

Turf's Up in the Inland Empire

Winter 2020

IEGCSA Spring Meeting

“We would like to host this annual event and we are cautiously watching as COVID-19 continues its presence.” Still applicable to the spring, the above sentence began the blurb about the Fall Meeting in the summer issue of our newsletter.

We are tentatively planning to meet March 8-9, 2021 at Zintel Creek Golf Club, Kennewick, Wash., hosted by Shane Hughes, GCS.

The Washington State Coronavirus Response offers a Business Guidance section with rollbacks listed in effect from November 17 – January 4. These rollbacks included a limit to gatherings. We will continue to monitor the regulations. With vaccines being distributed, hopefully there will be positive news on the horizon that will allow us to meet in person. Stay tuned!

Ready for Your Rounds

Our auction for golf rounds, plus carts (preferred), is “on” through the Great NW Golf Show. This virtual event replaces the 2021 Spokane Golf Show. It was with regret Vision Marketing, the event organizers, felt it was important to make the decision to cancel - even after the planned move to Post Falls. With the spike in COVID-19, and the restrictions in place now in Idaho and Washington, they didn't want to have to cancel the event at the last moment.

The Great NW Golf Show will not only market to their Spokane email list of 22,000, but to the entire 50,000 Golf in the NW email list. It is their hope the platform will keep revenue coming for the participants who depend on the event each year - like us! And, also keep the Spokane Golf Show brand alive with their over 8,000 customers who attend in person each year. The virtual event will take place February 1 – February 28.

How will it work for our auction?

We will have a landing page within the Great NW Golf Show. The link to our own silent auction will be found on this page. Here we will advertise our most exclusive opportunities and encourage

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January Roundtable

Our January Roundtable is definitely happening! Whether via Zoom (probable) or in person (doubtful), the event will take place on January 13. What we do know is that this theme-show event will be highly interactive and moderated by Jeff Gullikson, CGCS. More information will be available soon. Watch your email blasts.

About Eve

Between writing this article and going to print, Eve passed away. But, I didn't care to change the article's tense.

You don't know Eve, but she kind of knows many of you. Eve Jacobsen has proofed our chapter newsletter for as long as we started printing our newsletter, again. When I tell you not to worry, your articles will have been proofed multiple times before printed – two of those times have usually been by Eve. Eve is a past school teacher and has been a long-time commercial lines account executive with an insurance company in Shelby, Mont.

Eve has found your articles to always be of interest. She has enjoyed learning about the turf industry and about many of your own experiences. She noticed when someone came back to the board. Eve was always challenging us for clarity. Sometimes she even performed magic as she polished our articles.

I go way back with Eve in a small northern Montana town. Eve is a person who constantly volunteers – sitting on boards and giving of her time to so many groups in her community. When I pass along articles to her, she usually replies with a comment that her week was packed with evening meetings and responsibilities, but she would do her best. She always has done her best – and always on time. Eve's email tag line for so many years has been, “In a world where you can be anything...Be Kind.”

I hope you feel you know a little about Eve. I regret not introducing you to Eve earlier. In all these years, this is probably the first issue Eve hasn't proofed at least some portion of this newsletter. Eve is a private person and hasn't made a big deal publicly about her cancer over these past few months. When this newsletter comes out, I really want her to tell me everything I missed. *Lori*



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Mavic Pro

Drone Use at Hayden Lake Country Club

Jessica Lenihan, Assistant Superintendent Hayden Lake Country Club, Hayden Lake, Idaho

After attending the GIS in 2016, and hearing about the neat things people around the country were doing with drones on their golf courses, I knew it was something we could benefit from at Hayden Lake. After doing a bit of research, I was surprised to find out that drone packages from a company called DJI, one of the leaders in drone technology, were relatively affordable. We ended up purchasing the Phantom 3 drone as our 'intro' to the



Phantom 3

drone world for \$600. Although terrifying at first, since I was essentially in charge of hundreds of dollars careening through the sky at a high rate of speed, I have since managed to hone in my skills and figure out how to make the most of drones at our facility. We spent about three years with the Phantom and have since upgraded to the Mavic Pro, a portable drone with a bit more capabilities than our starter drone. A few hundred dollars more, it was a worthy upgrade for the amount of use we have been getting out of it. Plus, it is much easier to transport around the golf course in a cart throughout the day. So, what exactly do we use the drone for anyway?

Here at Hayden Lake, we are in the process of a long

range remodel. This basically means we are remodeling the entire golf course - but our club is debt free and is choosing not to take on debt in order to complete the remodel. Therefore, we have been picking off different parts of the golf course; whether it is a hole or two, a bunker complex, or a complete corner of the golf course, pretty much every year until we are complete. This means we constantly have projects going on and have something to look forward to pretty much every year that is making a vast improvement to the golf course. For this remodel, we are working with Jackson Kahn Golf Design based out of Scottsdale,



Large scale removal of trees on #7 to widen fairway

Arizona, so our architects don't have easy access to the golf course. Our drone has made it incredibly convenient to send them aerial photographs to aid in their drawings, as well as planning for the upcoming year of construction and tree removal. Our course is filled with many 100+ year old Bull pines that we like to take down the winter prior to construction to prevent excess damage to the course during removal and to prepare ourselves for the new phase of construction. With the photographs



we send to our architects, they are able to mark which trees need to come out with ease, instead of having to make a trip up here in the winter.

We have also found our aerial photographs invaluable to communicate important information to our greens committee while trying to





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Drone Use continued from page 2

explain to them why certain trees need to come out. We are able to show them shadows across struggling greens from different times of the year and times of the day so they can understand that the shade really is making a difference in the quality of the green. It's one of those things where using apps like Sun Seeker and telling them what needs to happen makes no difference until they can visually see the negative effect that specific trees are having on greens quality. We have been able to use our drone photographs on several occasions to nudge the board to rule in our favor. Plus, no golfer ever says how much they miss a tree once it's gone, am I right?



Because we are doing so much construction and so many projects all the time, having a unique perspective on the project both during the planning and construction has been really neat. We get to have different angles that we would never get to see otherwise.

These two pictures below (left & right), were both taken during the fall 2018 construction of our #9 green. The fairway initially was a hard dogleg to the established green in the second photograph, but we moved the green to the right and straightened out the fairway, constructing a completely new green surrounded by several tall Bull pine trees. The former #9 green is now a practice green that has since been resurfaced as of October 2020.

From the construction process to post-sod, having aerial



shots that we can look back on is something that would be tough to miss out on. We keep the architects updated during the process as well as updating the membership on the upgrades that we are making to the golf course.

Ready for Your Rounds continued from page 1

bidder to enter the auction to see and bid on all of our listings. The auction site we plan to use (through recommendations of other chapters) charges a 5% fee, which is very reasonable.

What do we need from you?

We depend on high course participation to be successful – and every submission helps.

Please mail your rounds to Kal Zaranec asap. We need time to set up the online auction with the rounds. It is important Kal has your donations in hand because we must include any restriction listed on the certificates. Kal Zaranec, 3850 West Pescador Dr., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815.

Thank you to all who have supported us in the past or who are considering a donation this year. Proceeds from this auction help fund our continuing education and research programs, and keeps our user fees from increasing at a rapid rate.



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Having the ability to snap photos in the middle of the process has made the jobs of future employees at the country club much easier,

the future to see where our drainage is located in the bunker, in case we have issues that need addressing.

While the majority of our drone use is for convenience and because it looks pretty cool, after having one it would be pretty



as well. During the construction of #7 green, we got this shot of the drainage in the green. While definitely 'extra' since the drainage was laid was tracking wire it is still neat to visually see what goes into the phases of construction. On #7 fairway, where we removed all those trees during the winter to widen the fairway, we also added a very large bunker to that area. We use sod as bunker liner for the cost savings and the effectiveness. During the sod process, we snapped a photograph that makes things super easy for us in *(Jessica Lenihan below)*

hard to imagine going back to not. With the technology improving and the prices going down, I can't recommend the investment enough. Feel free to reach out with any questions!

jessica@haydenlakeecc.com





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Turf Geeks Captain the Hudson Cup

Larry Gilhuly
Gilhuly Golf Consulting
Gig Harbor, Wash.

The Hudson Cup was created in honor of Robert Hudson of Portland Golf Club. It is an event paring the section's top professionals against the area's top amateurs. I actually caddied in the 1965 Hudson Cup at Longview Country Club for Bob Atkinson, an amateur from Portland Golf Club.

In mid-October, the Hudson Cup was played at Meadow Springs Country Club in Richland, Wash. For the first time in the event's history, both the regular and senior amateur teams had captains from the turf industry. The regular team was captained by Tyler Daniels, golf course superintendent at Wine Valley Golf Course, Walla Walla, Wash. The senior team dug deep and came up with a balding, old, broken down, retired agronomist with no

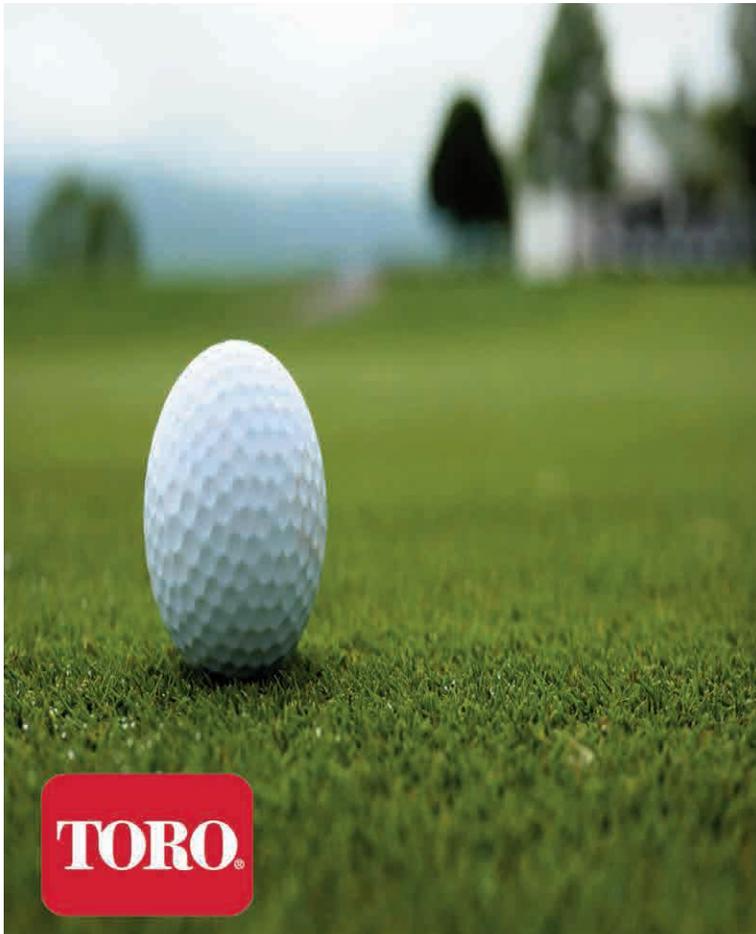
game...but a fighting spirit - myself. Tyler and I were honored to be chosen and looked forward to watching some great golf. We also knew that if a ruling came up about chinch bugs and manganese, the pros didn't stand a chance.

Robert A. Hudson was a very successful Portland businessman whose firm, Hudson House, was one of the nation's leading wholesale grocers. Hudson played golf at Portland Golf Club and was devoted to the game. During World War II, the PGA of America was trying to keep its tour alive and was in dire need of sponsors. Hudson stepped up to the plate, with the urging of Larry Lamberger (Portland Golf Club head professional), and offered to underwrite a 72-hole open tournament with a purse of \$10,000. Thus, the 1944 Portland Open was born, and Sam Snead won it. Hudson stayed with the program and went on to sponsor the 1945 Portland Open (in which Ben Hogan set the 72-par 72-hole scoring record of 27-under-par 261) and the 1946 PGA Championship, won by Hogan. Hudson went on to sponsor Portland Opens in 1948 and 1949 and the Western Open in 1955-all held at Portland Golf Club.

Hudson became the first chairman of the PGA Advisory Committee. If you go into Portland Golf Club's clubhouse, there you will see displayed the history of how the Ryder Cup was saved. Mr. Hudson singlehandedly paid to have the Great Britain/Irish team travel across the US and also promoted the PGA.

In the end, old fart pros beat the good guys 11-9. It was a great experience 55 years after caddying in the 1965 event. Tyler also lost, so pros are two up on the turf geeks.

It was a great experience! And as the only turf geeks to be honored with being captains, it was very humbling to have been chosen.



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2020: A Pivot-al Year

Kevin Hicks
EarthWorks, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho



It's no mystery that 2020 has been a tremendous challenge for all of us; but, also no surprise is how the golf industry took it all in stride. Through all of the ups and downs brought on our country, communities, work, and families, the golf industry (with a few exceptions) was fortunate to remain open through most of the year. While many businesses have been closed for weeks or months at a time, the golf course was an opportunity for many communities where there were few other 'outlets' from the isolation and shutdowns.

In my conversations and limited travels across the western states this year, there were a few underlying themes resonating from superintendents and turf professionals across my territory:

- The constant pivoting of staff, closures, restrictions, and safety measures (both in maintenance departments and throughout the larger facilities) was something that would be tiresome for most. But, I was amazed at how well managers and staff took all of this in stride.

- Rounds were way up at most facilities around the country, but this was a double-edged sword. With increased revenues came cart seating restrictions - effectively doubling the cart traffic and causing excessive wear on teeing grounds and around greens. The unfortunate result of the increased revenue is that much of the windfall has been re-directed to F & B, since they were severely hobbled during the shutdowns, much like the restaurant industry.

- From the uncertainty of what could change at work the next day, to how to handle kids at home trying to school remotely, to whether there was going to be a job for much longer, all of these new pressures have taken their toll on our collective psyches. The unfortunate thing is there doesn't seem to be an end in sight for a lot of this.

- Many clubs and sports complexes reduced staffing to a bare minimum and, true to form, turf managers went above and beyond trying to maintain conditions at their facilities - regardless of the fact that many were operating at 50% or less of the normal staffing numbers. As usual, clubs weren't as understanding about the fact that the product couldn't be the same with less. After all, we as an industry have been doing the 'more with less' thing since 2008 in many cases.

- The removal of many (or all) of the golf course accessories has streamlined course set up and mowing practices, and has reduced some associated wear and tear. The positive that's come out of this is that many folks I've talked with feel as though many of those accessories may not come back out once the pandemic is over. I've also seen some interesting work-arounds that clubs have utilized to meet the requirements of the restrictions - without removal.

- Bunker maintenance has been severely reduced due to the removal of rakes, but also to account for the reduction in staff. The great thing is that I've heard very few complaints from golfers who say they won't play if the bunkers aren't raked. Whew,

dodged that one. Will that become 'a thing?' Who knows, but we have learned getting back to the game we all love doesn't necessarily have to include perfectly maintained bunkers and

other hazards. I love that. I still think I played the game just as well with a single 150 yard bush at the edge of the fairway, as I have with a \$300 rangefinder or GPS in the cart. I, for one, wouldn't hate going back to the simple game of golf. It might even pick up the pace of the game a bit in the process.

- With the uncertainty of whether a facility was to stay open or closed, many courses deferred or canceled planned spring fertilizer and chemical applications. Some even pushed back scheduled cultivation practices either because of budget cuts, or the fact that the course was packed with golfers and they didn't want to jeopardize revenues. These decisions are now rearing their ugly heads as we're having to play catch up on turf conditions or go to Plan B. This summer, I've had more discussions than I can count with superintendents regarding teeing grounds that have had their turf basically removed with the extraordinary wear from concentrated cart traffic and by all of the additional rounds.

- I've also heard inspiring stories of team building efforts when other departments faced with shutdowns offered employees the option to work with the golf course maintenance team. Those that did became much stronger advocates for what we do, a mindset that could have lasting positive effects to the overall course operations. More of this should be done even without a pandemic. Nothing like cross training to build a sense of team!

So, what does this all mean going forward? I've asked countless people this same question, "Is the golf industry smart enough to capitalize on this renewed interest in the game?" Most are skeptical at best. First and foremost, it should highlight the fact that the golf course is by far and away the most important asset on the property. I understand the need to supplement the golf course with

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We want to recognize those who have contributed a donation in lieu of the Fall Meeting & Trade Show. Top honors belong to Desert Green Turf, Zintel Creek, and The Golf Club at Black Rock.

Also generous in support are:

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Why Should you Participate?

If you need any help convincing your employers how your facility will benefit in your participation with the 2021 Virtual GIS, check out the justification tool. A copy can be found by clicking on the News tab of our website iegcsa.org, or by visiting gcsaa.org

Make Time this Winter

Now that this crazy golf season has passed – use this time to complete your own facility BMPs. The Idaho state BMPs are complete thanks to the dual chapter committee working with Ken Benoit and Stacey Kingsbury of Kingsbury Consulting. As a chapter, we paid a total of \$4,763.60 for our share. Our share of the grant received in 2019 was \$5,000. The Idaho BMPs can be accessed from the home page of our website. The Washington BMPs, completed by Tom Calabrese, EnviroLogic Resources, Inc, are soon to go live, as well! If they aren't accessed on our website by the time this newsletter is in your hands, they will be soon.

Complete your own facility BMPs. Using the GCSAA state BMP template, you can update the document on the BMP tool for your own facility, even including your own pictures. The link to the tool can be found by clicking on our website's BMP link. Your user name and password for the tool is your same GCSAA user name and password.

The Inland Empire GCSA is established to serve members, advance the profession and promote the enjoyment of golf through responsible golf course management practices.

(Our) Elections

Congratulations to our new officers elected at our virtual Fall Business Meeting:

President: Mike Bednar, Palouse Ridge Golf Club, Pullman, Wash.

Vice President: Geoff Haynes, Galena Ridge Golf Club, Kellogg, Idaho

Secretary/Treasurer: Jamie Colson, Sun Country Golf Course, Cle Elum, Wash.

Newly elected to the board of directors was **Darcy Otto, Avondale Golf Club, Hayden Lake, Idaho.** Welcome aboard, Darcy!



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At the next in-person gathering of our association, we will appreciate the opportunity to thank our outgoing president, Jeremiah Farmer, Hayden Lake Country Club, Hayden Lake, Idaho for his leadership. It was a memorable year for Jeremiah being president with COVID-19 making such an impact.

Summer Outing 2021?

Sure hope so - stay tuned for more information via email blasts.

Pivot-al Year

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things like weddings, outside functions, fitness centers, etc., but as a long-time superintendent once said, "When it's raining, is the parking lot full or empty?" Make sure you're highlighting the crew's work and dedication, and how many things you were able to accomplish despite the limitations of staff, budget and access. Give yourself some credit. Very few people could pull off what turf managers accomplished this

year without the innate ability to pivot on a moment's notice, as many times as required. Let's hope 2021 is a much better year, but don't forget the many accomplishments of 2020. Well done!