

TEE TO GREEN

March 2013

The Official Publication of the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association

Meeting Schedule



PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THE NEW DATES BELOW

March 18, 2013

Walden on Lake Houston
Registration begins at 9 am
Must arrive by 10:15 to golf

[Map to Walden on Lake Houston](#)

Shell Houston Open
March 25—31, 2013
Redstone Golf Club
Volunteers Needed!

Contact George Manuel: 832.435.1645

April 16 2013—Scholarship
Tournament and Live Auction
High Meadow Ranch Golf Club

[Map to High Meadow Ranch GC](#)

May 13, 2013—Bay Oaks Country Club

Chapter Championship
[Map to Bay Oaks CC](#)

June 18, 2013—Supt/Pro, Member/
Member Tournament

Miramont Country Club
[Map to Miramont CC](#)

July 28, 2013—Redstone GC

[Register Now for Any Meeting!](#)

March Meeting to be held at Walden on Lake Houston.....

*The date of the scholarship tournament has been changed. Please make a note of the new dates to the right.

*Volunteers needed for the Shell Houston Open.

Contact George Manuel at 832.435.1645.

* Fill out the [donation form](#) for our scholarship tournament live auction (equipment, products, trips etc). Let's beat last years' collections and have an all time new high record!

* We will be collecting rounds of golf for the auction this year but we will also be collecting golf rounds for the Rounds for Research Program. The Board feels that more money can be raised through the Rounds For Research Program than through the silent auction at our scholarship tournament, so if you can only donate one round, put it towards the R4R Program. We get to determine how the funds raised at R4R are used (within certain parameters). Money generated can be used for research, education, and scholarships. We receive 80% of the purchase price for rounds sold. It is likely that they will sell for more with R4R but not guaranteed. We get to decide what research we fund and where it is conducted. We can also use the funds to pay for expenses related to meeting education such as the speaker's fee and travel costs. Scholarships from those funds must be industry related. These funds don't go into our regular legacy scholarship fund.



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- Asst. Supt. Derrick Hashimoto-Redstone GC
- Curtis Bruton-Golf Sales Ewing Irrigation
- David Johnson-Sales, Rinehart Trucking
- Asst. Supt. Scott Woodard-Tour 18
- Asst. Supt. Scott Gilley, Woodlands Palmer Course
- Asst. Supt. Hagan Patterson, Canongate at Magnolia Creek
- Welcome Back, Supt. Larry Boyle, Bayou GC
- Danny Arena, Supt., Westwood Shores CC
- Walt Wilson, Asst. Supt., Sugar Creek CC
- Asst. Supt. Will McCullough, Willow Fork CC

[Click here for all job postings](#)



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President's Message
 By: Sean Wilson, CGCS

We've had a great start to 2013! Thank you to all who came to our January meeting at Stephen F Austin. The Browne's always do a great job for us and it showed, as we had over a 100 people in attendance. We also had a very big turnout for the Lone Star GCSA reception at the GIS San Diego. Going to the GIS and the GCSAA Championship is always my favorite part of the year. Everything from the education, to networking, visiting with vendors and seeing what's new in the industry, makes it a valuable part of my year. I encourage everyone to make this an important part of their year; you'll come back with a renewed focus and spirit about our industry.

A total of 4,560 seminar seats were sold, while thousands more attended complimentary forums, sessions and panel discussions during the week. Subject matter included agronomics, business, environmental management, communications, leadership, technology, and personnel management. The GCSAA Education Conference, held in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show, is the largest educational conference in the turfgrass management industry. Covering all ranges of golf course management, including agronomics, environmental management, communication and business management information, the conference included more than 100 seminars, as well as numerous education sessions.

As you know, our own Johnny Walker was a candidate for GCSAA Director. Despite a spirited campaign, his bid to become a Director in his first year running came up a little short. I know Johnny worked extremely hard all year and he has already begun preparing for next year. We should all be proud of how well he represented everyone in Lone Star GCSA and STGCSA.

As tweeted by GCM Magazine:

No wardrobe malfunction, just a little team spirit from the South Texas GCSA folks in the GCSAA Championships.

Hope to see everyone March 18th at Walden on Lake Houston!

M. Sean Wilson, CGCS




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Shell Houston Open

The Shell Houston Open is the PGA TOUR's 10th oldest tournament and is conducted by the Houston Golf Association. HGA has been bringing big time golf to the Greater Houston Area since 1946.

Monday (March 25) - Monday Pro-Am

Tuesday (March 26) - Practice Day

Wednesday (March 27) - Grand Pro-Am Day

Thursday (March 28) - First Round

Friday (March 29) - Second Round

Approximate tee times off No.1 and No.10 tees of the Redstone Tournament Course from 7-8:50 AM and 11:30 AM-1:20 PM. Following completion of 36 holes, field will be trimmed to the low 70 scores and ties for the final rounds. The Golf Channel Network coverage (3-5 PM). On-site parking now requires proper credentials. General Parking available at the ecopark lot at Bush Airport where air-conditioned shuttle buses provide roundtrips for \$5 per person. Hours of operation for Will Call locations at the main tournament gate (7 AM-6 PM) and the satellite location (7:30 AM-5:30 PM) at the corner of Mesa and Fall Creek Bend.

Saturday (March 30) - Third Round

Approximate tee times from 8:30 AM-12:45 PM off No.1 tee only of the Redstone Tournament Course. The Golf Channel coverage (noon-2 PM), NBC Sports coverage (2-5 PM).

Sunday (March 31) - Championship Round

Approximate tee times from 8:30 AM-12:45 PM off No.1 tee only of the Redstone Tournament Course. The Golf Channel coverage (noon-2 PM), NBC Sports coverage (2-5 PM). Championship Presentation Ceremony on the 18th green immediately following the determination of a Champion at approximately 5 PM.

- South Texas Members who would like to volunteer at the Shell Houston Open, contact George Manuel (golfcoursesupt@gmail.com).



Hole Placement: It's all about location, location, location

Presented by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Ever get the feeling that the golf course superintendent is out to get golfers by tucking the hole behind a bunker or hazard on every green?

Superintendents have heard it all before. A golfer walks off a green and mutters, "What kind of idiot would put a pin there?"

Rest assured, there is a method to the madness for placing hole locations. As a rule, superintendents will set up the course using a hole rotation with six placements in the front third of the green, six in the center, and six in the back with nine holes cut on the left side of the green and nine on the right.

There are some deviations from this straightforward method. One involves dividing the putting surface into several sections or quadrants, but there is always a balance between locations in the front, center and back. That way, the overall length of the golf course does not change from day to day.

It's customary to relocate the hole to a new position on the green each day, especially during a multi-day tournament. By cutting the hole in different locations, the challenges posed to the golfers vary. Perhaps one hole location emphasizes a dangerous bunker located adjacent to the green. Maybe a different hole location emphasizes the slope or crown of the green. Yet another location toward the very front of the green may discourage the use of the bump-and-run shot. By varying the hole locations, a course can be made to test the versatility of all competitors, forcing them to demonstrate proficiency in several aspects of the game.

But as the golf season progresses and the weather changes, green speeds increase and weekly rounds double. This can make it very difficult to find a fair hole location where the turf is not worn. Since slowing down green speeds would entail altering Mother Nature, this is usually not an option. Superintendents have to come up with other ways to simplify the selection of hole locations.

Superintendents will study the design of the hole as the architect intended it to be played. They take into account the length of the shot to the green and how it may be affected by the probable conditions for the day -- that is, wind and other weather elements, condition of the turfgrass from which the shot will be played and the holding quality of the green.

A proper hole location has enough putting surface between the hole and the front and sides of the green to accommodate the required shot. For example, if the hole requires a long iron or fairway wood to the green, the hole should be located deeper in the green and farther from its sides than if the hole requires a short pitch shot. The hole should also be cut as nearly vertical as possible, not perpendicular to the contour of the green.

Because it takes three weeks for a cup to repair itself, the superintendent's rule of thumb is for every green to have approximately 21 hole locations - spots that are roughly flat for a yard in diameter.

Technology may also provide an answer to tougher hole locations. The return of hand-mowing has allowed bunkers and other hazards to be moved closer to the edge of the greens. In the 1970s and '80s, the triplex riding mowers that were commonly used needed more room to turn around. So a flagstick set at the edge of the green may in fact be closer to trouble than in years past. And though it's customary for a hole location to be at least three to five paces from the edge of the green, there are no official USGA rules prohibiting something even closer and more challenging.

Still, many superintendents will go to great lengths to give golfers a little extra information that can improve their scores and make their round more enjoyable. Hole location sheets, fairway flags and GPS laser-guided yardages are all ways superintendents provide information about hole locations on a daily basis.

For more information regarding golf course maintenance and etiquette, contact your local superintendent or the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America at 800-472-7878 or www.gcsaa.org.

Auction Items Needed!!!

[Click for donation form](#)

Any and all items are welcome!

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- ◆ Golf Packages
- ◆ Food and Cookouts
- ◆ Discounts/Gift Cards
- ◆ Rounds of Golf for Rounds 4

Thank you to those who have gotten in their donation early:

Bart Fox-Syngenta (4 items!), Jim Norris-John Deere Landscapes, Stan Ludwick-Cash Donation, Keith Watson-Turf Materials Golf Rounds Donated for Live Auction or Rounds4Research (or BOTH!!): Brae Burn CC, Sterling CC, Riverbend CC, Galveston CC, The Club at Carlton Woods,

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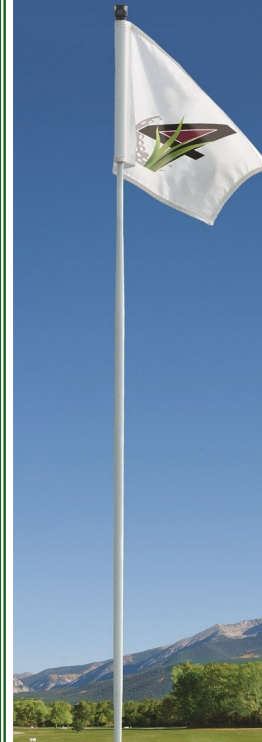
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Auction dates:

June 6-16, 2013
August 1-11, 2013

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Walden on Lake Houston

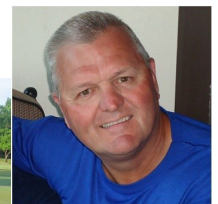
March 18, 2013 – 9 am registration

Host: Bob Cook

Walden on Lake Houston was built in 1984 and is a Von Hagge / Delvin design. It is an 18 hole private course, 6781 yards par 72, Century golf management facility.

I am Bob Cook, superintendent since October 2009 at Walden on Lake Houston. Golf Course superintendent since 1976 in Texas, California, Georgia and Florida, all private facilities from 18 to 63 holes. There is nothing I would rather do. Married to Debbie Sue for 38 years with two beautiful daughters Ashlee and Jilian. My girls live in Salt Lake City, Utah and Tallahassee, Florida. The best part of this business is "producing an environment for others to enjoy" (can't be the money!), and maybe even more important, the friends made at each stop that have enriched my life and those around me. I say Thanks to all of you for so many years of friendship.

Bob Cook will be speaking at the March meeting about People in our industry getting involved in what we do. With all the environmental concerns, political stands and golf's stability we need to be prepared to stand up. The talk involves the how's, why's and way's to make this happen.



Lessons Learned With Ultradwarf Bermudagrasses in Florida

Observations from a decade of successful putting green management

BY TODD LOWE



Light and frequent verticutting and sand topdressing are adequate for maintaining good playing conditions on most ultradwarf greens, but it is necessary to allow the time for these practices to occur.

Ultradwarf bermudagrasses

(TifEagle, Champion, and Mini-Verde) were developed in the 1990s and began being established on Florida golf courses in 1997. These early pioneers laid the groundwork for other golf courses in the South to develop maintenance practices that offered improved putting green smoothness and speed when compared to older varieties like Tifdwarf or Tifgreen. Early research showed TifEagle, Champion, and Mini-Verde provided consistently better playing conditions than other varieties in university trials (Morris, 2003), and such characteristics have proven superior on golf courses as well. In fact, ultradwarfs have now become the standard for putting greens in Florida. We have learned many things about these grasses in the past 15 years, and this article addresses a few key observations that may surprise some readers and hopefully will prove useful at your facility. Every region is different regarding the effects of climate and peak-season play, and these regional observations may differ slightly from yours, depending on location.

LESSON ONE

Ultradwarfs are not just for high-end golf courses. One of the first lessons learned is that ultradwarfs perform well under a wide range of management regimes. For the first few years, only high-end golf facilities converted their greens to ultradwarfs, and many of these golf courses employed intensive turf management programs to produce fast green speeds. Due mostly to the success of these early programs, it was thought that ultradwarfs required aggressive surface management and low mowing. These grasses soon became analogous with championship conditioning and very fast speeds. Championship conditioning through aggressive management deterred some golf courses from converting to an ultradwarf early on. It was not uncommon to hear comments such as “an ultradwarf would not be a good fit for our course because our golfers cannot play on fast greens” or “we can’t afford an ultradwarf because we cannot verticut and topdress greens every seven days.” While the ultradwarfs can produce faster speeds than Tifdwarf, they can also produce similar conditions, if desired. Over the past decade, we have seen ultradwarfs be successful on less-intensive programs, and we have learned that they do not require extremely low mowing or aggressive verticutting to maintain acceptable playing conditions.

Every golf facility has its own unique set of standards and expectations. Those that demand firm and fast putting surfaces often employ an aggressive surface management plan to achieve such conditions. However, ultradwarfs can be maintained under a less-intensive and more economical agronomic plan while producing speeds of 8 to 10 feet as measured using a Stimpmeter, and even faster during the winter play season. Some golf facilities also have excellent success with maintaining fast greens without mowing low. Early on, many ultradwarf greens were maintained at or below a height of cut of 0.10 inch to produce consistently fast putting greens. While some golf courses still mow low, we have observed faster/smoothier greens with innovative fertility and grooming (Lowe, 2012). These improved fertility programs have resulted in consistent growth and playability, and they drastically reduced the need for low mowing heights to provide fast putting speeds. While this is a new concept for many Florida golf course superintendents, it has been successfully implemented at several golf courses for nearly a decade. We are hopeful these innovative programs will continue to gain popularity as higher mowing creates deeper roots and healthier turf.

(continued on page 9)



It was originally thought that aggressive verticutting and sand topdressing were necessary to maintain proper thatch and surface quality on all ultradwarf bermudagrass greens. Dethatching is still employed on some greens but generally as part of summertime core aerations.



Encroachment from surrounding rough-type bermudagrass occurs on ultradwarf

putting greens. This probe was used to locate the underlying gravel layer that was

installed as part of putting green construction, which showed that the surrounding

Tifway bermudagrass encroached nearly two

LESSON TWO

Effective thatch management does not require overly aggressive cultivation. There are a variety of core aeration and surface management (verticutting, grooming, and brushing) programs employed on Florida golf courses. Early reports from turfgrass researchers discussed the tendency of ultradwarfs to produce more thatch and organic matter than Tifdwarf bermudagrass (Gray and White, 1999; Guertel and White, 1998). As a result, aggressive turf management programs were developed at many golf courses to dilute thatch and organic matter. Early on, we visited some golf courses that utilized as many as five or more aerations annually using half-inch-diameter hollow tines or larger. Since then, aeration equipment technology has improved and procedures have been refined. Consequently, turf managers are able to remove more soil cores with each aeration event and increase organic matter dilution (Lowe, 2011; Oatis, 2002; O'Brien and Hartwiger, 2003). We have learned that acceptable organic matter dilution can take place with less invasive procedures and less disruption to golfers. Furthermore, other practices like "venting" with small-diameter solid tines, also known as needle or pencil tines, are also valuable, especially during the peak winter play season. Verticutting procedures for ultradwarf greens have nearly come full circle. It was initially thought that aggressive dethatching with units like the Mataway, Graden, or SISIS was going to be standard for ultradwarfs in Florida. Turf thinning and slow recovery occurred at some courses, and other implements like carbide-tipped blades

became viable alternatives. Many courses have simply continued "grooming" with thin-bladed verticutters, along with prudent nitrogen fertility and frequent sand topdressing to maintain excellent surface smoothness. Light and frequent programs have been the

most successful for good surface management, and it is necessary to allow time for such procedures to take place. Aggressive verticutting/dethatching is still employed at some courses, but it usually takes place in conjunction with summertime core aeration. Aeration and verticutting are still necessary throughout the year to provide optimum playability, but effective thatch management requires a "holistic" program, beginning with proper nitrogen inputs. We have learned that the ultradwarfs, and perhaps Tifdwarf as well, simply do not require as much nitrogen as traditional programs for bermudagrass putting greens. Historically, putting greens in Florida have been maintained on annual diets as high as 18 to 24 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet for Tifdwarf bermudagrass (especially overseeded Tifdwarf). Nitrogen fertility has been reduced over the years with improved product efficacy and the ability to "spoon-feed" putting greens on a weekly basis. While some researchers continue to advocate very high nitrogen diets, USGA Green Section agronomists feel that less nitrogen is better for the turf and the game of golf. The average fertilization program in Florida is still quite high at 0.75 to 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per growing month, but it is trending downwards, with many golf facilities at nearly half that rate (Foy, 2011). Ultradwarfs perform well at lower nitrogen inputs, but increased thatch management programs will be necessary to provide acceptable playing conditions if nitrogen fertility for ultradwarfs is kept similar to Tifdwarf.

LESSON THREE

Most ultradwarf greens are still growing strong, but their lifespan remains a mystery. A question asked during many Turfgrass Advisory Service visits concerns the longevity of ultradwarf greens. The article Making a Change mentioned that the "lifespan" of Tifdwarf greens in Florida averaged between 10 and 15 years (Foy, 2003). It also discussed several key factors to evaluate before renovating Tifdwarf bermudagrass greens, including proper construction, loss of surface area from encroachment, and off-type contamination. It was initially thought that maintaining lower mowing heights on ultradwarf bermudagrasses would discourage encroachment from the surrounding rough-type bermudagrass, yet such intrusions still occur on ultradwarf greens. Encroachment reduces putting surface area over time, and it is necessary to eventually regrass/ renovate greens to recapture lost putting surface perimeters. Off-type bermudagrass contamination is a major concern on Tifdwarf bermudagrass putting greens, as they perform poorly at certain times of the year and cause significant turf damage. Some ultradwarf putting greens planted over a decade ago are still quite pure and continue to provide excellent playing conditions. However, we have seen a significant increase in off-type bermudagrasses in ultradwarf putting greens in recent years (Lowe and Foy, 2012). Off-types grow in size and number each year, and maintaining consistently good playing conditions can be a difficult task on putting greens with 40 percent or more off-type contamination.

(continued on page 10)



Many ultradwarf greens were originally heavily verticut, but this practice became unpopular due to turf injury and prolonged recovery.

If these off-types perform poorly, then it is recommended to renovate putting greens at some point. We have also learned that ultradwarfs are not bulletproof and are still stressed by similar factors that cause decline on Tifdwarf bermudagrass greens, including poor drainage, shade, and nematodes. A less-expensive

alternative to conventional putting-green renovation is no-till regrassing, where the turf and underlying soil are left intact and ultradwarf sprigs are planted into existing putting greens. It is unreasonable to expect significantly better playing conditions with ultradwarfs on putting greens that have failed previously with other grasses, unless the reasons for failure are addressed. Also, ultradwarfs are poor competitors and generally cannot overtake other grasses, even at low mowing heights. Increased off-types (most likely re-emergence of the previous grass) have been observed on many putting greens re-established using no-till methods throughout Florida.

In closing, perhaps the greatest benefit of being a USGA agronomist is visiting so many golf course superintendents and learning from their successes and failures. Superintendents are like chefs in that they all use different ingredients and recipes. While some superintendents still mow low, aggressively cultivate/

verticut, and apply more nitrogen than is needed to produce quality surfaces, others have learned better techniques for managing their greens. The ultradwarfs burst onto the golf course scene over a decade ago, and we continue to improve techniques, refine fertility practices, and lower economic inputs, all the while providing conditions ranging from acceptable for the budget-conscious golfer to putting surfaces worthy of hosting the best players in the world.

Green Section Record Vol. 51 (1)

January 11, 2013



Some Links in Tee To Green may only be active for 30 days

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January 22, 2013—Stephen F. Austin Golf Club

Thank you to Doug Browne and all the staff at SFA for such a great day! Always a pleasure to come out to Sealy!

Golf Results

Gross Results

Smelser/Gill/Polio 59 First Gross
 Webster/Johnson B./Knowles 61
 Cleavingers/Tessman/Wilson S. 62
 Mounday/Holley/Fultz 62
 Borowski/Hargrove/Riley 62
 Neuendorff/Stephens/Walker 62
 Browne/Browne/Ford 62
 Lotton/Chernosky/Littlefield 64
 Barclay/Warms/Buckner 64
 Wilson/Tennant/Lineberger 64
 Bancroft/Tanner/Cole 65
 Baughman/Johnson M./Terry 66
 Hess/Takushi/Johnston 66
 Kane/Noska/Elliott 66
 Atchison/Gravett/Marchand 67
 Light/Zuniga/Neely 67
 Haven/Fairall/Holt 67
 Wilagowski/Homeyer/Dickerson 67
 Finke/Hutchins/Glover 67
 Ludwick/Cook/Yewens 68
 Tolber/Rhoden/Freeman 69
 Ratcliff/Cincotta/Schuette 70
 Abetz/Monroe/Thomas 72
 Samoff/Anderson/Weinstroer 74

Blind Draw Winners

**Tolber/Rhoden/Freeman
 Ratcliff/Cincotta/Schuette**

Proximity Winners

CTP Hole #2 12 Hcp and under

Chris Webster

CTP Hole #2 13 Hcp and up

Jr. Schuette

Long Drive #4 12 Hcp and under

Pat Neuendorff

Long Drive #4 13 Hcp and up

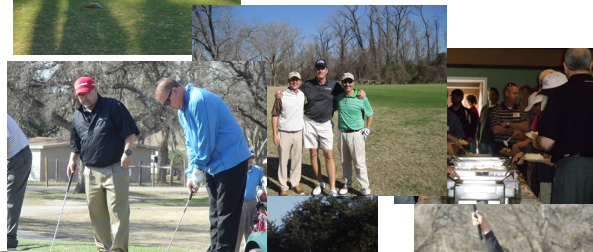
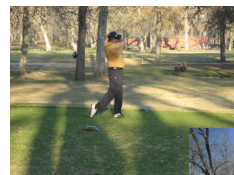
Ben Hutchins

Paid the first and last gross and net. Blind draw from all the non-winners for other two prizes.

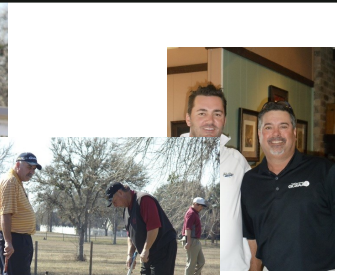
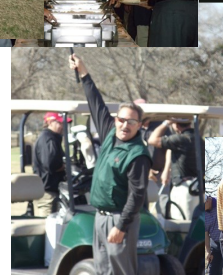
Net Results

**Neuendorff/Stephens/Walker 55
 First Net**

Smelser/Gill/Polios 55
 Borowski/Hargrove G./Riley 57
 Baughman/Johnson M./Terry 57
 Kane/Noska/Elliott 57
 Mounday/Holley/Fultz 57
 Webster/Knowles/Johnston 57
 Finke/Hutchins/Glover 57
 Bancroft/Tanner/Cole 58
 Cleavingers/Tessman/Wilson 58
 Light/Zuniga/Neely 59
 Wilson/Tennant/Lineberger 59
 Atchison/Gravett/Marchand 60
 Hess/Takushi/Johnston 60
 Hargrove/Gray/Huntsman 60
 Browne/Ford/Browne 60
 Barclay/Warms/Buckner 61
 Tolbert/Rhoden/Freeman 62
 Lotton/Chernosky/Littlefield 63
 Haven/Holt/Fairall 63
 Wilagowski/Homeyer/Dickerson 63
 Ludwick/Cook/Yewens 63
 Abetz/Monroe/Thomas 63
 Taylor/Gallegos/Wickliffe 64
 Samoff/Anderson/Wienstroer 64
 Ratcliff/Cincotta/Schuette 65
 Baker/Skarpa/Adair 65
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 Last Net**



Thank you, Allison "Alli" Jarrett
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Photos from January 9, 2013 Pesticide Renewal Class

Thank you to BWI and Turfsmith for providing Donuts and Drinks



Thank you to Robert "Skip" Richter of Texas AgriExtension Office for securing the speakers:

- * Mr. Perry Cervantes, TX Dept. Agriculture
- * Mr. Paul Nester, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (Harris County)
- * Dr. Young Ki-Jo, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (Plant Pathology)
- * Dr. Mark Matocha, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (Agriculture and Environmental Safety)
- * Mr. Robert "Skip" Richter, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

And off course, Bayou City Catfish for catering!



Mr. Robert "Skip" Richter



Mr. Perry Cervantes



~Quote of the Month~

It is almost impossible to remember how tragic a place this world is when one is playing golf. ~Robert Lynd



golf industry show

Photos from the Lone Star GCSA Reception in San Diego

Great job, once again, Karen White and the Lone Star Board for hosting a great event!



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Attention all Members!

To all of you who golf at the
 monthly meetings and
 tournaments.....
*-concerning all monies leftover
 from skins and prizes awarded at
 meetings -*



Starting in 2013, if you win money at a golf event, the money must be picked up within two meetings after the prize was won or the money will be donated to the scholarship fund. This change is due to the tournament committee having to keep up with winnings for extended periods of time, sometimes over a year. Winners are posted online within a few days of the event so you can determine if you have prizes waiting for you well before the next event.

Prize and skin money will not be mailed.
 Thank you for understanding this new policy!
 Guests are not eligible to win prize money



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