org or 972/662-1138.

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Do You Know This Assistant?

Tim got his start in the golf industry in his hometown of Jasper, Alabama. He was a crew member at Musgrove Country Club and Capstone Club for a total of three years before moving on to college at Mississippi State University. While at MSU, he completed an internship at Greystone Country Club in Birmingham, Alabama and The Yellowstone Club in Big Sky, Montana. After graduation he went to work for Greystone Country Club as an assistant superintendent for one and a half years. He moved to Houston in September of 2008 to be the assistant at the Tournament Course at Redstone Golf Club. While at Redstone Golf Club he oversaw three Shell Houston Open events. In his limited spare time he enjoys golfing, fishing, home brewing, and spending time with his wife Robin.



Tim Phillips—Assistant Superintendent, Sugar Creek Country Club



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—Scott Pickering
Course Superintendent
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COURSE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

The USGA Green Section's Construction Education Program is provided as a service to everyone concerned with the proper construction and renovation of golf courses. The program's main goal is to provide high quality, agronomically sound construction information in a variety of formats including written, video, internet, and multi-media. Education seminars are also offered to industry groups. The information is helpful to golf course architects, builders, superintendents, owners and players in their efforts to build and maintain golf courses. New types of construction information and projects (case studies) will be added frequently. Any suggestions as to what type of construction information you might like to see added are welcomed.

[Case Studies](#) [Physical Soil Testing Laboratories](#) [Course Construction Articles](#)



Publicize Summer Jobs Online

GCSAA members are encouraged to work with their peers at golf facilities to help publicize summer employment opportunities for youth. The Department of Labor has created the Summer Jobs+ program to help businesses communicate available jobs for youth through a variety of online databases. GCSAA was recognized earlier this year by the DOL as a 2011 Summer Jobs Champion for the contributions the industry makes to youth employment opportunities

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