



The Mountain State Greenletter

Volume 14, Issue 2
February 2022

West Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

Board of Director's Message

Sitting at 69 degrees down here in the tri-state area! The first day of spring is less than a month away. It is about time to get back to what we do. It's funny how by the end of February I'm praying for the season to begin, but by the end of August I'm praying for it to end!

I was fortunate to be able to attend the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show this month. The turnout was definitely down from previous years, but the event still provided excellent educational opportunities and the chance to meet up with some old friends.

For those that find the show to be cost prohibitive, remember that all current GCSAA members are entitled to a one-time complimentary full-pack registration as part of their member benefits. The GCSAA also offers free full-pack registration to all retired, student and educator members.

As the voting delegate for the WVGCSA, I also had the opportunity to place our association's votes for the next GCSAA Board of Directors. Having met with all the candidates at the annual delegates meeting back in October, I am confident that the newly appointed Board is one of high caliber. At this meeting, the delegates also voted to approve (7,150 to 216) an annual dues increase. The new cost for class A and B Superintendents will be \$430. Class C dues will now be \$220.

Finally, remember our spring meeting will be held Tuesday, May 10th at Marietta Country Club. Lunch will be at 11, followed by golf at noon. Hope to see everyone there!

Thank you,
Bobby Cline, CGCS
Guyan G&CC

WVGCSA New Website: www.wvgcsa.org

Upcoming Events:

Spring Meeting @ Marietta CC | Tuesday, May 10th
Lunch and Meeting - 11am | Golf at Noon
Cost - \$40 per person

Scholarship Fundraiser
Monday, June 13th
Bel Meadow Golf Club

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Welcome to our New Members:

- *Brady Hatch, Clarksburg Country Club, Clarksburg, WV*
- *Ben Rigney, Sleepy Hollow Golf Club, Hurricane, WV*
- *Nicholas Bauman, Belmont Hills Country Club, St. Clairsville, OH*
 - *James Burke, Cambridge Country Club, Byesville, OH*
 - *Collin Southern, Sleepy Hollow Golf Club, Hurricane, WV*



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Playing the Midwinter Yo-Yo

By Elliott Dowling, agronomist, Northeast Region

The uptick in rounds played since the start of the pandemic has continued through 2021 and into this winter. Reports from courses in Maryland and Virginia show upward of 900-1,000 rounds in December and the trend continued in January. If the weather cooperates, indications are that February won't be any different.

This time of year always brings the question, what is the purpose of winter play? In other words, what are the goals for the course and what risk(s) are you willing to take? In the southern part of the region, there is usually an expectation of playing golf throughout the winter. This doesn't mean the weather is warm or course conditions are in peak shape, but courses are snow-free and open.

Just because a course is free of snow though doesn't mean there isn't risk in playing. Playing on totally frozen soil carries less risk of damaging turf because the ground is solid, so injury from root shear is not a major concern. However, many courses from Philadelphia to Virginia Beach will find themselves with partially frozen soils at this time of year. Under these conditions, footsteps or vehicle traffic can cause the turf to shear away from its roots – resulting in damage that can take a significant amount of time to heal. If you have concerns about root shear, implementing temporary greens can prevent damage.

Courses farther north might be covered in snow and ice, which means they will be less focused on winter play and more concerned with plant health. With plenty of winter weather still ahead of us, superintendents may be wondering how the grass is holding up. If ice and/or snow cover has persisted for a few weeks, now is the time to sample for winter injury.

Winter golf is bonus golf. Scores cannot be posted for handicap purposes in most parts of the Northeast and courses are not groomed like they would be in summer. With that said, when the sun is shining and courses are open, golfers have certainly proved that they love the game and are willing to wear a few extra layers and get on the links. Superintendents need to be prepared to manage the impact of winter play so there aren't lingering effects in the spring.

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Snow-free courses look open for play, but there can be good reasons why the course or greens are closed temporarily to prevent



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