

## Cutting Edge on the Use of Technology in the Turf Industry

This is the term offered to describe the first of our two featured speakers at the Fall Meeting. And if that isn't enough, William Kreuser, Ph.D., is also well known for getting the most out of chemicals, fertilizers and growth products. For the past two years,



the Idaho GCSA has contributed to Kreuser's research focused on winter desiccation – a topic too familiar in many parts of our region. Kreuser is an assistant professor in the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He also serves as the state's Extension Turfgrass Specialist with a focus on soil and water management. Kreuser joined UNL in January of 2014 after receiving his

*“Understanding and Preventing Winter Desiccation”*

*“Using GDD Models to Predict PGR Performance”*

are highly rated and Kreuser is a popular conference speaker.

Anthony Williams, CGCS, CGM, is a class act – a commonly used phrase to describe this iconic superintendent. Williams is considered the leading authority on Environomics. He retired with 30 years of exceptional service as a senior manager with Marriott International, winning Marriott's highest honor, the J.W. Marriott Award of Excellence in 2008. Williams' achievements throughout his career have resulted in prestigious awards and recognitions. Just

*“Effective Stewardship for the Modern Superintendent”*

*“Integrated Pest Management on the Golf Course: Real World Applications”*

water conservation policies and advocacy in Georgia. A sought after writer and speaker, Williams was recognized by the Turf &

Ph.D. at Cornell University where he studied turfgrass physiology. His GIS conference presentations and webinars

to name a couple, he was the recipient of the GCSAA 2014 Excellence in Government Relations Award for his role in

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## A Fortunate Experience

One of the greatest pleasures in life is to enjoy a quality round of golf on a beautiful day. When the course you are playing isn't your home base, it can even be a sweeter experience to get away both mentally and physically.

We offer our sincere appreciation to our host superintendent, Mike Rapp, and host professional, Ryan Nielson, along with Falcon Crest Golf Course, for hosting the 2016 Super/Pro Golf Challenge.

Rising to the top with a 2016 win were the Net team from Falcon Crest as mentioned above (#homecoursevictory), and the Gross team from Purple Sage Golf Course - Ken Wheeler and Jim Empey. Our tournament participants benefited from the opportunity to talk to their fellow turf resources in addition to playing a course with great conditions. Please visit page 14 for more results.

Our allied partners were such great supporters of this event and we are thankful for each company who sponsored a hole. Please check out our sponsors on page 14, and as you see them this summer, pass along your appreciation for all they do for our association.

## Chapter Room Block for GIS Open Soon

Each year we have several Idaho GCSA members disappointed they missed out of the chapter room block at the GIS. Don't be “that person” for the 2017 GIS in Orlando!

Even if you aren't 100% positive you are attending, make your reservation when the call goes out the block is open. You can adjust your nights, or even cancel with proper notice. November, December and January are too late to reserve a room in the block. By the end of October, if any rooms are left, we give them back to GCSAA, per our agreement.

It may be difficult to wrap your head around February 2017 with everything you are juggling right now... but we need you to do just that!

We will have two blocks again in 2017. The Rosen Inn at Pointe Orlando, and the Hyatt Place Convention Center/ International Drive. We have used the Rosen Inn (\$97 Single/Double) before and it is more of a budget property. The Hyatt Place (\$156 Single/Double) is on International Drive. Although we have not used the Hyatt as a block property before, it is near our previous blocks. Shuttle service is available to the convention center with both properties.

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**Editor**  
Lori Russell, Executive Director  
*Grass Clippings* is published  
three times a year. Our newsletter is  
not copyrighted, but we would  
appreciate credit for original material.

Did you know the events shown on our website homepage  
are only a portion of events listed?  
Click on the News/Events tab to see a larger list.

The screenshot shows the Idaho GCSA website homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'ABOUT US', 'NEWS/EVENTS', and 'MEMBER'S AREA'. Below the navigation, there's a green banner with the text: "The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to helping its members provide the best playing conditions in an environmentally friendly manner." To the right, there's a section titled "Thank a Golf Course Superintendent" featuring a photo of a man in a cap. Below this, there's a "Grass Clippings" logo and a "Grass Clippings Newsletter" link. The main content area displays a list of events: "Chapters of the Northwest Hospitality Room 2016" (Feb 10), "Idaho GCSA Spring Meeting & Trade Show 2016" (Feb 23), and "Peaks & Prairies GCSA 'Almost' Spring Meeting, Helena, Mont." (Mar 07). There's also a "ABOUT US" section with the text: "The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association..."

**Welcome New Idaho GCSA Members!**

**Mark Hensley**  
NACHURS  
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BOISE, ID 83714

The screenshot shows the "Submit Job Listing" form on the Idaho GCSA website. The form includes fields for "Job Title", "Introduction", and "Description". There's a "Job Category" dropdown menu with the text "--select a Job Listing Category--". A "Submit" button is at the bottom. To the right of the form, there's a text box that says: "It is easy to post your job announcements! Sign into the website, click on job announcements under the member area, and scroll down the listing page till you see this." Below the form, there's a "Crop Production" logo.

**Info about Idaho GCSA website!**

- \* Do you have an address change, for example? Changing the information in Your Profile in the Member's Area will automatically update the association's database! Use of proper capitalization and spelling is appreciated.
- \* Do you have any classified items? Please be sure to complete the classified section in the

Member's Area.

- \* Your username is always your password. If you do not have your password click on forgot password and follow the prompts.
- \* Please remember to keep an eye on the job announcements and pass the information along to your fellow employees at your facility.

[www.idahogcsa.org](http://www.idahogcsa.org)

**Idaho GCSA**

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*"The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to helping its members provide the best playing conditions in an environmentally friendly manner."*



# President's Message

## What's Going on in the World of Golf?

Mark Spraktes, Pinecrest Golf Club, Idaho Falls, Idaho

If you read the title, I will just start by saying, "I don't know." My season has been pretty good. Winter was extremely soft on my environment and the turf came through with shining colors. No winterkill and I actually had to mow when the snow burned off. It's always nice to have a good blanket over the greens for the duration. My only disappointment was the lack of snow expected due to the El Ninja with the region only recording normal amounts for the season. Good, but not outstanding.

July is bringing a couple tournaments in which I have been involved. The Idaho GCSA Super/Pro hosted by Mike Rapp at Falcon Crest, and I will host the Ladies State Amateur at Pinecrest this month on the 17th and 18th. Last year was pretty exciting hosting the Men's State Amateur. It was won by an Eastern Idaho teen at age 17, with a five under par. Kind of cool, I thought. Especially since he didn't beat the course record and he was a teenager from Shelley. I guess there is a golfer on the east side of the state. Hopefully, a repeat will happen with the ladies playing here and the course record won't be beaten. A young assistant college student set it, after all, from Sand Creek last summer - another eastern Idahoan. Ha? Imagine that.


The PGA has been kind of as expected. I can't say as exciting as last year, but still good. I'm happy for Jason Day with his well-deserved victories and mostly happy for Dustin Johnson for finally capturing his well deserved back-to-back wins. Both tournaments hold some strong influence over the industry. Wow, thinking of Dustin's victory at the USGA Championship, it was frosting on the cake, stretching the lead to four strokes. Everybody was sure he was going to be wrongfully penalized and loose due to technicalities, again. What about that USGA ruling? Just another controversy associated with the USGA Tournament. Like every year I suppose, it keeps the watchers looking at the screen. Is it good for golf? I don't know that, either. The greens seemed to be a little too quick to keep my interest and the reliance for good luck was in every player's bag. Some spectacular shots were made and enjoyed, but still, I watched a lot of chance and not enough great golf. You can say that controversy associated with this tournament has become tradition.

The Rio Olympics are just around the corner and I must say I'm a little disappointed in the players who have opted out of the games. To me, this is a chance for the sport to receive honorable mention and help grow the game. I still feel these games will help golf and the players who are playing deserve the opportunity. So, enough said, I will enjoying watching with baited breath. The golf course looks like it would be fun to play. "Growing the game" - what does this entail? Well, for Pinecrest and Idaho Falls Golf, this topic is continually discussed. Family golf has been successful, reducing rates on one of the courses every Saturday and implanting some big 8" holes. Argh, not a fan, but it's not that difficult, just a little more time spent during

setup. A better idea, as far as I am concerned, is adding additional tees forward and shortening the course for the higher handicaps and shorter hitters. You have to be able to reach the hole to par the hole, and a lot of courses are just too long for the average senior, Jr. and ladies who are out here to have fun. So, that's the direction we are going at Pinecrest. Thirteen additional tees will be added, which will shorten the course by seventy-five percent. I can estimate with some fairly concrete optimism, play will increase by around thirty percent and the game will be more fun for those who use the forward tees. Foot golf has been mentioned, as well as disk golf. Lucas, Canyon Springs Golf Course, has experience with foot golf and last fall I once tried to host a tournament for the Frisbees. I guess it was successful. The participants seemed to like it. I'm just not too sure on the revenue generated for the event if it will be tried again. I would have to assume the wholesale market would have to compensate the revenue string for both foot golf and disc golf to be profitable. No mention of additional tournaments as of now, so another one probably won't be offered. I could be wrong, though.

Surfboard golf carts have been successful for a couple of courses in Washington and Oregon State. Non-golfers are tagging along just to ride, while their friend plays the game. At least they are introduced to the game and in the future may pick up a club and try golf. For me, golf has always been a matter of time spent on the course, and, of course, the final score on the sheet. The Jr. Program is the first place to start and build. Shorter courses are going to help that more than anything else. Always thinking of something new to help encourage the game and grow the sport: at the same time it is true that golf has survived two world wars and many other obstacles throughout the years. I believe it will be around for some greater amount of time than I can imagine. With that, I say, keep playing the game and hit them well.

On a personal note, I would like to take this time to thank our allied members for providing the goods and services we use. It's always nice to see one of their faces walking through my office door. Thanks, ladies and gentlemen, for making my job a little bit easier and my course more playable. It is appreciated.



**Rennie L. Kubik**  
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(Editor's note: This article was written over the winter and saved for this issue)

A first year superintendent in profile, I am Alex Bliss, the superintendent of Sun Valley Courses Trail Creek and White Clouds. It has taken quite a few years to get where I am, and many people have helped. I would like to share a little about myself and the journey to get where I am now.

I was very fortunate to have grown up in the Wood River Valley. My family moved here when I was only one: my father moved us up here to start his landscaping business. I spent my summers as a kid working with my father at his many job sites. It's amazing how much you learn just from watching others. By the time I was old enough to actually help with jobs, I knew what to do just by the countless days and hours of watching my father and older brother do the work; mowing, string trimming, planting trees and flowers and installing irrigation. In fact, to this day my dad still reminds me of when I was four;

I dry fit and put together an irrigation system in our back yard. Didn't every kid grow up with sticks of PVC pipe and boxes of fittings to play with in their back yard? He still insists that should be a bullet point on my resume today.

My father introduced me to the game of golf when I was in my early teens. I quickly picked it up and soon had a passion to play. I played golf on the Wood River High School golf team from my sophomore to my senior year. We even made it to the state tournament my senior year, no thanks to my performance. It was while playing golf for the school that I thought it would be fun to work on a golf course maintenance crew since I knew a little bit of landscaping work.

Life on a golf course started at the age of 15 for me. I was a sophomore in high school and just got my driver's license that summer. I applied at The Valley Club to work for Steven Maas. I was hired to be the "water boy" for the summer. I still remember my first day on the job: "there's your cart and here's your hose. Go to 18 approach, Shawn will meet you there and show you what to do." I met Shawn Aicher that morning and he showed me what I would be doing for the rest of the summer.

I survived my first summer on the golf course hand watering hot spots every day. At the end I asked if I could come back again next summer. For some reason they said absolutely. I spent the next three summers working at The Valley Club for Shawn. During that time I got a taste of more and more daily activities from mowing to course setup to bunkers, I was even able to participate in small irrigation and construction projects. I was very fortunate to work



# A (first year) superintendent in profile

**Alex Bliss, Superintendent  
Trail Creek & White Clouds, Sun Valley, Idaho**

for Shawn and get a well-rounded experience of what it takes to maintain a golf course.

After graduating high school and another summer working at The Valley Club I was off to college. I attended University of Nevada Reno; I was planning to get a degree in mechanical engineering. While attending school, I needed a job to help pay my bills. I ended up getting a job at D'Andrea Golf Club. It was there I met Scott Wackoski. Scott was a great mentor of mine, he treated me like a son and I gained an incredible amount of knowledge from him. I was hired as the irrigation tech that first year. After that, I started spraying and was given other duties of helping to run the crew. At the end of my second year at D'Andrea, I was irrigation tech/spray tech/ second assistant. By this time Scott had opened my eyes to golf course maintenance - that it should be a career instead of just another job. I enrolled that fall for school at Rutgers University for their two year program.

After graduating from Rutgers in the fall of 2008 I returned to work at D'Andrea. I now had the basics of agronomic

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To see the full research report, visit [www.floratine.com/research](http://www.floratine.com/research)



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## Bliss continued from page 4

principles and was able to demonstrate and further learn more at the course with the help of Scott. I stayed working at the course for another three years, eventually being promoted to the first assistant title. In the summer of 2011 D'Andrea fell on hard economic times and was filing for bankruptcy. It was only a matter of time before everyone knew we would be looking for new jobs. Later that summer, I took my wife Amber and our daughter Miyako on a quick vacation back to Sun Valley to visit friends and family for the weekend.

While we were in the valley, I stopped by Sun Valley golf course to visit an old friend from high school. Sure enough he was off that day, but I ran into another old friend. Shawn had recently just taken the superintendent's job for Sun Valley. After talking and catching up with Shawn for a few minutes he told me he was looking for an assistant, and by fate I happened to be looking for an assistant's job. After talking a little more and a few phone calls and emails thru the fall that year, Shawn offered the job to me. By a spur of the moment vacation trip and a chance encounter with a former boss, I was suddenly offered a job I wanted, in a

place I've always wanted to return and raise my family.

In the spring of 2012, I started here at Sun Valley Golf Course as Shawn's assistant. During those three years, I furthered my knowledge of agronomics and new cultural practices with the help of Shawn. The most important thing I learned from those three years with him was a better way of management, one style to get the most out of the crew and also make work enjoyable. This is something you read in a book or a professor teaches you in class; this was something you see and pick up by being around someone who uses this style.

In March of 2015, I was offered the superintendent's job for Sun Valley. After 13s season of working on a golf course, I had finally made it to a superintendent's position. Nearing the end of this, my 14th season, I look back at all the challenges and accomplishments as my first year as a superintendent closes.

The challenges, including starting my season off with no assistant, and not finding one until the middle of June. Also, the paper work; invoices, hiring forms, purchase order requests, dealing with payroll. We all got into to this career because we

love being outside working with our hands, not sitting at a desk staring at a computer. The fear that it's now up to me to have final say is alive and well. Should I cut water to greens for a few days to firm and speed up, should we really start another big project right now, was it really that important to cut that tree down? All questions and decisions fall back on my plate. That's what comes with this job, the paper work, the stress of making the right decision and action in the eyes of your employer. Without the challenge we

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# SIX WAYS TO SAVE

THINK NOW ABOUT  
THE FUTURE

**Blake Meentemeyer, Agronomist,  
USGA Green Section, West Region**

Employee wages are increasing. Water and energy costs continue to rise. The price of plant protectants increases every year. While this introduction might sound a bit “doom and gloom,” it is important to have a master plan in place that addresses economics and accommodates such financial increases.

Think you are immune and have a

fiscally sound operation? You don't have to look far to see the challenges of the future, as superintendents in California will be required to pay a new state minimum wage of \$15.00 per hour to employees by Jan. 1, 2022. That's a 50 percent increase in just six years. Although such a law may not directly affect many of the Plains states, it is important to think about future costs in your region and to have a plan in place to absorb some rising costs. Given the current scenario of supply and demand, it is unlikely that golfers will be willing to fully absorb these costs.

Here are a few tips to consider as you analyze your budget and create a golf

course master plan that focuses on economic sustainability:

### Establish native grasses in out-of-play roughs

In the July 1, 2016, edition of the USGA Green Section Record, you will find my most recent regional update highlighting a very promising alternative for secondary rough and native areas that can save water, fuel and labor in out-of-play areas. Wheatgrass looks very promising as a low-input alternative grass, and very impressive native mixtures have been observed in Park City, Utah, containing

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## Bliss continued from page 6

wouldn't be doing it, we are problem solvers; that's our job.

Now, at the end of the season, I look back at the accomplishments of the year.

With a mild winter and weak snow pack, we had enough water to make it thru the summer months with our water. Big thanks to Mother Nature bringing a fairly mild summer with short stints of high heat but also a few days of good afternoon showers. Great weather led to some of the best course conditions we have had in years. There were a few more golfers to play than the last few years, too.

Mother Nature did her part to help this season, and so did my crew. Without them I would have nothing. As superintendents, we direct and lead the people who work for us. There is only so much one person can do. I have the trust and faith in my crew to handle the challenges we face and work together as a team. I respect them and all they do to help, and in turn, they give me respect for the challenges that we all face. I want to thank every one of them for all their hard work and look forward to many more years of great seasons ahead.

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the following species:

- Western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*)
- Slender wheatgrass (*Elymus trachycaulus*)
- Sheep fescue (*Festuca ovina*)
- Bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*)

### Mow efficiently

Still walk mowing greens, tees and approaches? Why not triplex at least once per week to speed up the process? Golfers likely won't know the difference.

### Save the striping pattern for special events

Many are infatuated with burning in stripes, but does it need to be performed every day? If you mow in a stripe pattern every day, is it still considered "special"? Mow in stripe patterns only during special events and holidays to give golfers the "wow factor" – after all, you probably don't wear a tuxedo to work every day. Mowing stripe patterns adds many hours to a mowing operation, so consider an alternative pattern for routine mowing. Try the "half-moon" mowing pattern on fairways where half is mowed in one direction and the other in the opposite. This method eliminates short angles and unnecessary turns.

### Reduce bunker maintenance

Hand raking bunkers, the faces in particular, is a time-consuming task. Have you considered an alternative approach to raking bunkers? More courses are trying the "Aussie" method where only the bunker bottoms are routinely raked and the faces are smoothed with the backside of a rake, roller squeegee or push broom. The edges are simply touched up, saving time. Do you have bunkers that rarely receive golfer traffic? You may wish to remove one or two bunkers altogether, especially if they are not affecting play or adding aesthetic value to the golf course.

### Diligently track labor hours

Track labor hours either with a spreadsheet or with a labor-tracking app to help identify where time is being spent.

### Sign up for the USGA Course Consulting Service

Site-specific recommendations for your golf course can help you save time, money and resources. The USGA Green Section offers several specialty visits including evaluations of putting greens, trees, irrigation/water use and bunkers. In the near future, a specialized visit will be offered to analyze how golfers use your course with GPS data loggers. The GPS data loggers map where golfers are going and, more importantly, where they are not going. A lack of golfer tracks can identify areas that are out of play and prime candidates for alternative landscapes or turf removal, reducing resource consumption without affecting playability.

In closing, economic sustainability is an issue for every golf course and every superintendent. These suggestions will not reduce the quality or playability of your golf course and may help mitigate maintenance-intensive practices with those that can save resources, time and money.

The USGA Green Section publishes BMP case studies and we would love to learn about your creative sustainability practices. Blake can be reached at (908) 458-1511 or at [bmeentemeyer@usga.org](mailto:bmeentemeyer@usga.org).

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# Firm and Fast

*A few considerations when getting caught up in the dogma*

**Matt Nelson**



“Firm and fast” has become a popular mantra in modern golf.

There are ample reasons to support this maintenance directive for the sport, including a greater diversity of shot options, potentially reduced water use

via irrigation, and less surface damage from golfers and machinery. Firm playing surfaces provide greater ball roll for players of all ability, add strategic interest and variability to shot-making, and can provide greater challenge for expert golfers. Turfgrass maintained on the “drier” side usually experiences less disease, can be mowed less often, uses less fertility and is irrigated less frequently and/or intensely. Mowing heights on putting greens

and fairways can often be raised to provide desired ball roll when the playing surface is firm and dry. While these are all worthy objectives for golf course maintenance and conditioning, there are a few considerations to keep in mind during implementation of the program.

In the arid/semi-arid climate of western North America, the wet spots tend to get wetter and the dry spots drier as the irrigation season progresses. Even the very newest and best irrigation systems usually only provide 80% or so distribution uniformity, which does not account for wind, variable soil conditions, differing grass species and concentrated wear patterns. Older irrigation systems have much more significant shortcomings with respect to uniform water application. Before you decide to dry out the golf course, be sure to audit sprinkler head distribution uniformity and performance. Also, assess control flexibility, consider the effects of no independent perimeter irrigation for putting green surrounds and review the overall watering window for the golf course. While golfers in North America may say they want firm and fast conditions, they generally despise wicked dry spots. Do you have the labor necessary to conduct hand-watering as needed? Will the clientele accept spot watering during the day? Are you ready to take the heat? Do you have full support from the ownership/green committee/membership?

In addition to reducing irrigation, rolling and sand topdressing are common cultural practices employed to achieve firm playing surfaces. The benefits of rolling continue to be brought forth in our industry through independent research trials and field observation. If your club is not utilizing rollers on putting



greens, it should, since the benefits are irrefutable. Sand top-dressing provides numerous benefits including surface smoothing, dilution of accumulated organic matter (thatch/mat) for balanced soil porosity, and surface firming for reduced mechanical damage and disruption from routine play. Less understood, is how much sand to apply and how frequently, to achieve the best short and long-term results. Since every site and every growing season is different, experience and regular empirical evaluation is needed to gauge the efficacy of a topdressing program. Annual testing of organic matter in the upper soil profile can be useful to evaluate trends over time, but may not provide enough information to make real time decisions during the growing season. Excess thatch can create soft and puffy conditions, but too little thatch can compromise wear tolerance, shot reception value and recuperative potential. Some amount of thatch and mat is necessary for a good stand of golf turf and good playability. A decent starting point for evaluating thatch levels is to pull a soil profile and conduct a "tear test" of the top inch or so. If the top inch easily pulls apart or disintegrates, there probably is not enough organic matter to hold up to reasonable amounts of play. If you can squeeze water out of the top inch or so, the organic matter density is likely too high for good agronomic health and surface conditioning. Keep in mind that organic matter provides numerous benefits to the grass plant system and that a well diluted organic matter layer can be maintained to yield rock hard surfaces.

Finally, consider your golfing clientele. The average (so-called avid) male golfer totes about a 16 handicap and the average women player a 28. These players probably do appreciate a little more roll off the tee, but not so much watching their best hybrid approach shot land on the front of the green and careen off the back in two hops. And what about those delicate little



pitch shots played around the greens? My experience suggests that the majority of golfers appreciate the beauty golf courses provide (think green grass), the comradery of friends, a friendly challenge and getting a little exercise outside. Firm and fast is a noble cause for the golf purist, but consider the ramifications of fully embracing this philosophy before attempting to take it too far. Firm and fast does not necessarily mean brown and dead and it is possible to have a reasonably green, beautiful, firm and fast, fun-to-play golf course with the proper infrastructure and planning. Both the game of golf and the preparation of the course are difficult to master.

*Matt Nelson is a sod farmer and golf industry consultant from Idaho.*

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**1st Flight**

1st Net - 104: Mike Rapp and Ryan Nielson, Falcon Crest Golf Course

2nd Net - 110: Jared Stanek and Josh Cantrell, Ryan Nielson, Falcon Crest Golf Course

1st Gross - 105: Ken Wheeler and Jim Empey, Purple Sage Golf Course

2nd Gross - 115: Luke Kujawski and Jon Totorica, Falcon Crest Golf Course

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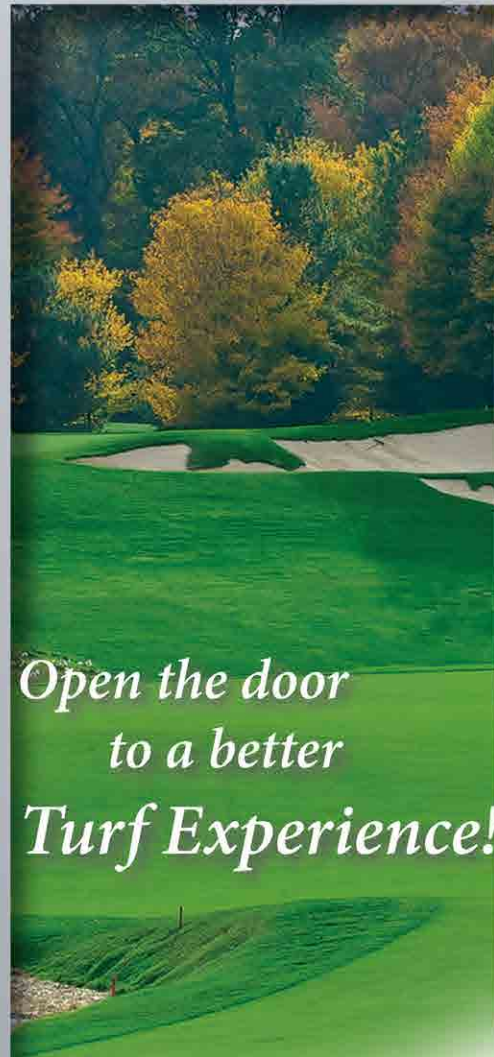
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# The Balancing Act of a Golf Course Superintendent

Cooper Hayes, Golf Course Superintendent



There are several rules I try to live by at work and at home, and I am sharing four of them with you. I can't say these rules are always followed, but somewhere in my mind - behind moisture levels, tourna-

ment preparation and green speeds - they always persist. We are in an industry that is ever changing, and is demanding both physically and mentally. It is easy to let work pull us from our home life, just as it is easy to let home life pull us from work. This is the balancing act we all must play as golf course superintendents. It's a fine line to walk and it's easy to fall off on either side. The important thing is to get back up on the line and learn from each time you fall. I'm sure many of us have seen a tweet about this in one form or another, but I've adjusted them to life on a golf course the way I see it.

*"Work is a never ending process. It can never be completed."*

This statement could not be more true for our profession. There is always grass to be mowed, bunkers to be raked, water to be applied and golfers to make happy. Being in our profession for the past six years through Idaho, Florida, California, and back to Idaho, has certainly taught me that we, as superintendents, very rarely turn our brains off from our courses. As soon as you fully turn your mind off, that is the moment you may be putting your career in jeopardy. It is our livelihood, our passion and is part of what gives us satisfaction in life. I've been very lucky to work for who I believe are some of the best in our industry. One of my first mentors taught me to not only work smarter but also work harder. That mantra has stuck since those early days and has served me well. This idea is not always possible in times of heat stress, tournament preparation or certain agronomic practices, but it is something we should all strive for. Tasks needing to be accomplished will always be there. As soon as one punch list is completed, you have already written the next. When we are on property we should be all in and we should have the goal to use our time wisely and as efficiently as possible.

*"Dedication to your course and facility is important, but so is your family."*

If we want to keep our jobs and our source of income for our families, then yes, we do need to be dedicated to our facilities. But, without our family there to support us and carry us when times get tough, what is the point of thinking our facility is important? Do not let your relationships with your family suffer because of your relationship with your course. Our families and

life outside of work should be our number one priority without ever forgetting about our facilities. The balancing act is important.

Building and keeping relationships with friends and family should be high on our priority list. These are the people who will always be there when we need them. They are the people who bring you back up when life gets you down. Just as many people in our industry have done, I also have traveled across the country gaining experience in different environments. These were long hauls from the East Coast and eventually back to the West Coast. None of my employers offered to help me make the cross-country drives. It was my friends and family who helped me make the drives and move my family. But, seeing how my employer cares has taught me that you can have a balance between work and caring for the people who work for you. It doesn't need to be as cut and dried as it was twenty years ago.

*"Don't let your life be meaningless. You need time to socialize, entertain, relax and exercise."*

Working stretches of weeks on end and putting in twelve-hour days for months can be detrimental to your personal life. For some, it has led to broken families, no families or the abuse of alcohol. Recognize when those hours are truly required to maintain the course to level your employer's expectation, and when those hours could just be a habit.

Being organized and planning are the two most important things we can do as superintendents to make those hours at work really count. As a result, proper organization at work can make your life at home more meaningful. If our shops are organized, our carts are organized, then our minds have a much better shot at being organized. When you are organized and have a plan, you are more apt to perform at higher level. One person's lack of planning always becomes someone else's emergency. I personally have been the cause of emergencies due to my lack of planning and have also been on the other side of that table. Neither of those seats are fun to find yourself. Don't put yourself in either of those situations, as they will only cause stress and concern for everyone involved. My mentor from Florida told me to always have a plan no matter how small a task we were trying to accomplish. But, also know that the greatest plan is bound to be changed, adjusted or flat out dismissed due to unseen circumstances. "Those who fail to plan, plan to fail." Winston Churchill

*"Love your job and trade but don't love your company because you do not know when your company may stop loving you"*

The majority of us entered our industry because we either love the sport or we enjoy being outside in nature. If you use that as your motivation to succeed and go to work each day, your

continued page 18





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Ornamental Communicators Association as the 2011 Environmental Communicator of the Year. Williams is currently the Environmental Editor for Golfdom magazine and is involved in numerous environmental, service and philanthropic activities. It wasn't easy to narrow down William's topics among the education committee from the list offered. I already see him returning in the future.

We are taking advantage of local knowledge in our efforts to



***“Proper Fertilization and Irrigation Rates Reduction of White Clover ”***

***“Tree Pests”***

bring you another conference agenda that will encourage you to protect the event dates! Tony McCammon, Area Extension Horticulturalist Twin Falls County Extension, University of Idaho, develops and conducts consumer and commercial horticulture programs in high priority areas identified by advisory councils that include horticulture commodities, nursery production, landscape maintenance, tree care, and consumer produced fruits and vegetables grown in the Magic Valley. His expertise extends as well to helping the 17 commercial berry farmers, the nursery producers growing plants under more than 250,000 square feet of greenhouses, or the more than 100,000 acres of vegetable production that is harvested for sale each year. McCammon also provides statewide leadership for the University of Idaho Master Gardener program coordinators and participates with regional and national Master Gardener organizations as the Idaho state representative.

A familiar association speaker, Bill Bankhead, OSHA, recommended Steven Hines to us. If “The General” says Hines is a pesticide guru – there is no argument on our end! Hines is the University of Idaho Extension Educator for Jerome County. He works primarily as an Extension agronomist and conducts pro-

gramming in pesticide safety and pre-licensing topics. He has been with the University of Idaho Extension for 16 years. Regardless your time spent in the turf industry – the opportunity to learn new information, or to review safety programs in place, will help ensure and safe and compliant pesticide program.

Attendees will enjoy a great afternoon of golf at a fantastic facility - Blue Lakes Country Club. Superintendent Jim



***“General Pesticide Applicator Safety ”***

Rasmussen looks forward to hosting his peers.

The annual silent auction will also be held in conjunction with the event. This is a vital



component to our annual budget. Over \$10,000 in product is donated each year. Each and every contribution is appreciated and vital to our success. This year the event will be chaired by Assistant Liaison Ryan Coburn, The Club at Spurwing. It is not too early to contact Ryan with your contribution (ryanlcoburn@gmail.com or Cell: (208) 559-5576).

**Balancing Act continued from page 16**

performance will only increase. Your personal satisfaction for your job will grow each day while your performance will match your passion. We see peers losing their jobs year after year by being blindsided by management. Be dedicated and work smarter and harder, but do it for the right reasons.

Every day, we face new challenges and we have the ability to either fail or succeed. It is what we decide to do in the face of these challenges that will determine our fate in this industry. If I have learned nothing else in my time working on golf courses, it is that we must learn from our mistakes, listen to our mentors and continually work on the balancing the act of being a golf course superintendent.

I can only speak for myself, but having a loving and supportive wife while raising three kids will be much more fulfilling in the long run. Take time in your personal life. Go on camping trips, run as often as your body lets you, invite family and friends over for Boise State football games and get out there and live a life outside the course.

It is simple – find true balance so you will enjoy your life and your career.



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