

# THROUGH THE GREEN

March/April 2015

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### Inside

- › Caron Renovates Ford
- › Mangum in State Hall





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A view of the newly renovated Ford Plantation.

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**Cover:** David Noto has gone from zero to golf course ownership, marriage and a love of the game again over the past decade.



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## Several Habits of a Highly Successful Association

Now that it's March, I'm sure most of us have broken our New Year's resolutions. My resolution was to fill the drainage trench in my backyard. Well, it's March and my wife still casually mentions that I "haven't filled in the trench."

It was easy to make time to dig the trench because our driveway was flooded after every rain. Now that the trench has diverted the flooding, it's harder to make time to pipe and fill it back in.

As many can relate, work, family, or other obligations take most of the few extra hours we in this industry have. If we fail at keeping our resolutions it's because it requires forming a habit. It's easy to do something when the matter is pressing; however, forming a habit takes more discipline.

As I mentioned in the last Through The Green, your board of directors met for its annual retreat to plan for 2015 and beyond. During the retreat, we discussed some of the good habits that have been formed through the years that make us successful and how to build upon them or keep from breaking them. One thing is for certain, through many years, this association has formed some good habits and that's why this chapter is a leader. These habits have brought rewards of recognition to us and have improved our footing for the good of golf within Georgia.

What are some of these habits? Probably the most important is providing quality education at our events. Continuing education helps keep all of us informed on the latest research and technology, which then can be utilized at our facilities benefitting our employers. It's important to be recognized, not only from within our group but also from outside groups as an association that believes in educating its members.

Another habit has been to research and confront any issues that may unfairly restrict our industry. Last year, Wally Gresham, as a GCSAA grassroots ambassador, set up a meeting with Congressman Lynn Westmorland at Sunset Hills Country Club. This meeting was an opportunity to discuss the Waters of the U.S. rule proposal by the Environmental Protection Agency.

It was noted at the meeting that Congressman Westmorland is on our side and against this proposed rule change to the Clean Water Act. However, it was also noted that he hadn't heard from anyone in golf until Wally contacted him. Well, at this year's board retreat we decided we'd do something about that. We are currently making plans for several members of the Georgia Golf Alliance to travel to Washington, D.C. and build a foundation of support with our legislators.

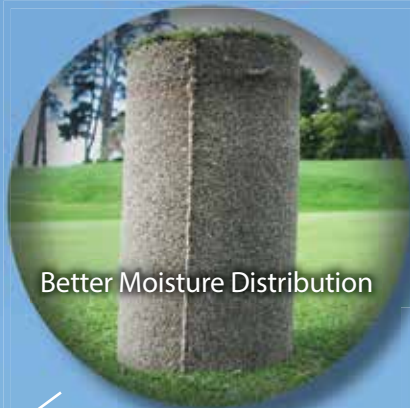
Other good habits we maintain include supporting our industry partners, growing leadership and communicating to our membership just to name a few.

We are heading back to the coast for our Spring Classic, which benefits the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation. In advance, I want to thank fellow Georgia GCSA director Chris Steigelman, CGCS and The Landings Club for hosting this important event. I hope to see everyone there in another sell out. That's become a habit too.



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# President Encourages Members To Act on Rounds4Research

Georgia GCSA president Mike Brown has appealed to members for a renewed effort to promote Rounds4Research in 2015 to help fund turfgrass research in the state. The online auction which began in the Southeast and has since gone national has new administration at GCSAA this year. Brown urges all Georgia GCSA members to solicit donations of rounds from their facility in time for the auction that runs June 8-21 alongside the U.S. Open and Fathers Day.

“We’re hoping there will be new energy promoting this campaign across the country and we want to be sure we have as many Georgia courses participating as possible,” Brown, from The Standard Club, says. “We were part of this campaign in its second year with the Carolinas GCSA so we have an added stake in ensuring its continued success.”

Brown says funds from the 2015 auction will help ensure the success of efforts to expand the Georgia GCSA’s Best Management Practices programs. Directors recently voted to draft BMPs on water quality, nutrient loading and pesticide scans. These will be in addition to existing water use BMPs drafted by the association that were so instrumental in shaping water policy for golf course use during the past decade. Georgia GCSA leaders will work with researchers from the University of Georgia to create the new BMPs.

“I have always said that today’s turf is yesterday’s research,” Brown says. “If we’re to continue to improve drought and shade tolerance then research donations need to continue for the sake of tomorrow’s turf.” Brown has made personal approaches to several GCSAA board members urging the national association to solicit on-air support for the program from television golf commentators David Feherty and Nick Faldo. “Why not,” Brown asks. “The same research has a great and positive impact on the PGA Tour product too.

More than 100 Georgia golf facilities participated in the first year of the auction but support from clubs and courses has eased since. Last year just 63 of about 500 courses in the state donated rounds for a foursome.

“Frankly, it is surprising that many more facilities don’t participate because they are the ultimate beneficiaries,” Brown says. “Better turfgrass research means better golf course conditions delivered more efficiently and more effectively. That’s good for the bottom line. Better yet, it is the golfer who is actually handing over the money when they bid for rounds online. We all need to get behind Rounds4Research.”



Mike Brown

Rounds can be donated online or donation forms can be downloaded online and then sent to Rounds4Research headquarters. There is a link to those forms on the Georgia GCSA website: [www.ggcsa.com](http://www.ggcsa.com).

Proceeds from Rounds4Research in Georgia go directly to the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation which distributes funds to programs and projects that help golf courses fulfill the environmental, recreational and economic needs of their communities. ■



# Equipment Managers Get Closer to Hector's Shop

By Cory Phillips

The 2015 Georgia GCSA equipment managers seminar started out like most equipment managers start their work day - walking around visually inspecting equipment, shop set-up, exchanging morning pleasantries with others, and most importantly, looking for coffee. Capital City Club at Crabapple was gracious enough to host this year's event mid-January. Host superintendents Kyle Marshall and Mike Studier, CGCS and equipment manager Don Lanning and their staff had the place looking phenomenal. Thanks also to Greenville Turf and Tractor for sponsoring the event.

The opportunity to tour another equipment manager's shop is reason enough to attend the meeting but the key speaker this year added even more incentive. Hector Velazquez, producer of Hector's Shop educational videos, spoke about the importance of self-education, communication and organization around the shop. He also emphasized the key role that social media plays in technician networking.

Velazquez resonated with the group really well because, like the majority of technicians in the audience, he is the only person in his shop. When asked about the communication with his superintendent, he said one key was their morning ride together. They ride the course and check equipment and course conditions.

"This gives us the opportunity to understand the goals and standards we are faced with," he said. "If you give most technicians a goal it is in their nature to try and meet or exceed that goal."

Over an hour of the presentation was spent with the group of 100-plus people asking questions and talking in an open forum format. Just before lunch Erik Sides with the Equipment and Engine Training Council presented the group with training certification opportunities available through the EETC. Bruce Dowling of Jerry Pate Turf and Irrigation and a proctor for the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association presented certificate opportunities available through IGCEMA organization.

The Georgia GCSA education committee always tries to offer something engaging during the Equipment Managers Seminar. Last year the group spent time after lunch practicing welding techniques and instruction with tremendously positive feedback. This year wasn't any different. Velazquez spent the afternoon teaching money-saving techniques like plastic welding and vinyl repair.

Steven Rice is a representative with Gates Corporation and he spent time with the group on the different products available to them such as belts, hoses and hydraulic fittings. Greg Dupree is a representative with Kohler Engines and spent time on engine failure analysis.

If your technician attended this year, ask them about their experience. If your technician didn't attend this year, encourage them to do so next year. Equipment is always evolving. Technicians, shops and techniques must follow suit. ■

- Cory Phillips is equipment manager at Horseshoe Bend Country Club in Roswell where Georgia GCSA director Sam Welch is director of agronomy.



Hector Valzquez, of Hector's Shop, leads education.



Cody Aaron from Cartersville Country Club



Trent Manning from Ansley Golf Club.



Jackie McKenzie from Atlanta Athletic Club.





Part of the full-house for the annual equipment managers seminar at Capital City Club at Crabapple.



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# GGEF Seminar Gives Food for Thought

Given that he is exploring options for reducing maintained acreage at The Georgia Club in Athens, this year's Golf Course Management Training was almost tailor-made for John McMullan. McMullan was one of about 100 people at this year's event at the Student Learning Center at the University of Georgia's Griffin Campus in January. The annual seminar is provided free for attendees through the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation.

McMullan, who has been at The Georgia Club for 14 years, says he "got a lot" out of afternoon presentations by Mark Hoban from Rivermont Golf and Country Club and Bob Farren, CGCS from Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina. Hoban discussed his experience at Rivermont where he has done extensive work introducing native grasses and exploring an organic maintenance philosophy to reduce the use of conventional inputs, namely water, fertilizer, pesticides and mowing.

Farren is director of golf course maintenance and grounds at Pinehurst which has cut about 100 acres from maintenance across the resort's eight courses in recent years. Of course some of that acreage generated considerable interest when the No. 2 course hosted last year's U.S. Open on the driest, firmest fairways in the championship's recent history. There was no rough, instead balls missing the fairways ended up in sandy waste areas dotted with native grasses and plants.

For McMullan, who maintains close to 200 acres with 27 holes at The Georgia Club, both talks gave him food for thought. "I don't know that I would ever want to go to either extreme but I would like to try a few things," he says. "I'd love to go and take a look at Mark's course and see what he's done. From the photos he showed it's a very interesting look."

McMullan says he is considering making a visit to Rivermont and perhaps even bringing some members or key personnel along at the same time. "We have a lot of areas between holes that I would like to do something with," he says. "They were originally seeded with fescue but with budgets being what they are these days there isn't the manpower to take care of them the way they were designed to be maintained."

The morning program included a series of updates on turfgrass research from members of the University of Georgia turfgrass team. "The program was one of the best I've attended I think," McMullan says. "The presentations seemed to move along really well. As superintendents we're used to being on the move so sometimes when a single presentation or seminar takes up four hours or eight hours it can be a bit challenging." ■



UGA's Dr. Patrick McCullough delivers an update at the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation's annual seminar.





Dr. Paul Raymer, UGA



Dr. Alfredo Martinez-Espinoza, UGA



Dr. Clint Waltz, UGA



Mark Hoban



Dr. Brian Schwartz, UGA



Bob Farren, CGCS



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# Annual Retreat Leads Association Forward

By Chris Steigelman, CGCS

One of the real privileges of serving on the Georgia GCSA board of directors is attending the annual board retreat. This “live-in” gathering over three days is designed to help get the best out of the board for the betterment of the association as a whole. It works.

I have to admit when I attended my first retreat last year I was overwhelmed. I’d been on the board for about a month and had little to no idea just how much goes into the running of our association. That first retreat really opened my eyes and I came away with a much better appreciation for the work our staff does, for the work of my fellow directors and for the efforts of all previous boards.

In January, I attended my second retreat, this time at Barnsley Gardens Resort in Adairsville where golf course superintendent Lance McDonald, his assistant Dusty LeGrande and the entire staff were very cordial hosts. The retreat is a great chance for the directors to interact socially away from the day-to-day work life. Getting to know each other better helps us all in our work as we strive to represent the interests of each and every member.

Once again the retreat was led by Mark Esoda, CGCS from Atlanta Country Club. Everyone at least knows Mark by reputation as one of the true leaders of the profession. But to see him in operation up close and personal for three days is something else altogether. He’s not just a leader because of his expertise and dedication. The guy also thinks with a sharper edge than most of us and is not afraid to go into uncharted territory. Nor is he afraid to push the rest of us

there and each of us and the association is better for it.

We were supposed to begin the retreat with a golf outing with some of our most-engaged industry partners. Rain put an end to those plans but we still had a chance to spend time with them over an informal dinner that evening. Even with the golf being washed out we still had very strong attendance from our vendors. It was great to be able to unwind with them in a casual setting, even if it was a bit chilly sitting outside.

I sat next to Peggy Clanton of BASF who I have known for several years now. Peggy typifies the kind of support that helps our association be what it is. She is one of many vendors who go to great lengths to contribute, helping with sign-ups at meetings and so on. After saying our goodbyes, the directors had a quick debrief about what was ahead from Mark. He gave us some reading material but to be honest I’m not sure how much reading was done that night given that it was late and everyone had a very full stomach.

The next morning, after a very, very cold walk about 7.30am, it was down to business. There was a lot of intense discussion about the year just past. There was a lot of positive things to talk about, like incredibly strong attendance at meetings and our latest video project, which executive director Tenia Workman had a lot to do with. Tenia drives so much of what we do and does so with such passion and true care that is so near the surface all the time. It wouldn’t be a Georgia GCSA meeting if Tenia didn’t end up crying at some point. Honestly, I think her passion alone is one of the



Mark Esoda, CGCS from Atlanta Country Club leads directors on an early morning wake-up walk.



Chris Steigelman, CGCS.

biggest factors that sets us apart from all the other chapters in the country.

There are a lot of legislative and regulatory issues on the table at the moment such as Waters of the United States proposal, new drought regulations, changes to pesticide and fertilizer controls and more. Each issue is important to our work as superintendents making efforts like Golf Day at the Capitol all the more critical. Golf Day is back on this year in March and the fact that we now have a tradition of bringing all the allied golf organizations to Atlanta means our industry is on the radar of all the people making the big decisions. I can tell you there is a lot of excitement on the board about this year's event.

Monday afternoon was devoted to team-building, which often involves an activity a little out of the ordinary for us. Last year it was yoga but this year it was sporting clays, something a little more comfortable for a lot of the guys. Jason Whitecliffe of Syngenta and Randy Mangum of Corbin Turf and Ornamental led the way. They are both experts and taught everyone the ropes. While a lot of us had fired a gun before, it was a first for Mike Martin from Hampton Golf Village. But he did a very good job. I was impressed.

I shoot maybe two or three times a year and hit about 50 percent of my targets but I'm happy to report that our president Mike Brown from The Standard Club was the best shot on the board with about a 70 percent success rate. So if we ever get into a gun battle it's nice to know we will be in such good hands.

As the sun went down so did the temperatures but Kyle Macdonald from St. Ives Country Club cooked up a storm. The board splits into three groups for each meal with each group taking turns at preparation, cooking and clean up. Kyle did some wonderful steaks and even brought his own blender to make his special sauce.

Then we watched a movie, "When the Game Stands Tall." It is the story of the phenomenal success of De La Salle High School's football team out in California. Mike Martin picked the film and it was very inspirational and perfect for the job. We followed that with a freewheeling brainstorming session over a few beers in the kitchen of one of the cabins we were using. That really helped set the creative tone for our next session Tuesday morning.

We began with the traditional thorns and roses walk where each of us share a negative and a positive from the previous day. It was 20 degrees but we still walked a few holes of the golf course and were wide awake by the time we sat down inside. We covered goals and tasks for each of the committees and I can tell you there is a lot of great education and golf coming this year.

All in all, this year's retreat was a very positive and productive exercise. Everyone deserves credit for that. Every time I get in a room with the guys on this board I learn so much. Having a guy like Mark Esoda there with people like Anthony Williams, CGCS from Stone Mountain Golf Club is amazing. They've forgotten more than I will ever know. Mark really pushes you to think creatively and doesn't let you off with any soft answers. We all need that Esoda in our heads constantly telling us to dig a little deeper, to work a little harder on it.

I think I can speak for everyone on the board when I say that we all come away with a renewed sense of vision and purpose. I think that helps us all at our own golf courses and it definitely helps us in our work on the board of directors. I can't wait for next year's retreat but I'm just as excited about all the great things we have lined up for the Georgia GCSA until then. ■

*-Chris Steigelman is certified golf course superintendent at The Landings Club in Savannah and a Georgia GCSA director.*



Georgia GCSA president Mike Brown from The Standard Club deep in thought.



Greg Bureson from Augusta Country Club, Georgia GCSA executive director Tenia Workman, Tommy Hewitt from Windermere Golf Club, Scott Griffith from the University of Georgia Golf Course and Tim Busek from The Manor Golf and Country Club.



Georgia GCSA executive director Tenia Workman, who teaches kick-boxing in her spare time, is never one to shy away from a challenge, no matter how uncomfortable. Thanks to some help from Randy Mangum of Corbin Turf and Ornamental she can now check off sporting clays from her bucket list.

#### Hesitation



#### Instruction



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#### Relief



Kyle Macdonald and St. Ives Country Club members donated clubs to The First Tee at East lake through the Governor's With a Servant's Heart Foundation and the Weir Foundation.



Nelson Caron from The Ford Plantation was happy to take part in the sporting clays shoot.



Sam Welch from Horseshoe Bend/Golf Club of Georgia during a brainstorming session.



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# Spring Classic Heads South Down I-95

This year's Georgia GCSA Spring Classic heads south to The Landings Club in Savannah. The event, one of the most popular on the association calendar, is expected to attract a full field of 180 golfers across The Landings' Palmetto and Plantation courses. The trek down I-95 represents a shift from recent years when the event has been in or close to Atlanta. It will be the first Georgia GCSA event at the club since the summer conference in 2004.

Proceeds from the Spring Classic on March 23 go to the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation to help fund turfgrass research to serve superintendents and the industry in the state.

"It's a little daunting having 180 of your peers coming to play your golf courses," says host superintendent and Georgia GCSA director, Chris Steigelman, CGCS. "But I am definitely excited that it's happening. I've wanted to host some event for the Georgia GCSA for a while as a way of giving back. To have such a big event as the Spring Classic is wonderful chance to do that."

The Palmetto course designed by Willard Byrd opened in 1982 and underwent a \$600,000 renovation last year. Fairways and bunkers were refurbished and greens were regrassed with TifEagle bermudagrass. The project also returned greens to their original sizes which added nearly 25 percent to their total acreage. Greens collars are TifGrand and the fairways are Celebration. More than 80 trees were removed on the course which, like each of the six courses at The Landings, is a designated Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary.

Arthur Hills designed the Palmetto course which opened in 1985. It will close shortly after the Spring Classic for its own renovation. Steigelman says each of The Landings courses, set among hard-

wood forests, saltwater marshes and tidal creeks, receives about 30,000 rounds per year.

"We are thrilled to be able to have such an important event at such a wonderful venue," says Georgia GCSA executive director Tenia Workman. "I think our members and other golf industry supporters are in for a real treat. It's been some time since we have been to The Landings and it will be great to be back there." ■



A view of the Palmetto course which was renovated last year.



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# REDEMPTION: *From Broke and Burned To a Decade of Miracles*

by Trent Bouts

Ten years ago, David Noto sat in a cheap hotel room with his every earthly possession in a single bag slung off in the corner. He had no job, no car and not much more of an idea of what was next. His lifelong dream of being a professional golfer had instead turned into a living nightmare. He was broke and near broken.

It wasn't just because he "missed a lot of cuts" in his first full year playing the mini-tours. Drink, a demon he'd fought off once, had slithered into his life again on the back of constant disappointment. Things were so far off track he didn't even turn up to the last few events of the season, events he'd paid for in advance.

"I'd crashed and burned," he says. "I'd wanted to be a professional golfer my whole life. I thought it would be different. I was devastated. I was drinking again. Financially, spiritually, I was bankrupt in every way you could be."



By Trent Bouts





A hose and a cup-cutter are permanent fixtures beside David Noto's golf clubs.

Whether or not the light was on in that hotel room Noto felt a darkness pressing in, a kind of darkness that serves as a cross-roads for some, for others ... perhaps even as the end of the road.

Noto took a sharp turn, to the right you could say, and this year he marks a decade of sobriety. While he may not be a professional golfer, he is a golf course superintendent, at Mossy Creek Golf Club in Cleveland. What's more, since August of 2013, he is also a part-owner of the club. He is also now married, a homeowner and recently bought a new truck, his first.

If in the years leading up to that lonely hotel room there was a "lost decade," Noto, now 46, regards the period since as his "decade of miracles." "I could call it God's grace, I think," he says. "I could never have drawn it up in the way it has worked out. I haven't wanted for anything in the past 10 years."

He's even regained his love of the game, along with his amateur status. In May, he takes another tilt at the Georgia State Mid-Amateur Championship as an automatic qualifier courtesy of his Georgia GCSA championship - his third in four years - in December. How well he does there will depend in large part on how his bentgrass greens do at Mossy Creek beforehand.

Noto is, by anyone's definition, a hands-on superintendent. "If the

greens are where they should be I can play some golf, work on my game," he says. "If they aren't then I won't." His only full-time employee doubles as his mechanic and equipment operator. There are two part-timers to help with everything else. If that doesn't paint a clear enough picture for you, consider that Noto doesn't even have a desk, let alone a computer. Never has, in six years at the club. In terms of office equipment, his phone is about it.

The only heat in his maintenance facility is from a wood fire in a converted 44-gallon drum. "Something to take the chill off," he explains. "If you're moving you don't get that cold." A hose and a cup-cutter hang permanently off the back of his golf cart beside his clubs, symbols of work and pleasure - a mix Noto has finally mastered. For a long while though, trying to mix the two mastered him.

"Shoot man, out of college I was 20-something years old and thought I knew everything," he says. "I was tending bar and waiting tables and just wanting to continue the party. I could do both for a while, stay up late and still play well the next day."

And Noto could play. At Central Alabama his team-mates included eventual European Ryder Cup team member Per-Ulrik Johansson. After two years there studying business, he went to Georgia Southern in Statesboro majoring in psychology. But by his own admission he "didn't go to class much." Instead, distractions became the focus.



Even so, in 1990, just out of college, he had his best year winning the Montgomery Country Club Invitational, finishing top 10 in the Alabama State Amateur and qualifying for the prestigious North and South Championship. “But life got the better of me,” he says. Before long Noto wasn’t even playing golf let alone making a living at it. “I don’t know what I was searching for or looking for,” he says. “But there was no good, orderly direction.” The ‘90s constituted that “lost decade.”

Eventually, Noto took stock and in 2001 moved north to Helen “just to get away.” He picked up work at Innsbruck Golf Club running a weed-eater. He wanted to play golf again but first had to “round up some clubs.” Soon he was working his tail off until mid-afternoon then playing to his heart’s content. His game came back. He shot a course record 65 from the tips at Innsbruck overtaking the previous best by PGA Tour winner and Georgia Golf Hall of Famer DeWitt Weaver.

“I was sober,” Noto says. “And I was on my way, at least in my mind, to reclaiming what I had lost.”

He did turn pro and after playing a handful of mini-tour events in 2002 and 2003, committed to 2004 as his coming out year. With still shallow pockets, Noto avoided an extra room night each tournament by making the three-hour drive to the Charlotte-based Tarheel Tour on the morning of his practice round. Those rounds invariably took six hours to complete because “guys were hitting two balls and taking all kinds of notes.” After fast food and a night in a shared hotel room, he often went into the tournament “burned out before I teed it up.”

“It was more of a grind and I got out of it what I put into it, which wasn’t enough,” he says now. Whether it was disappointment, disillusionment or being in the company of room-mates who enjoyed a drink, Noto “relapsed.” It took the best part of a year for him to get a handle on life again. Then in the summer of 2005, now living in that hotel room, he landed a job as an assistant superintendent to Fred Williams at Apple Mountain Resort and Golf Club in Clarkesville. He’s never looked back.

“I realized I’d been in golf for all the wrong reasons,” Noto says. “I wasn’t helping others. It was always about what golf could do for me. And that attitude bit me on the ... well.”

Simply getting the job was surely part of Noto’s “miracle.” Having people willing to pick him up for work each day and drop him back at his hotel had to be another. That others were investing in him helped Noto’s self-belief and grow his faith in a greater good. He enrolled in the horticulture and turfgrass program at Gwinnett Technical College and secured his pesticide license. The collective faith was vindicated.

“It’s unbelievable. As soon as I’d taken my last class I got the job at Mossy Creek (in 2008),” he says. “There’s a plan in place. I’m not sure how much I’ve had to do with it. But I’m grateful for the past life experiences I have had. Now I find those liabilities are my assets. It’s all part of the journey.”

Even the catalyst for Noto’s job offer at Mossy Creek was an invitation to succeed. The club had lost their greens. “There was nowhere to go but up,” he says. “It’s not like I could ruin the greens. I thought, ‘Hey,



David Noto is on the way up at Mossy Creek.

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I can sow bentgrass seed.' I'd done it before after some vandalism at Apple Mountain. It was the perfect job for a first-time superintendent."

Noto returned Mossy Creek's greens to health and around the same time reconnected with an old middle school friend through Facebook. They married in 2011 and it is now part of Georgia GCSA lore that he and that friend, Jennifer, honeymooned at Jekyll Island while he was winning his first superintendent championship. Noto had planned a different getaway but when he discovered the dates clashed with the Georgia GCSA conference and golf championship, his fiancé was understanding, on one condition.

"Jennifer had told me, 'You better win.'" Noto said after his win that year. "We had a great weekend. I can't imagine anything better than marrying the woman you love and then winning a golf tournament."

While Noto's life and his greens were growing in the right direction, Mossy Creek the club struggled and by 2013 was in receivership and heading to foreclosure. "We didn't know who was going to buy it and if we would have jobs when they did," Noto says. It was a testing time. But once again, adversity brought opportunity to his door. Three members were prepared to buy the club but only if Noto and general manager Robby Hayes were part of the deal.

"My banker said, 'Do it! It's a once in a lifetime chance,'" Noto says. "So then it was a no-brainer with job security for me thrown in. It was a smart move by the membership group because now, as the people protecting their investment, we were also protecting our own. I used to want to mow greens every day even if there was only one group on the tee sheet. Now I look at it and ask myself do I really need to spend those resources. I'm always asking how can I use less fuel, inputs, labor and still have a good product. Before I just wanted the good product."

In 2014, Mossy Creek saw 22,000 rounds, better than the break even mark of 18,000. This spring, Noto will even move into an office after renovating a dilapidated storage room in the clubhouse. Still, it's doubtful he will spend much time in there. There's too much to be done on the golf course and that's where he's happiest once again. Only now it doesn't have to be a five-iron in his hands. A rake or a spade brings as much contentment.

"I would still like to play professionally again one day but for different reasons," he says. "Maybe play some senior events. Who knows if it will happen. But it's fun to think about." ■

Until now David Noto has not shared so much of his life story with colleagues in the golf course maintenance profession. But after 10 years of sobriety thanks to the help of a rehabilitation program, he wants to be open in the hope that his recovery might offer encouragement to others. "I am grateful to many people, including my mother and late father, and to the Georgia GCSA for the role it has played in helping my career," Noto says. "My wife and I talked about it and if I can help anybody in any way by sharing my experience then it's the right thing to do."



# Caron Works with Dye on Rebirth at Ford Plantation



Nelson Caron and master golf course architect Pete Dye.

**L**ike many of his colleagues in golf Nelson Caron endured a sinking feeling during the recession. Unlike the rest of them though, the sensation at The Ford Plantation had nothing to do with the economic downturn. Instead, the Pete Dye designed course in Richmond Hill was too often quite literally under water.

Director of golf course maintenance Nelson Caron likened his job description to captaining a ship. “A ship that had holes in it,” he told reporters when the course reopened after a \$7.2-million renovation last fall. Infrastructure failures meant that as little as two inches of rain would flood the back nine. Without functional drainage, the links-style nine amid saltwater lakes was closed about 40 days a year.

“We had all of our hands in the ship and it was going down,” Caron went on. “It was time to make some changes.” Speaking to fellow Georgia GCSA members during the annual conference at St. Simons Island in December, Caron quipped, “We had water features in the middle of the fairways!” In addition to flooding from rain, the course averaged 2.5 irrigation breaks a week. “The backhoe left the shop every day,” he said.

This spring, Caron is ready to give the golf course back to course superintendent, Kyle Johnson. The leaky ship is more of a limousine now. Among a host of improvements, perhaps none will be more valuable than nearly 30 miles of new piping for a seepage

drainage system and a storm water pump that can disperse 16,000 gallons a minute.

Above ground, Caron, a Georgia GCSA director, now works with a course sodded with 2 million square feet of Celebration bermudagrass. The Tifeagle greens are 20 percent larger and the 27-year-old irrigation system was replaced. The course was also lengthened by more than 300 yards to 7,409 yards. Close to 100,000 cubic yards of soil were moved around the course resulting in bunkering and natural waste areas with a new “high dunes” look.

Caron made good use of the “Sunseeker” app to help convince members of the need to remove numerous trees, including some that were member-owned. The entire front nine was also root pruned. The renovation also targeted “yellow dog” bermudagrass that had overtaken much of the course. Caron “scalped it down to the basement” in October then heavily overseeded – with \$75,000-worth of seed – to inflict “as much damage to the old bermudagrass as possible.”

“The overseed was popping like crazy by November 20,” Caron says, and the course was verdant for Christmas. In the fall of 2015, the club plans on entering a four-year overseeding rotational program that includes; overseeding wall-to-wall the first year, overseeding just fairways the next and only roughs in the third year. The fourth year the club will simply paint fairways.



The mind, the mystique and the magic of Pete Dye at work, step by step on the Ford Plantation's third hole.



1

Dye scratches his vision in the dirt.

Caron says technology played a significant role convincing members to support the renovation which was funded by a \$35,000 assessment. A camera on a boom lift captured photos from more than 30 feet in the air and a computer art designer generated images of what the course would look like post-renovation. "They were a big hit," Caron says. "They cost between \$1,100 and \$1,500 per slide. So we only did five or six but they were very helpful letting people see what they were going to get when we were done."

Naturally, Caron is thrilled with the changes which led Golf Digest to name it one of the best new courses for 2014. "It was a tough place to work," he says. "I've been there six years and I'm the longest-tenured superintendent they've had." Previous superintendents had battled clouds with the facility ownership which led to "significant deferred maintenance issues." Members took over the club in 2008 but it took until late 2012 to get approval for the much-needed renovation of the property once owned by Henry Ford and frequented by Harvey Firestone.

Caron understood what the renovation would deliver in agronomic terms but he admits he had no idea how much energy he would draw from watching Dye, the master architect, at work. "He is amazing. It's unbelievable how smart that guy is," Caron says. "You have to be very alert and physically fit to work with Mr. Dye because he will test your mind and then walk you to death, which is amazing for an 89-year-old man. You have to be sharp, you have to be fit, and you have to have a good night's sleep."

While Caron says members wanted clear pictures of what the renovation would deliver, Dye preferred more old-fashioned means to illustrate his vision. "Mr. Dye would literally get down and scratch it in the dirt," he says. "I took a lot of photos of them because I knew they were my new 'as-builts.' He doesn't want you taking notes. I think he just wants to be sure you grasp the vision. He really wanted us to understand what we were working towards and then let the golf course develop."

The renovation team also included Dye's long time collaborator Tim Liddy and MacCurrach Golf Construction. ■



2

What he draws.



3

What it means.



4

What it looks like under construction.



5

The finished product.

# Mangum and McClure Enter Hall of Fame



Pam and Ken Mangum, CGCS.

Georgia GCSA members were a prominent presence at this year's Georgia Golf Hall of Fame induction ceremony at Atlanta Athletic Club in Johns Creek. Some traveled from far and wide to pay tribute to a colleague who had the shortest trip of all because he works at the club. Ken Mangum, CGCS has been at Atlanta Athletic Club since 1988 hosting two PGA Championships, a U.S. Women's Open, a U.S. Amateur Championship and a U.S. Junior Championship. He will retire May 31.

Superintendents present also paid tribute to a close friend and longtime ally of the profession, Gene McClure, who was also inducted to the Hall of Fame. McClure is a lifelong contributor to the game of golf and has demonstrated an excellence in his knowledge, passion and volunteerism for the good of the game. In one of his many volunteer roles, which have included the presidency of the Georgia State Golf Association and key positions with the USGA, he currently serves on the board of trustees for the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation.

Others inducted in January included Ray Cutright, director of golf at Idle Hour Club in Macon, and Carter Mize, one of the best amateur players the state has produced.

But for superintendents, the spotlight shone brightest on Mangum.

Georgia GCSA past-president Mike Crawford, CGCS from TPC Sugarloaf in Duluth was not surprised such a strong contingent turned out to congratulate Mangum. Crawford says Mangum mentored more than 50 assistant golf course superintendents over the years that have gone on to superintendent positions. Crawford himself worked for Mangum from 1990 to 1995.

Mangum joins only two other superintendents in the Georgia Golf Hall of Fame. Mangum actually worked for one of them, Palmer Maples Jr. when he was superintendent at Atlanta Athletic Club. Mangum paid tribute to Maples' influence in a video shown at the induction ceremony. "He set such a great example and is still a great friend," Mangum says. Another Georgia GCSA past-president, Mark Esoda, CGCS from Atlanta Country is the other superintendent in the Hall of Fame.

Not every superintendent at the event worked for Mangum though. "I never have had the pleasure of working with Ken," says William Smith, CGCS from Country Club of Columbus. Although I have known Ken professionally for over 25 years and have always admired his accomplishments in the golf turf industry." Smith was also there in support of Carter Mize who "is also a friend and a member at the Country Club of Columbus." "It was a great night for golf in Georgia and a great night for the Georgia GCSA with Ken's most deserving recognition."

Among a long list of accomplishments and awards, Mangum was inducted into the Georgia GCSA Hall of Fame in 2013, and was the recipient of the USGA's Ike Grainger Award and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Col. John Morley Distinguished Service Award that same year. He was named Georgia Superintendent of the Year in 2002 and the Georgia Turf Professional of the Year in 1996.

Mangum paid tribute to the influence of his father as a major factor in his professional success and that of his brother Randy, a fellow Georgia GCSA member with Corbin Turf and Ornamental Supply. "He taught us to be the best we could be," Mangum said. "He never got hung up on what we did but emphasized that whatever we did, we should do it to the best of our ability." ■





Gene McClure



Mike Crawford, CGCS from TPC Sugarloaf spent five years under Mangum and Kyle Marshall from Capital City Club.



Anthony Williams, CGCS from Stone Mountain Golf Club and Palmer Maples Jr., CGCS who was an early mentor for Mangum.



Kyle Johnson from Inverness Country Club in Birmingham, AL worked for Mangum and Tyler Andersen who has been at Atlanta Athletic Club since 2007.



Atlanta Athletic Club golf course maintenance secretary Teresa Morgan and Jackie McKenzie who has been equipment manager at the club more than 40 years.



Neal Wisdom from Druid Hills Golf Club and wife, Kate.

## Video Lands Major Award



John McCarthy, CGCS

The Georgia GCSA has been recognized for excellence with an award for its video work promoting the role of the golf course superintendent. Golf Course Industry magazine was to present the GCI Super Social Media Award for best use of video at the annual Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, TX in February. The award is for the “Stewards of the Land” video, available for viewing at [www.ggcsa.com](http://www.ggcsa.com).

“The award reflects not only the high quality of what your organization has been doing on social media but also the great example the Georgia GCSA sets for its peers and colleagues around the global golf and turf industry,” GCI leaders said announcing the award.

Georgia GCSA president Mike Brown from The Standard Club says the award is due recognition for the “excellent work” of a number of people including Scott Griffith from the University of Georgia Golf Course, Sam Welch from Horseshoe Bend/Golf Club of Georgia, Kyle Macdonald from St. Ives Country Club, Georgia GCSA executive director Tenia Workman and video producer Justin Wojtczak.

Brown paid particular tribute to the efforts of former Georgia GCSA director John McCarthy. “I can’t tell you how many hours John put in,” Brown says. “He was instrumental in the process. The videos are phenomenal and this award is further proof of that. We are very honored to be recognized for putting the message of the golf course superintendent into a form that is so easy for all people to access and appreciate.”

## Letter of Thanks

Tenia and the Georgia GCSA



Ron Sinnock

Once again, I want to express my sincere appreciation to you and the association for selecting me for the 2014 Hall of Fame. This is a great honor for me and my family. I consider it the highlight of my career to be recognized by my peers and to be part of such an esteemed group.

It was good to see so many old friends and new faces at St. Simons. The Georgia GCSA organization is an excellent one and I’m proud to be associated with it.

Thank you again for the honor,  
Ron Sinnock

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# Manor Gathering Maps Meetings

About 20 members of the Georgia GCSA education committee met at The Manor Golf and Country Club recently, confirming details for a full 2015 calendar and brainstorming ideas for 2016. "Anytime you've got every aspect of the industry represented in the room, you get good ideas," says host superintendent and Georgia GCSA director Tim Busek. "We gathered an excellent mix of ideas and suggestions from

University of Georgia professors, USGA agronomists, superintendents, vendors, assistant superintendents and others." The highlight of the 2015 calendar is the annual meeting and golf championship at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta, home of the annual Tour Championship for the PGA Tour.



UGA's Dr. Gerald Henry and the USGA Green Section's Pat O'Brien.



Ralph Kepple, CGCS who hosts this year's annual meeting at East Lake Golf Club.



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## UGA to Honor Turfgrass Duo



**Alfredo Martinez-Espinoza**



**Clint Waltz**

The University of Georgia has recognized two members of the UGA turfgrass team with significant awards. Professor Clint Waltz and Professor Alfredo Martinez-Espinoza have been chosen as recipients of the 2015 Walter Barnard Hill Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach.

“As you know accomplishments don’t happen without the support, encouragement and mentoring of family and colleagues,” Waltz wrote in an email informing Georgia GCSA members of his award. “There have been many that have played various roles throughout my career, to all of them I am truly appreciative.”

Martinez-Espinoza echoed that sentiment in a message to Georgia GCSA executive director Tenia Workman. “I’m humbled and honored for this distinction; your support made it all possible,” he wrote.

Recipients of the award are judged to have made contributions to the improvement of the quality of life in Georgia or elsewhere of an order that greatly exceeds the normal accomplishments of a productive faculty member. A maximum of five Hill Awards are made annually. Waltz and Martinez-Espinoza will receive their awards at a special ceremony later this year.

The Hill Award is named in honor of Chancellor Walter Barnard Hill, who led the University of Georgia from 1899 until his death in 1905.

## Legacy Scholarships Deadline is May 1

Applications are now open for the 2015 Georgia GCSA Legacy Scholarships. The scholarships provide financial aid to support the continued education of children and grandchildren of Georgia GCSA Class A, SM, C, Retired A, Retired SM or AA Life members. Nine scholarships were awarded in 2014. The program is presented in partnership with Jerry Pate Turf and Irrigation.

Applications must be postmarked no later than May 1 and will be reviewed and winners determined by the Georgia GCSA scholarship committee chaired by Mike Martin from Hampton Golf Village. All decisions of the committee are final. Applicants will be notified by mail of their status by June 15, 2015. All scholarship award checks will be made payable to the applicant.

Applications will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- (1) Academic achievement, extracurricular and community involvement, leadership and outside employment;
- (2) Two original essays;
  - a. Your family and why you should be a Legacy Scholar (maximum of 300 words) and
  - b. Besides someone in your family, who is your hero or mentor and why (maximum of 300 words).

Please note, financial need is not a factor in the selection.

For full details and application paperwork please visit the Georgia GCSA website and click on the “Scholarship” tab in the upper right hand corner of the home page.

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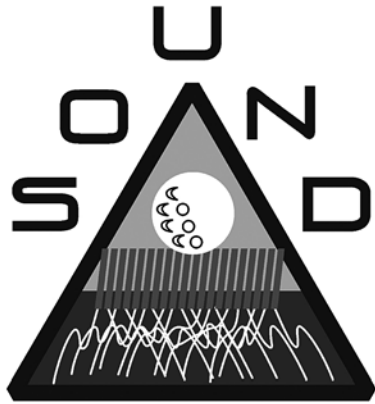
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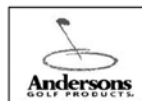


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# Georgia GCSA Events

 **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

March 23, 2015

**Georgia GCSA Spring Classic**

*Benefiting the GGEF*

The Landings Club

Savannah, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Chris Steigelman, CGCS*

April 28, 2015

**69th Annual Southeastern Turfgrass Conference**

University of Georgia

Tifton Campus

Tifton, GA

May 18, 2015

**Bentgrass-Bermudagrass Forum And Golf Outing**

Coosa Country Club

Rome, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Tim Cunningham, CGCS*

June 9, 2015

**Bulldog Classic**

*Benefiting the Georgia GCSA*

*Scholarship Fund*

University of Georgia Golf

Course

Athens, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Scott Griffith*

September 14, 2015

**Bermudagrass Forum And Golf Outing**

The King and Prince Golf

Course

St. Simons Island, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Chuck Moore*

October 19, 2015

**Assistant Superintendent Seminar And Golf Championship**

Druid Hills Golf Club

Atlanta, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Neal Wisdom*

November 2, 2015

**Challenge Cup**

Cuscowilla on Lake Oconee

Eatonton, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Sam Murphy*

November 16-17, 2015

**Georgia GCSA Annual Meeting And Golf Championship**

East Lake Golf Club

Atlanta, GA

*Host superintendent:*

*Ralph Kepple, CGCS*

## Jerry Pate Grows Subaru Territory

Jerry Pate Turf and Irrigation has extended their Subaru small engines and parts distribution territory. In addition to Georgia, Alabama and Northwest Florida, the territory now includes the state of Tennessee along with North Mississippi. "We have enjoyed our first full year of partnership with Subaru and we are extremely pleased to continue the opportunity to grow their engine and parts market share," says owner Jerry Pate.

## Williams Wins Grainger Award

The Georgia GCSA congratulates Layne Williams, a trustee of the Georgia Golf Environmental Foundation, on winning the USGA's Ike Grainger award for volunteers achieving 25 years of service. Williams, who serves as senior director of rules and competitions at the Georgia State Golf Association, serves on the USGA's U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship committee.

Ike Grainger served on the USGA Executive Committee and served as USGA president in 1954 and 1955. The award in his name was instituted in 1995. Williams was one of 16 recipients named at the USGA's annual meeting at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York in February.

## Photographers Wanted Now

Through the Green wants you to share the beauty of your course with the membership with our photography contest. We are looking for images of your golf course, including scenes similar to our cover and center spread photos, wildlife on the course, maintenance operations and/or construction. Entry deadline is July 31, 2015. Visit Through The Green at [www.ggcsa.com](http://www.ggcsa.com) for details.

## Georgia GCSA Welcomes

- > **William Boyce, Class C.** Assistant golf course superintendent, Golf Club of Georgia, Alpharetta (770) 343-9070.
- > **Andy Brock, Class C.** Second assistant golf course superintendent, Legends at Chateau Elan, Buford (770) 932-2216.
- > **John Davis, Class AF.** Territory manager, Agri-Business Technologies, Charleston, SC (843) 812-0107.
- > **Jeff Green, Class C.** Assistant golf course superintendent, The Club at Osprey Cove, St. Mary's (912) 882-6746.
- > **Chris Hargrove, Class C.** Assistant golf course superintendent, Bent Tree Country Club, Jasper (770) 893-2624.
- > **Steve Haynes, Class AS.** Irrigation and Systems Tech, Augusta National Golf Club, Augusta (706) 667-6300.
- > **Howard Horne, Class AS.** Equipment manager, East Lake Golf Club, Atlanta (404) 687-2454.
- > **Tom Howard, Class C.** First assistant golf course superintendent, Reynolds Plantation - Great Waters, Eatonton (706) 467-4042.
- > **Thomas Ingram, Class C.** Assistant golf course superintendent, Horseshoe Bend Country Club, Roswell (770) 992-2310.
- > **Jacob Parker Class S.** Student/Assistant golf course superintendent, Cherokee Golf Center, Woodstock (770) 926-3195.
- > **Preston Parton, Class AS.** Chemical application technician, Champions Retreat Golf Club, Evans (706) 854-6960.
- > **Josh Richardson, Class C.** Second assistant golf course superintendent, Country Club of Gwinnett, Snellville (770) 978-7755.
- > **Kenny Song, Class AF.** President, Tri-Stone Corp., Norcross (678) 672-2067.
- > **Paul Stalvey, Class C.** Second assistant golf course superintendent, Horseshoe Bend Country Club, Roswell (770) 992-2310.
- > **Kevin Towe, Class C.** First assistant golf course superintendent, Golf Club of Georgia, Alpharetta (770) 343-9070.
- > **Scott Waddell, Class AS.** Assistant golf course superintendent in training, Augusta National Golf Club, Augusta (706) 667-6300.
- > **Chad Williams, Class C.** Second assistant golf course superintendent, Golf Club of Georgia, Alpharetta (770) 343-9070.
- > **Robert Wilson, Class A.** Golf course superintendent, Golf Club of Georgia, Alpharetta (770) 343-9070.
- > **Jody Wortham, Class C.** Landscape superintendent/project manager, Cherokee Town and Country Club, Atlanta (770) 993-2040.

## Movers & Shakers

- > **Leonard Owens** formerly assistant golf course superintendent at Crystal Falls Golf Club in Dawsonville has been promoted to golf course superintendent.
- > **Robert Wilson** is now golf course superintendent at Golf Club of Georgia in Alpharetta.
- > **William Boyce** is now assistant golf course superintendent at Golf Club of Georgia in Alpharetta.
- > **Chris Frame**, formerly spray technician at Reynolds Plantation - Great Waters, has been promoted to second assistant golf course superintendent at Reynolds Plantation - The Creek Club.
- > **Chris Hargrove** is now assistant golf course superintendent at Bent Tree Country Club in Jasper.
- > **Chad Williams** is now second assistant golf course superintendent at Golf Club of Georgia in Alpharetta.
- > **Kim Moseley** is now assistant golf course superintendent at The Orchard Golf and Country Club in Clarkesville.
- > **Lucas Walters** formerly the assistant golf course superintendent at Rivermont Golf & Country Club in Alpharetta is now the golf course superintendent at Sea Island Golf Club, Seaside, St. Simons Island.

## Congratulations

- > Congratulations **Bill Hirschert, CGCS** from Colleton River Plantation Club in Bluffton, SC on completing the renewal process for maintaining his status as a certified golf course superintendent with GCSAA.
- > Congratulations to **Ralph Kepple, CGCS** at East lake Golf Club in Atlanta on completing the renewal process for maintaining his status as a certified golf course superintendent with GCSAA.
- > Congratulations to **Hampton Kicklighter, CGCS** from Dublin Country Club in Dublin on completing the renewal process for maintaining his status as a certified golf course superintendent with GCSAA.

## Births

- > Congratulations to **Brandon Smith** from the Trophy Club of Atlanta and his wife, Madi, on the birth of their son, Jackson Walker Smith. Jackson was born on December 11, 2014 and weighed 8lbs and 2oz and measured 21 ¾ inches.

## Thank You

- > The Georgia GCSA greatly appreciates the donation of \$1,850 from **Golf Agronomics Sand and Hauling** in support of the Georgia GCSA Legacy Scholarships.

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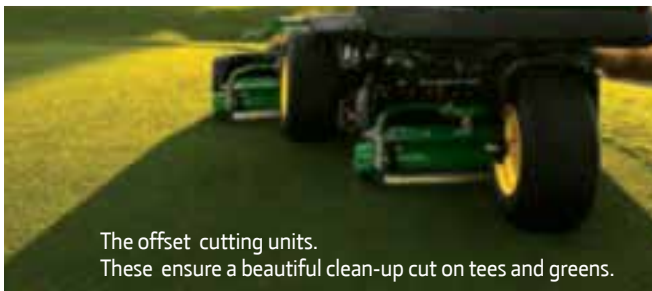


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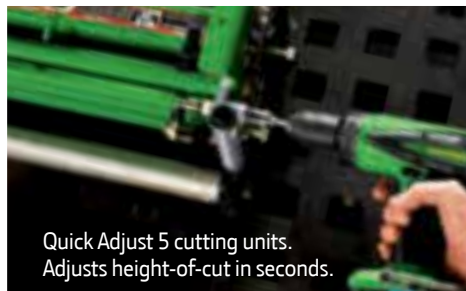
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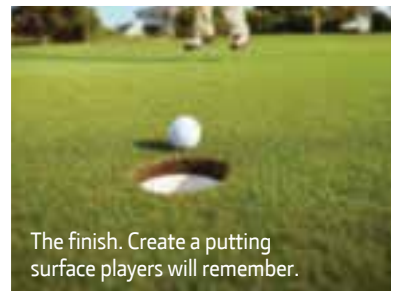
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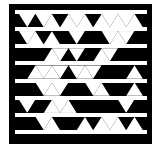
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# TIFEAGLE

## SOARS AT PRESTWICK C.C.



*"To be honest, Champion was on my mind early on, because it was the sexy, in-vogue pick. But I put in a test green with TifEagle, MiniVerde and Champion, and after 2 years of playing around with all three, I got to see the limitations and strong points of each grass. I also looked at a lot of TifEagle courses. In the end, my bosses and I agreed that TifEagle was by far the best ultradwarf for Prestwick."*

*Paul Kaufman-Superintendent  
Prestwick Country Club  
Myrtle Beach SC*



You'll find TifEagle Bermudagrass at the spectacular Prestwick Country Club in Myrtle Beach SC. This links-style gem was designed by Pete Dye and his son P.B. Dye and opened in 1989. Superintendent Paul Kaufman is responsible for the day-to-day management and upkeep of this top-flight course that features towering dune-like berms, stairway bunkers and bulkhead-protected greens. It was Paul along with his bosses who made the decision to go with TifEagle. "Our Tifdwarf was really beginning to show its age and was getting to be almost unmanageable. On top of that, the Myrtle Beach area is so competitive. There are almost 100 courses here now in what's essentially a one-mile by 30-mile strip, and the majority of them have ultradwarf

greens. From a competitive standpoint we were just lagging behind. So I put in a combination test green with TifEagle, MiniVerde and Champion and evaluated all three grasses for over two years. I also looked at a lot of other clubs, and talked to a lot of other superintendents, We decided to no-till and shut the course down on June 18th. Believe it or not, we were open for play on September 1 with superb new TifEagle greens." Take a tip from Paul Kaufman. Whether you're renovating your existing greens or planning a brand new facility, insist on the best. Specify certified TifEagle Bermudagrass by name. You can sod it, sprig it or even no-till it under the right conditions.

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