

Turf's Up in the Inland Empire

Spring 2021

Virtual BMP Workshop for Washington and Oregon Facilities

The Inland Empire GCSA is joining with the Oregon GCSA and Western Washington GCSA to offer you an opportunity to learn about creating a BMP guide for your facility.

Join us live on April 29, 2021. In this 90-minute workshop, knowledgeable GCSAA staff—Mark Johnson, David Phipps, and Emily Fuger, will explain why BMPs are important at your facility and will show how easy it is to use GCSAA's tool to develop your own BMP plan. During this workshop, we will help you start adapting the state guide to your own facility by leading you through some highlights of one state. We encourage you to use a split screen with GoToWebinar to follow along and create/work on your own facility BMP.

In addition to the benefit of having a BMP plan, you will earn 0.2 education points from GCSAA for attending the session, and you can also earn 0.50 service points once you complete your plan.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are the tools that successful superintendents use every day to maintain quality playing surfaces. The adoption of BMP plans at the facility level helps our Inland Empire GCSA chapter and GCSAA to advocate for golf course superintendents with national, state and local lawmakers, as well as the media. BMPs demonstrate our commitment to professional land management using science-based BMPs, including the responsible use of inputs.

To register for this free event, please visit the calendar event of iegcsa.org, or use the link provided in our email blasts.

2021 Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo

The October 11 & 12, 2021, event at the Coeur d'Alene Resort is coming together! While we are close to sharing all of the details, in the meantime we can say we will meet expectations for another quality educational and networking opportunity.

Windstorm Makes Changes to Golf Courses

Mid-January, a wind storm slammed into the Inland Northwest. In the Spokane region, the wind gusts topped 70 mph in some areas. The regional weather of the prior week teed up the destructive conditions of what turned out to be hit and miss to which properties were most affected.

The Coeur d'Alene Resort and Coeur d'Alene Public Golf Course each received substantial tree/property damage. Thanks to Brandon Bubar, Coeur d'Alene Public Golf Course, for sharing his experience for our readers on page 2.

Summer Outing 2021

Stay tuned for information concerning where/when the event will be held. Updates will be offered in our email blasts.

In the meantime, please consider supporting our event through play and through hole sponsorship.

Online Auction Nets Surprise Results

Our online auction for rounds advertised through the Northwest Golf Show was new territory for our group when the in-person event was cancelled. Kal Zaranec volunteered many hours to set up the silent auction online, and he and Jake Leiser worked to secure the rounds. Overall, our course donations were down and we didn't know if the usual participants would find us. It turns out that although several past bidders participated, the majority of the successful bidders were new to our auction. Upon asking, we learned the common thread was most found us through the golf show.

We will take this experience and consider how the auction will look in the future. In the meantime, we offer our gratitude to all facilities that donated, as well as a huge thanks to Kal and Jake. Our successful event netted us \$4,918—a pleasant surprise.

Inland Empire Chapter



A publication of the Inland Empire Golf Course Superintendents Association

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We all Fall Down!

Brandon Bubar, Superintendent Coeur d'Alene Public Golf Course Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

On the morning of January 14, for us and many of the other CDA/Spokane area

courses, we woke up to a mess of tree, building, and/or other damage from a storm our gracious Mother Nature decided to cast upon us!

What recipe led us to this disaster? A couple days prior to the storm, with snow cover still on the ground and warming temperatures, the rains came pouring down. At Coeur d'Alene Public Golf Club (CDAPGC), we had approximately 1.25" of rain on those days leading up to the winds sustaining 45 mph with gusts reaching 70 mph at times. With the extreme amounts of moisture and high winds, what does a 100+ foot tall ponderosa pine do? **TIMBERRRR!!!!**

Although every facility in the area sustained a different level of damage, one thing remained consistent—the challenge of how do we go about cleaning this up. This process looked different for every facility, depending on the available resources they had at their disposal (such as a helicopter...Tom Walker), but here is how we approached this challenge.

(What used to be our rough mower)



(Hole 2 next to cart path)

The Damage

When I arrived at the facility early that morning, the very first thing I noticed was that we had no power. One of the trees had clipped the powerlines to the maintenance yard, where they lay on the ground at the entrance to the facility. "Not a good start!" I thought. Once navigating that hazard and pulling up to the building, there I found a massive pine laying right across an outdoor carport, which housed some of our maintenance mowers. Luckily, only one of the four units took a direct hit and another sustained some minor damage. This was quite the start to my day and I found myself thinking about what the course may look like. My feeling wasn't good. My equipment manager/assistant and I grabbed a utility vehicle and began touring the golf course. As we approached hole number one, it didn't matter which side of the hole you looked, there were trees down. We began taking photos and counting trees.

After going through the entire course, we found a total 53 trees down or damaged. Of those, 43 were ponderosa pine completely uprooted, five were blue spruce uprooted, and there were five other deciduous trees that were either uprooted or took a beating from a pine. In addition to the building, downed power lines, smashed equipment, and trees, we also sustained some damage to our netting at the back of the range. Other things that we had to consider might be damaged—but we didn't know either how bad or couldn't see yet—were cart paths, irrigation, the front of our #2 green and back of our #7 green. After compiling the list, the next step was to contact the insurance company and begin the claim. At CDAPGC, we were fortunate our insurance was going to assist us with expenses for

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continued from page 2 (Between #7 green and #8 tee)

the cleanup of the trees and repair to other damaged areas. But, we couldn't really begin that process until we knew what amount we would receive. "How much assistance?" was going to be the million dollar question! It took a couple of weeks for the insurance to process the claim and finally we received our number. Upon getting that information, we then proceeded with the cleanup.

The Cleanup

We decided to go ahead and log out the trees we could in order to try and increase revenue to offset some expense associated with the damage. We used a local contractor to help with removal of the tree stumps and debris from the course. We were able to obtain a skid steer from another local business to assist us with moving the logs to a location where they could then be hauled away. Once all this was done, we used two different log haulers to take the logs to the mills. Unfortunately, we couldn't send them all to the same mill as we had some logs that were considered either oversized or greater than 27" in diameter. The damaged building, fences and equipment were hauled away, too, by the same contractor that did the stumps and debris. This took some strategic planning to route the company around the facility in order to minimize damage to the course as they used a very large excavator and dump truck to remove materials. We also were very fortunate that cold weather came and froze the ground during the time the work was being done. We had three people in addition to the two from the contractor working on the cleanup.

Where We are Today

As I'm writing this little excerpt, we are currently trying to backfill all the holes from the stumps being removed—along with

other early spring debris cleanup in preparation to open for the season. We brought back a couple of our full-time seasonal staff earlier than normal to help. We stay busy everyday working on something to do with this storm. Fences are repaired, a new carport ordered, and the greens are repaired and ready for play. We still have a lot of work scheduled to do, including repairs of the cart path and range net.

In closing, this little write-up doesn't really give justice to everything we have had to deal with, but it does summarize the



Range netting bent backwards

progress we have made and our path. In the early days, I can say it was one of the most overwhelming things both to see and begin to even try and maneuver through. All I can say now is by taking it one day at a time, we have begun to see recovery and things are turning back to normal. If you ever find yourself in an overwhelming situation, don't be afraid to rely on others for help. And, even though we sustained a good amount of damage, we didn't get hit as hard as some of our neighbors did. So, remember when you think it's bad for you...there is always someone who has it worse!

I wish everyone the best and here's to a better 2021 season than 2020!



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Controlling a Golf Course with a Baby, During a Pandemic

Shane Hughes, Superintendent
Zintel Creek Golf Club
Kennewick, Washington

We all seek to control parts of the world around us. Control through irrigation systems, soil moisture meters, cultural practices, impact meters, pesticide applications, soil and tissue testing, drone technology...the quest for control methods in our industry is simultaneously growing and evolving.



Merriam-Webster defines control as, “to exercise restraining or directing influence over.” As golf course superintendents, we are in a position of power. We influence our properties, our staff, our equipment and consequently our customer’s experience. But does that power and the feeling of control, or lack thereof, have to control us?

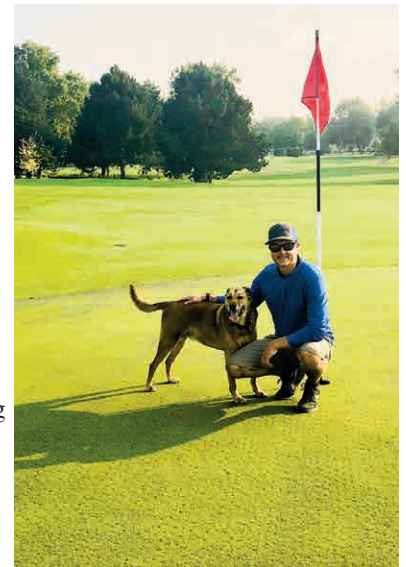
March 24 through May 4, 2020, our state’s governor issued a Stay Home order due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Golf courses were closed in Washington State, period. My wife was 20 weeks pregnant at the time and her health and safety were on the top of my priority list. I was navigating Facetime pregnancy appointments, placing dedicated staff members on standby unemployment, reshaping my entire 2020 cultural program and battling to continue essential maintenance on the golf course with limited staff. I had never felt so completely out of control.

Reflecting back on that difficult time we all faced, I find a few lights. First, what I was feeling is OK. I’m not ashamed of

having the reaction I had to a situation that was totally out of control.

Second, the love, reassurance and spirit my wife displayed, all while managing her first pregnancy and our family wine business, was truly amazing. She’s quite the catch. Third, the camaraderie between the GCSAA and PGA, industry professionals and my friends was a constant reminder that we all were in this together. That is quite the blessing.

Pre 2020, I used to do a lot more of “more.” More hours at work, more lawn mowing, more car washing and more home projects. The amount of work needing to be done would control my thoughts. I would then begin my work only to feel in control of the task at hand. Once completed, I would find a glimpse of satisfaction
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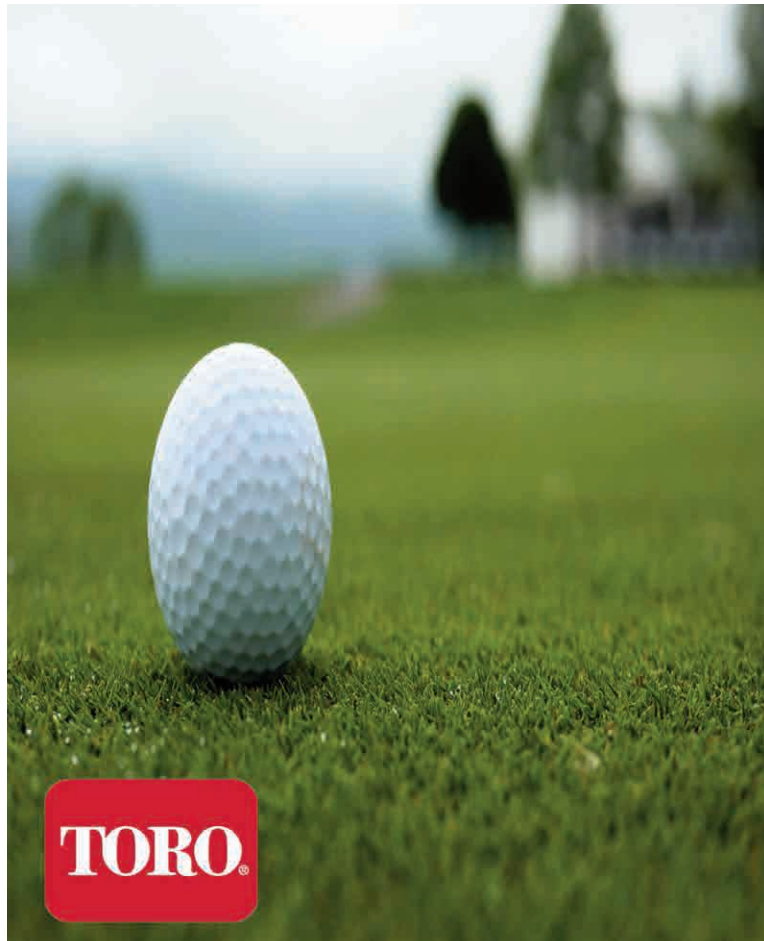
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Control During a Pandemic

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and myself in control of the situation. It was exhausting and not a healthy cycle.

So, how do I maintain control and maintain my mind at the same time? Can you hear the classic Eagles song, “Get



Over It,” playing in the background? My dad loves to share those classic lines with our family.

Post July 26, 2020, my world and outlook on control changed. My wife and I welcomed our first child, baby girl Lucille. She has shown me the power of an innocent smile, the beauty of a joyful laugh

and the wonderful feeling of truly being needed. Her name is of French origin, meaning “light.” Lucille was my light when I needed it most. She had control of me.

Control can take on many forms. Our industry is on a quest to create the perfect, or controlled, playing conditions. But we don’t have to let our constant search for control be our last stand. When I find myself losing control or seeking too much of it, I pause, and remind myself why I love this industry. I will take in a sunrise, hop on a mower, call an old friend or simply go home to my family.

It’s ok to hit the pause button every now and then to regain some sense of normalcy. If 2020 had one takeaway for me, it’s that hitting pause for yourself or to care for others is OK. I will admit, I went two weeks in August without a lawn mow or a car wash. It was total chaos, but my daughter’s love controlled me. I hope you find someone or something positive to control your time in 2021. The golf course will always be there but only you can control your time and your pursuit of happiness.



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An Incredible Project — The Indoor Golf Learning Center

Pat Nowlen, Director of Parks and Recreation
Polson Bay Golf Club, Polson, Mont.
The Perfect Lie, March 2021, Peaks & Prairies GCSA



This past year at Polson Bay Golf Course, we added two indoor golf simulators in a 1,200 sq. ft. addition to the restaurant. Many other golf courses have recently done something similar, so why should I write about it? I have two reasons — it didn't cost us anything and we cut down trees to make it happen!

There are two parts to this story and I will be brief on the first part because I believe the second part is what will peak the interests of golf course superintendents. However, it is all a good story and it is important to the game of golf. And, importantly, some of you may be able to take what we have done and use it as a model to accomplish great things at your facility.

Part 1: Getting an addition to the clubhouse with two golf simulators for free.

While we have been operating a great junior golf program for years, we took it to an unbelievable new level this year. My head golf professional, Cameron Milton, won the national PGA 2018 Youth Player Development Award for the work that he has done in growing the game of golf in the Mission Valley. The junior golf program includes a free four-day junior camp, a school golf program, and a PGA Junior League consisting of 72 players (just in Polson). Each part of the junior golf program is a great story and it has been an honor to be identified as the best in the nation. We estimate that our junior golf program touches the lives of 450 juniors every year. We had previously created a 501(c)3 called the Mission Valley Junior Golf Association (MVJGA) to handle the donations to the junior golf program.

In 2019, we decided to ride the tidal wave of support generated by this award to create a permanent funding source for the MVJGA. This funding source was to take the form of the Junior Golf Indoor Learning Center. We then went on a huge fundraising campaign! Our goal was to raise \$190,000 to construct a building and purchase a golf simulator. It seemed like a lofty goal at the time. In the end, we far exceeded our goals and plans changed. The indoor learning center became an addition to the restaurant, with two top-of-the-line Full Swing 16' golf simulators. The community of Polson stepped up to the plate and hit a home

run! Individuals, businesses, contractors, and nonprofits came out of the woodwork to help in any way they could. From cash donations, to materials, to sweat equity; if we asked, it was provided. The MVJGA collected the money, hired the contractor, ran the project, and donated the facility to the City of Polson and Polson Bay Golf Course. I estimate that the total value of the building, simulators, and the business is worth \$425,000. After operational and capital expenses are met, the remaining profit goes directly to the MVJGA as a permanent funding source for continuing growth of our junior golf programs.

Part 2: How removing trees from the golf course helped make it happen.

The cost to the golf course was minimal and was mostly labor for preparation of the site for construction. The maintenance department wasn't allowed to help with the actual construction of the facility because they are city employees and the area was under contractor control. Legally, they just couldn't do it. However, they were able to prep the site, which included stripping the asphalt from the construction site and hauling it away. Also, they were able to strip the siding off the exterior wall of the clubhouse and replace the deck stairs. Their work saved tens of thousands of dollars in the scope of the whole project. The majority of our labor force still wasn't able to really participate in the project and wouldn't have a significant emotional tie to the project, and I wanted to find a way to rectify that situation.

How do the trees come into play? In the two years prior to the clubhouse addition, we completed an irrigation replacement project of the oldest nine of the golf course. In the design of the irrigation system, it was determined a few trees had to come out to make way for new mainlines. Also, a few trees caused head spacing issues. Decisions needed to be made to either remove the trees or keep these trees and add additional heads to water around the trees. I made the call to remove four trees to facilitate proper installation of the irrigation system and to keep the project within budget. Removal of one of the trees was very easy to justify because a six-inch mainline would need four additional fittings to go around it, and the area was overplanted and out of play. The other three were a different story. They were all planted in 1936 or 1937. All were larger than three feet in diameter. All could be kept if an additional head was added to the project. Now, keep in mind that in total seven trees were in question and only four were removed. I had to take other factors into consideration. Were they integral to play? Were they in an area that was overplanted? Were they damaged? Could they be replaced with a new tree? There was also a financial side to the decision. When the project went out to bid, it was an itemized bid.

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Learning Center continued from page 7

We were paying an amount per head, swing joint, foot of pipe, foot of wire, etc., installed. This meant that if the irrigation heads were removed from the project, then we could save \$1,300 per head on average. I made the decision to re-move three additional trees and save \$5,000.

The irrigation system was completed and the maintenance crew removed the trees in 12' to 14' long sections and placed them at the top of the golf course, next to Highway 93. As always, when a tree gets cut down, there is a political price to pay. I spent the next year defending the fact that I had killed four 80-year-old ponderosa pines and telling people that they couldn't come cut them up for firewood because, "I have a plan!"

I convinced Hans Lund, the contractor for the Junior Indoor Learning Center, that we should use the trees in some way to contribute to the project. He convinced Dupuis Lumber to mill the trees into three-inch slabs and tongue and groove. Hans then convinced a local cabinet company to plane, sand, and finish the tongue and groove. Employees of Traditional Home,

owned by Hans, installed the tongue and groove on the walls, and the slabs became the countertops, doors, and stair treads. The entire room has been finished in ponderosa pine and is truly a sight to behold.

All companies involved have kids in the junior golf program. A statement about the trees used on the project will be put on a sign made from the trees. It will read like this: "100% of the wood to finish this room came from four eighty-three-year-old trees removed from the Olde 9 to make way for a new irrigation system." To me, it is the ultimate statement of sustainability and use of natural re-sources that we could have accomplished.

The Center is up and running. Kids get to use it for free, for golf activities. Adults pay \$35 per hour. You can rent the space for parties and sporting events for around \$250 to \$500 and watch football games on a 16' screen while golfing Firestone CC on the other simulator. We have started our Winter League and have 64 people. Our food and beverage operations have become year-round. I no longer have to explain why the trees needed to be removed. One more tree has fallen down in a windstorm and will be sent to the lumber mill to make

new interior trim for the rest of the clubhouse. Another important contribution from the maintenance crew will become an integral part of the project.



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