



# TEE TO GREEN

The Official Publication of the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association



## Annual Meeting & Past Presidents Meeting Kingwood Country Club

November 6, 2018

Hosted by Jeremy Lewis

[Click Here to Register](#)

### 2018 Meeting Schedule

**November 6, 2018**

Annual Meeting &  
Past Presidents Meeting  
*Kingwood Country Club*

**December 4, 2018**

Supt/Pro - Member/Member  
*Black Hawk Country Club*

**December 15, 2018**

STGCSA Christmas Party  
*The Redneck Country Club*

## Northgate Meeting & Education October 8, 2018

**Thank you to Kevin Hill and  
staff at Northgate for hosting  
our October Meeting &  
Education!**

Congratulations to our  
1st Place Gross Division Team!

Kevin White, Tanner Chrastecky, Cody  
Spivey, & Chris Webster

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW ALL RESULTS](#)

(also found on page 3)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Kyle Brown - President STGCSA*



First, I would like to say what an honor it has been serving as your President for this year. Thank you to the Board of Directors and Carrie Cole for all the work you put in to make this association run. As this is my last Message as President I am going to take some space to reflect.

Every year seems to go by fast but this one has really seemed to fly. When in conversation, someone brings up an event that happened in the Spring, it seems like years ago, not months. Maybe that is a sign that I've sprayed too many chemicals without the proper PPE. This has certainly been a year of ups and downs and as usual the weather has played a big role. We had to reschedule the CEU Meeting, the Chapter Championship and the Supt/Pro tournaments because of ice/rain. I do not know of a year when three events have faced rescheduling. Since mid August, we have received over 30 inches of rain at my club. Many have received less, some have received more, but either way it has presented its challenges for everyone rolling into winter. We started with the 2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off at Cypress Lakes followed by the GIS show in San Antonio, then the unfortunate loss of our dear Marian. Our association was blessed to have found Carrie Cole to hire as our Executive Director in May to keep us moving forward. Summer through September was a blur!! We rolled out the Marian Takushi GIS scholarship. No one applied for the two scholarships this year so keep an eye out for it next year as we plan to keep going with it. The application process is simple and the reward is an expenses paid trip to the Golf Industry Show.

We do have an exciting finish to this 2018. Our Annual Meeting and Past-Presidents lunch is November 6th at Kingwood. Following that is our rescheduled Supt/Pro tournament at Black Hawk Country Club on December 4. This year we are changing up the Christmas Party and having it at Redneck Country Club on December 15. This will be a very relaxed atmosphere with no formal program, just fun, food and fellowship and Tracy Bird is performing. I hope you can join us for all or some of these year end events. We are currently filling our the 2019 schedule and would appreciate your input for meeting locations and education topics. Thanks again for letting me serve.

Kind Regards,

*Kyle Brown*



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**NORTHGATE  
COUNTRY CLUB**

**Golf Results for 2018 Meeting & Education**

**October 8, 2018**

**Hosted by: Kevin Hill**

**1st Place Gross Team**

135 – Cody Spivey, Kevin White, Tanner Chrastecky, Chris Webster

**2nd Place Gross Team**

138 – Jason Barrington, Clint Evans, Vince Gallegos, Alex Kugelberg

**1st Place Net Team**

104 – Kyle Brown, Aaron Cox, Chad Ott, Rick Partain

**2nd Place Net Team**

109 – Cody Fisseler, Richard Kane, Bryan Pace, Brian Sigler

**Proximities**

0-12 Handicap CTP – Daniel McCann

0-12 Handicap Longest Drive – Jason Barrington

13 & above CTP – Brian Sigler

13 & above Longest Drive – Clint Evans

**What Is This Stuff?** By Elliott Dowling, agronomist, Northeast Region

One of the most enjoyable parts of golf is being able to play different courses around the world. Playing a course in Texas where the winds seem constant presents a different challenge than a course built on the rolling terrain of Pennsylvania. Despite the obvious differences between these golf courses, comparing their playing conditions is risky business because comparisons are often made without a full understanding of what makes each situation unique. To most people, grass is grass and there is not much difference between one grass and another. It's easy to understand this perception, but it makes a golf course superintendent's job more difficult because reality is far more complex. So, how different could one grass be from another?

At the surface, most grasses appear to be very similar. However, when compared closely, there are important differences that make some grasses better than others depending on the situation.

Decades of USGA-funded research have led to the creation of more than 30 new grasses each bred for very specific traits. Advancements in breeding grasses continue to be vital for the golf industry. Golf facilities are now able to choose grasses based on important criteria such as disease resistance, drought, heat or cold tolerance and the ability to withstand heavy traffic. But as more golf courses plant new and improved grasses, unfair comparisons of golf courses can develop by those that may not realize they are playing on a different grasses.

Depending on your location, or where you choose to play most of your golf, the grasses you play on can vary greatly from other parts of the country. This seems intuitive, but the concept becomes less intuitive when we encounter different grasses on courses that are just a few miles away from one another.

Thanks to turf breeding programs, grasses are now available to suit almost any situation. The specialization of grasses is most evident in the transition zone, which includes areas of the U.S. that experience hot, humid summers and relatively cold winters. Because of the seasonal weather extremes, both cool- and warm-season grasses can provide good playing surfaces in the transition zone. You could be playing on a bermudagrass or zoysiagrass fairway at one course and then a bentgrass fairway at a different course just down the road. Each grass could be well-suited to its specific location, but they will look and play very differently throughout the year.

Consequently, trying to compare playing conditions and turf appearance at the two golf courses is simply unfair. The course with bermudagrass fairways may have healthy, rapidly growing grass in summer and the turf may go completely dormant in winter, losing most of its color. The course with bentgrass fairways may struggle during a hot summer, but it may be in great condition during early spring and late into the fall. Which grasses are appropriate for each facility will depend on a wide range of factors including the local environment, maintenance budget and golfer preferences.

Before comparisons are made, it is important to understand what exactly is being compared. Wondering why one course doesn't look or play like another is a valid question, but it should be posed as an investigative question rather than a criticism of agronomic programs and practices. If you like the playing conditions of a neighboring course, it may be worthwhile to ask if they have made any grass changes that have allowed them to improve playing conditions in their unique environment.



These fairways were recently regrassed with Latitude 36 bermudagrass. Although this warm-season grass was bred to survive colder temperatures, it will still perform differently than a cool-season grass like bentgrass.



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**Annual Meeting & Past Presidents Meeting**



**Kingwood Country Club**

**November 6, 2018**



**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**

**Superintendent/Pro – Member/Member**



**BLACK HAWK COUNTRY CLUB**

**December 4, 2018**

**Shotgun Start @ 10:00am**

Registration opens @ 9:00am

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**



**SADDLE UP &  
SAVE THE DATE  
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## GCSAA Field Staff Representative

### John Walker - South Central Region

Before joining the GCSAA staff, John Walker was a superintendent, 30-year GCSAA member and past GCSAA board director.

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### **Reasons for Golf Course Tree Removal** By: Frank Dobie

A longtime superintendent outlines factors that can necessitate tree removal, helpful for communicating with stakeholders about the often-tough topic of eliminating trees.

“Why did you remove that tree?”

Over the years, a few of the members here at The Sharon Golf Club in Sharon Center, Ohio, have asked me this. Tree removal can be a controversial subject, so I decided to document the various potential reasons for removing trees. (I am not advocating for the removal of all the trees — which would make Sharon GC a links-style course — yet there can be numerous practical reasons to eliminate certain trees around a golf course.) Having such a list can be useful when a superintendent is communicating with members.

- Large tree limbs can get broken off during a storm and become lodged in the tree. They can get dislodged during another storm and become a danger to players. If that condition is known and not corrected, it also becomes a financial liability. If the damage is substantial, removing the whole tree may be the best course of action.
- Trees that cast shade on playing surfaces reduce photosynthesis, resulting in weakened bentgrass or bluegrass and promoting *Poa annua* populations. Morning shade also prolongs wet conditions, which foster fungal diseases.
- Morning shade on greens or tees in late fall allows frost to last longer and delays starting times.
- Trees blocking air movement across a green promote fungal diseases.
- Tree root invasion sucks the moisture and nutrients from the playing surface, resulting in weak, unhealthy turf. Such areas can be hand-watered and given extra fertilization, but these are only temporary measures, as tree roots will outcompete grass plants. Root pruning is another temporary solution that must be repeated every few years.
- Tree roots that invade and plug drainage lines can kill a green by eliminating the natural air draw in the soil when drainage water is blocked.
- Trees that are in line with a shot to a green from a bunker present a double hazard.
- Surface tree roots can cause damage to mowing equipment.
- Surface tree roots can be a danger to a player’s hands or wrists if struck when playing from that lie.
- Trees have a life expectancy and should be removed when they show signs of serious decline — before they can become a hazard.
- Certain tree species are undesirable, such as sweet gum trees, which produce thousands of burr-like pods in spring; wild cherry trees, which tend to have excessive dead limbs that can fall if there’s a strong wind; spruce trees, which have naturally low limbs that offer no relief to a player’s ball; and weeping willows, which have very invasive roots that can plug tiles several hundred feet away.
- Trees can be infected by insects or diseases that have limited or no effective cures, such as emerald ash borer, canker on blue spruce, *Diplodia* blight on Austrian pine, root rot on eastern white pine, scale and tent caterpillars on flowering crabs, and birch borer on European white birch.
- Trees that have a split in the leader (forked trunk) are at risk of splitting apart in a strong wind storm.
- Trees that are too close together don’t allow either tree to develop into a natural, attractive form.
- Trees that are too close together don’t allow triplex mowing equipment to pass through them, requiring the area to be mowed by hand.
- The higher the population of trees in playing areas, the more labor time must be spent on string trimming around the bases, spraying for insects and fungus, pruning dead or low-hanging branches, and removing leaves in fall.
- Dense, unkempt native stands of trees and underbrush that are in play can contribute to lost balls and slow play.
- Dense stands of trees that are in play can cause so much shade that even shade-tolerant grasses won’t survive, resulting in bare ground and undesirable lies.
- Trees can block scenic views of the course.
- Trees close to bunkers can contaminate them with acorns, burrs, leaves or roots. This is unsightly and warrants additional labor to keep the bunker clean.
- Trees close to paved areas such as paths, patios or parking lots will heave up the asphalt, concrete or bricks, creating a tripping hazard for players.
- Trees that have matured to a certain height and width can block shots from one side of a tee. This causes restricted use of the tee surface and promotes excessive turf wear on the remaining space.
- Certain tree placement can create difficulty solely for high-handicap players and can slow up pace of play.



Trees can add beauty and interest to the golf course landscape, but they can also be a detriment to healthy turf and the safety of players, and can lead to unnecessary expenses. Trees shouldn’t take precedence over playing surfaces.

*Frank Dobie is a 60-year member of GCSAA and is the general manager and senior agronomist at The Sharon Golf Club in Sharon Center, Ohio. Frank graduated summa cum laude from Penn State University’s turfgrass management program in 1960. He was the superintendent at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Brecksville, Ohio, from 1961-1962; the superintendent at Fairlawn Country Club in Akron, Ohio, from 1963-1964; and the superintendent/general manager at The Sharon Golf Club from 1964-2014. He has been in his current position with the club since 2015. Frank has also been the president of the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation since 1988.*




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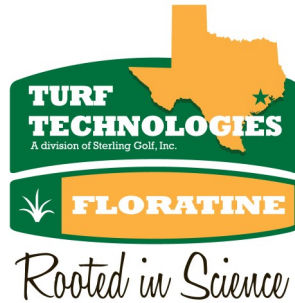
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