

SEA TO SAND

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE HI-LO DESERT & GCSASC | VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 5 | JUNE 2020

SPECIAL FEATURE

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GOLF COURSE DOGS**



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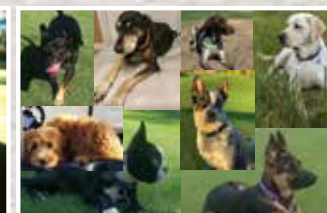
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GCSASC President's Message

By John Nachreiner • Superintendent • Shady Canyon Golf Club



I hope this message again finds you all healthy and safe. Although I am sure there is a lot more to learn about how to protect ourselves from COVID-19 infection, it feels great to do some of the "normal" things we all were accustomed to, albeit with a new twist.

As businesses begin to re-open, and we move more towards an open economy, I have found the need to frequently remind myself in my personal and work life of the new standards levied towards COVID-19 safety precautions. Changing habits is a difficult task, but it is everyone's responsibility in order to keep the infection trend heading in the right direction. Let us all work together and continue making a difference.

The GCSASC Board of Directors is still meeting via video conference monthly. We would love to be announcing the dates of our next meeting and golf events; however, we do not have the clearance needed to safely meet in large groups. Our Executive Director, Marc Connerly, has come up with some great concepts to help everyone with GCSAA and DPR education credits. We are working on a way to implement those ideas quickly. Watch for information via email regarding online learning opportunities for DPR hours in the near future.

Lastly, I would like to thank you all for your support of the Hi-Lo Desert & GCSASC. It is an honor to serve you all, and please know that we are working hard to improve the value of membership inside a new set of rules.

I am looking forward to seeing you all soon.

John

ADAPTING THE ROUTINE

By Gerad Nelson • Secretary/Treasurer • Porcupine Creek



When I heard about the “shelter in place” orders from the Governor, there were many things running through my mind. My job, the kids’ school and daycare were some of the first things that raced to the forefront of my mind. Then I realized my gym was closed as well. My 5:00 AM workouts are the cornerstone of my day. Each morning I meet a group of like-minded people at the gym for our morning workout. Not only is it good for my physical health, but also for my mental health. 5:00 AM is the one time of the day where I don’t worry about anything other than how I’m going to complete the physical tasks set before me. Just like in any routine, I depend on a workout to start my day out right.

Once my wife and I figured out our “new” family routine, we needed to figure out how we were going to get our workouts in as well. The first thing we did was clean the garage, to make a temporary workout space. Next,

we had to get creative and develop our own workouts, as to not get bored. This seemed to work for the first few weeks. However, it became increasingly more difficult to come up with new workouts each day. Once our communities realized we weren’t going to get out of the quarantine anytime soon, both my gym and my wife’s gym started doing live Zoom workouts. It is apparent Zoom video conferencing is the new wave of the future. It is the way of communicating, not only for business meetings, but for catching up with family, workouts and even “virtual happy hours.” Zoom workouts became key for our success.

By the time this article is published, gyms, salons and restaurants will be open and back in action. I hope everybody is staying safe and finding creative ways to keep safe and busy during these unpredictable times. ...

Gerad

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

By Marc Connerly • Executive Director • GCSASC / Hi-Lo Desert GCSA



To say that the last three months have been tumultuous would be an understatement of epic proportions. In fact, it is shocking that it has only been three months since our world was turned upside down and inside out. It sure seems like it has been much longer than that!

While it has been challenging, frustrating, and at times downright scary, I’m left to reflect on the lessons learned from the pandemic, economic devastation and civil unrest that has gripped our nation.

The first is not so much a lesson derived from our recent crises as it is a sentiment I had been sensing for quite some time that was magnified while reflecting on the issues underlying so much of what we are struggling to resolve. Specifically, social media and the social media culture have provided a platform for boundless hostility, profanity, name calling, and verbal attacks, often without accountability and with complete impunity.

While the rights to free speech and protest are foundational to our society, the standards for respect, patience, tolerance and understanding in our communications and actions seem to have dissolved almost to the point of nonexistence, and from my perspective those pillars are essential to a meaningful and long-lasting resolution to the issues we face.

I have also learned just how little control we have. If wildfires, earthquakes, mud slides, floods, hurricanes, and terrorist attacks haven’t convinced us of that, certainly the pandemic was a brutal slap in the face. Try as we might to work hard, protect ourselves and our families, and do the right thing, there simply are things that are far beyond our control that can irreversibly change the course of our lives and ruin our well-laid plans. The lesson learned is to prepare the best we can for crises and “rainy days” because those who have their affairs in order are best prepared to weather the storm, but at the end of the day flexibility and the ability to roll with the punches are important virtues.

Another lesson was the importance of laughter. I don’t know about you, but I sensed that I was laughing and smiling much less while confined to home, burdened by the oppressive shelter in place orders, and exposed to the barrage of dire news stories about the pandemic. I realized just how important laughter is to our well-being, and found that watching sources of amusement such as YouTube videos, comedic TV shows and podcasts raised my spirits and really improved my overall sense of well-being.

A big lesson was the value of recreation in our lives. Essentially every recreational outlet that could not be enjoyed on a smartphone, computer or TV was stripped from our lives for an extended period. We lost our access to restaurants, professional sporting events, movie theaters, bars, amusement parks, comedy clubs, live theater, beaches and campgrounds, resorts and cruises, and even golf went dark for a period of time. Never have I been more aware of the number of recreational options and outlets at our disposal pre-pandemic, and never have I had a greater appreciation for those activities or for the value they bring to our lives and our mental, emotional and physical health.

Which brings me to what has probably been the biggest realization and lesson out of the crises of the last three months: appreciation! Appreciation for what we have, what we have access to, what our society affords us. With all of our recreational outlets taken away for an extended period of time, and our freedoms severely restricted, it occurred to me that we still have it immeasurably better than any third-world country and the citizens of oppressive governments. There is much for which to be grateful, even in the worst of times.

A commitment to respect and tolerance in all debate and communications, laugh often, do my best and understand that some things are out of my control, enjoy the many activities and recreational outlets at my disposal, and appreciate more...these are the lessons of a trying three months. ...

Marc

MEET THE GCSASC AND HI-LO DESERT GCSA GOLF COURSE DOGS

By Brittany Connerly • Special Projects Assistant • GCSASC/Hi-Lo Desert GCSA

One thing you can always count on while golfing is taking in the gorgeous scenery. Whether that is water, mountains, or the lush greenery, the views are always incredible. One thing you probably don't count on seeing—a furry dog trotting around the course. However, thanks to many golf course superintendents bringing in their dogs, golfers can add a whole mix of breeds to their list of favorite golf course views. Customers are loving the new “canine staff,” bringing a new level of excitement to coming out to the course.



Four-year-old rescue dog Tuxy belongs to Desert Willow Golf Resort Superintendent Chris Bien. Tuxy adds a lot of cuteness and excitement to Desert Willow. While there, he takes his job as a course dog very seriously. He is always eager to make a guest's day brighter. Although he is small, he has no fear when it comes to chasing birds away from the course. If you are interested in seeing more of Tuxy and what he is up to, his Instagram account (@desertwillowdog) is regularly updated with pictures and videos of him!



Niki is the course dog at The Springs Club; her proud owner is Superintendent, James Pogue. Niki is a thirteen-year-old Catahoula Leopard dog. Despite her age, Niki shows no signs of slowing down when it comes to her love of swimming after the geese and coots that try and infiltrate “her” course.



Hank is a four-month-old Boston Terrier, and pup to Toscana Country Club superintendent Jared Stanek. Despite being a puppy, Hank takes his responsibility of becoming a course dog seriously. Hank is currently in training, and eagerly waiting for the day he will put his training in action. Soon, members at Toscana will be able to see Hank chasing coots, rabbits, and roadrunners. He has also been working hard on making sure members are happy. Hank's member outreach and relations training will be put to great use with the course reopening.



At only eight months old, labradoodle Birdie is new to being a course dog, but she is already making her owner, Pat Gradoville, Superintendent at Palos Verdes Golf Club, proud. From the members to the staff, Birdie is a course favorite at Palos Verdes. Each morning, Birdie greets and is greeted by crew members. Palos Verdes veteran crew member, Martin Lomeli, who has worked at the course for 50 years, was won over easily by Birdie, as were the rest of the crew by her cute face and sweet personality. Birdie has proven she is meant to be a course dog through her love of riding on the cart and running through the course. Birdie has appealed to more than the crew; Birdie's sweet temperament has made her a member favorite! Whether people are coming to the course to work or play, Palos Verdes has more than one type of Birdie to love!



German Shorthaired Pointer, Molly, belongs to Sunnylands Golf Course Director of Agronomy/Landscape Nicolas Hanson. Molly is a daily fixture at Sunnylands; she is always there to greet members and crew. She takes pride in more than just socializing with the people at Sunnylands, as members can spot her chasing birds, and any other pesky creatures she comes across, away from the course. Molly is all about member satisfaction.



We are pleased to present Chili, a friendly companion and course dog of Shady Canyon Golf Club Superintendent John Nachreiner. Chili is an English Lab who brightens the day for members and the crew anytime they are around her at Shady Canyon.



Duke is a two-year-old Australian Cattle Dog, and wonderful course dog of Mike Magnani, Superintendent at Andalusia Country Club. Duke is an excellent companion and does an outstanding job at keeping Andalusia running!



Bill Houlihan, Director of Agronomy at Black Gold Golf Club is the proud owner of Quinn, a 6 month old German Shepard. Bill got Quinn from the OC Shepard Rescue at 3 months old. She accompanies Bill to work everyday and enjoys running the golf course, chasing rabbits and coots. The golfers are always amazed to see her sitting next to Bill in his vehicle!



Callaway Tang, an eleven year old mix of Golden Retriever, Labrador Retriever, and Greyhound, is a long-time course companion to Tyler Tang, Superintendent at the Club at Morningside. Although Callaway was born on April Fool's Day, there is no funny business while he is working as course dog. Since he was a young puppy, Callaway has taken his duties of chasing birds and wildlife from the course seriously. Callaway is a hard worker, who shows up to the course every day. When he is not making sure that Morningside is running smoothly, Callaway loves to sprint the course with his dad, followed by taking a well-deserved break by cooling off and wading in the water. Although Callaway is top dog at Morningside, he still abides by the rules. One of his many talents is making sure to walk around the green while doing rounds with dad, because he knows he is not supposed to be on the green. Callaway was certainly born to be a dog on the course!



FROM THE BUNKER

By Craig Kessler • Director • Governmental Affairs
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GOLF ASSOCIATION

PICKING UP THE PIECES

“Recreational” golf is back. Everyone, golfers and facilities alike, have gotten the hang of what it means to manage and play golf per social distancing and common touch point controls. The rest – the business and social – are rapidly coming into focus as counties at varying speeds enter Phases II and III of the re-opening process. Of course, they’re coming back in severely truncated forms, but they’re coming back, nonetheless.

Keeping it for the duration of the pandemic is in the hands of golfers and golf facilities. So far so good, which is more than some other outdoor recreational activities can claim. But unless the Novel Coronavirus is unlike every other virus in human history, there will be a second wave of COVID-19 later this year; how severe is anybody’s guess. Complacency is not an option. The industry fought too hard to be the first activity restored to allow that to happen.

Okay; we developed a theory of golf’s “recreational” case, and at least in Southern California’s ten (10) counties, that “case” got us reintroduced literally before every other outdoor recreational activity, including hiking/walking trails. We should be rightly proud of having done that. But we all know that this is but the beginning of a long slog through some very difficult terrain.

According to Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, we are facing 20-25% unemployment this summer, and a recovery that will look more “U” or “L” shaped than the “V” shaped one that some predicted at the dawn of the pandemic shutdown. We are facing staggering local/state budget deficits. We are staring down the barrel of a 2nd wave of the novel coronavirus of unknowable dimensions this fall/winter, which at best will sustain this economic grief, and at worst lead to a second lockdown. Many of golf’s sectors, particularly the municipal sector, were struggling pre-COVID-19 – struggling at the tail end of the longest economic expansion in American history. We are picking up the pieces before all the pieces of our pre-2009 puzzle have been restored.

Golf is a discretionary leisure activity disproportionately dependent upon aspiration and confidence about the future – two things not exactly on anybody’s radar screen right now; indeed, all polls show that the biggest challenge as we enter Phases II and III of the reopening process is the general population’s reluctance to incur much risk in patronizing restaurants, malls, or any of the other businesses that require congregating in cozy confines.

As long as that remains true, it’s hard to see how an economy that is 70% consumer-driven is going to escape the doldrums anytime soon.

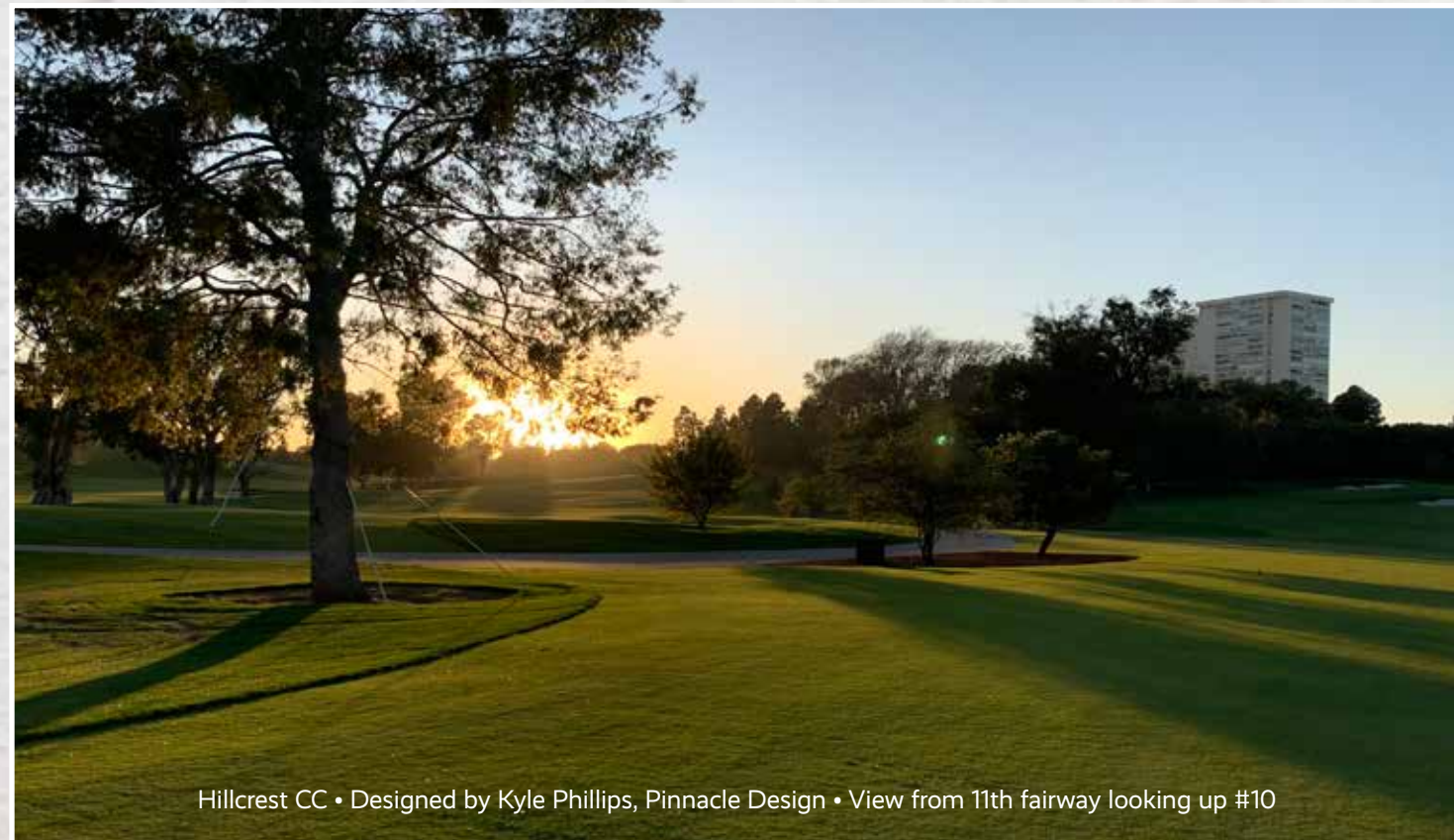
We are going to be challenged – to say the least! So is everyone else, most of whom are less well positioned than golf, which has been up and running and running on more cylinders than most others. That can be an advantage, but only if we recognize it and alter our arrangements accordingly. What exactly does that mean? I don’t know; no one person is smart enough to venture that guess. But I know this. Status quo arrangements are not going to cut it. Those sectors and activities prepared to pivot quickly toward recognizing that times like these pose challenges, but also opportunities are the sectors that are going to survive the coming detritus and thrive on the other side of this mess.

I also know this: rising above challenges and finding opportunities within them are not the stuff of isolated individuals, solitary organizations, or chance; they require something called leadership. Not the leadership of heroic effort, but rather the much tougher and more effective variety in which personal and organizational ego are set aside in favor of collective action.

In the coming weeks and months, I’ll be watching to see whether golf and its “leadership” organizations step up to do the uncomfortable and unfamiliar things necessary to snatch opportunity from challenge, or fall back into familiar arrangements and patterns all but guaranteed to elevate challenge over opportunity and in the process reduce golf to one of COVID-19’s victims.

I plan to more than “watch.” I plan to engage. I hope to see some of you join me in the effort.

Craig



Hillcrest CC • Designed by Kyle Phillips, Pinnacle Design • View from 11th fairway looking up #10





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FROM THE FIELD

By Jeff Jensen • GCSAA Field Staff • Southwest Region



I hope this finds everyone back at the course and prepping for a busy summer of play, or in the case of those in the desert, getting ready to complete some summer projects (hopefully they are not all deferred).

GCSAA recently launched a webpage containing reopening resources for golf facilities who were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Back2Golf was specifically designed for courses to work with counties, cities, and state governments to open golf courses where closed, as well as provide a roadmap to getting golfers back on the course in a safe and efficient manner.

Partnering with allied golf organizations through the We Are Golf Coalition, the documents include an industrywide guideline developed off the plan of the White House and CDC "Guidelines for Opening Up America Again" including a specific, three-phased approach to golf that aligns with the broader plan to reopen the economy, as well as a playbook for operations that provides guidance to the nations nearly 15,000 golf courses. The operations playbook covers clubhouse operations, cart operations, practice facility set-up, staffing, signage, payment/cash handling, pool, tennis, and basic guidelines for on-course play.

Additionally, GCSAA prepared its own guidelines focused on the maintenance side of the operation, which includes BMPs for on-course setup, sanitizing of vehicles and equipment, and safety protocols and social distancing requirements for the workplace.

The remaining GCSAA Back2Golf materials include temperature screening logs, potential exposure questionnaire, employee infection actions flowchart, maintaining a healthy work environment checklist, acknowledgment of preventative measures checklist, termination letter, signage templates and a return to work letter. The templates are Word documents that can be modified for individual facilities.

The GCSAA Back2Work webpage can be viewed at: <https://www.gcsaa.org/resources/back2golf-resources>. Links to additional materials from the CMAA, NGCOA and PGA of America are available at the bottom of the webpage. Check back regularly as the documents will continue to be updated as the situation evolves.

I hope you and your family are safe during this crisis, and make sure to take some time away from your facilities this summer to recover from both the physical and mental grind that this situation has caused.

If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to contact me at jjensen@gcsaa.org and make sure to follow me on Twitter @GCSAA_SW for industry updates. ...

Jeff



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GOLF AND THE PANDEMIC

By Marc Lilliberg • El Dorado Park Golf Course



Marc Lilliberg and family

As I sit here and free hand my thoughts on the golf shutdown, I can think of many other topics I would like to discuss. For example, topics pertaining to aerifications, top dressings, growth regulators, and anything to do with creating a perfect environment for turf grass roots and shoots. Maybe discussing the stark contrasts between green grass facilities and their benefits, compared to the once emerging indoor golf and entertainment complexes and their challenges at this moment and time.

Even more interesting would be discussing the origins and evolution of using a bent stick to hit a stuffed leather ball evolving to what golf is today, a multi-billion dollar industry. Or even discussing the challenges the industry and owners and operators are facing with a declining golf population and demand coupled with the ever increasing price of labor and other resources.

Shelve those thoughts, and what I want to address is the notion that for some medical and safety concern, golf needed to be on the list of activities too dangerous to attempt in the face of the pandemic.

I believe the uncertainty of the medical situation warranted caution and skepticism with regards to any activities deemed non-essential. What makes me, and I hope everyone else, scratch my head in confusion is the grading system of what was deemed essential or non-essential. In addition, what was deemed safe and unsafe behavior to reduce transmissions and “flatten the curve.”

Golf is both sport and recreation, and is the perfect environment for maintaining all the necessary factors in limiting the spread of the virus; all the while, keeping an integral part of the economy and people active during this shutdown. I understand time is, and was, needed to implement social best practices with respect to worker and customer safety. Close to 50 days of golf being shutdown was excessive and unneeded. I am not a fan of Monday morning quarterbacks, but this was a NO BRAINER!

I take particular issue with one company allowed to remain open without restriction of hours during which they

could operate: Dairy Queen. Most love ice cream, but c'mon, man, “essential”? I don't think so. In contrast, home improvement stores were closing at 5:30 pm. If you needed plumbing, electrical or hardware for an emergency repair at your house, you were unable to get what you needed. But, if you had the munchies at 9 p.m., hop in the car for ice cream, no problem; 31 flavors, no problem!

I can go walk around any Dairy Queen, supermarket or liquor store and hand cash to any cashier, but could not hand cash to a pro shop starter and tee it up. The customers I see on my golf course have an addiction. Golfers were “jonesing” for golf and would break a few laws to peg it up. A misdemeanor charge of illegal parking and trespassing was worth it for just a few swings of a club on a golf course.

I saw people dressed up in their Sunday outfits of black pants and red shirt ready to break the course record. Significant others must have been scratching their heads in disbelief. “Honey, where are you going dressed up in your favorite golf outfit? Aren't all the golf courses closed?” I can only imagine the responses given! Unfortunately, I was there at the course to burst their bubble and receive the brunt of their golf shutdown dissatisfaction.

Our economy and society have been through a lot in the last 100 years. I do not recall, other than two World Wars, where the economy was at the mercy of CDC, disease experts and politicians. We have been hit with the Spanish Flu, The Great Depression, Korean and Vietnam Wars, The Cold War, Desert Storm, Ebola, yearly influenza, and so on. While all

are not related in tragedy, sacrifice, and recovery, our economy and beliefs have always continued with little to no interruption and have evolved to withstand these outside pressures. California golf is both beauty and beast. It exhibits greatness and pandemonium at the same time. We have nearly 1,000 courses in this state. The economy needed golf. The people needed golf. We all had our surreal moments on our courses during the shutdown. From isolation to enjoying what nature had to offer during the shutdown. •••

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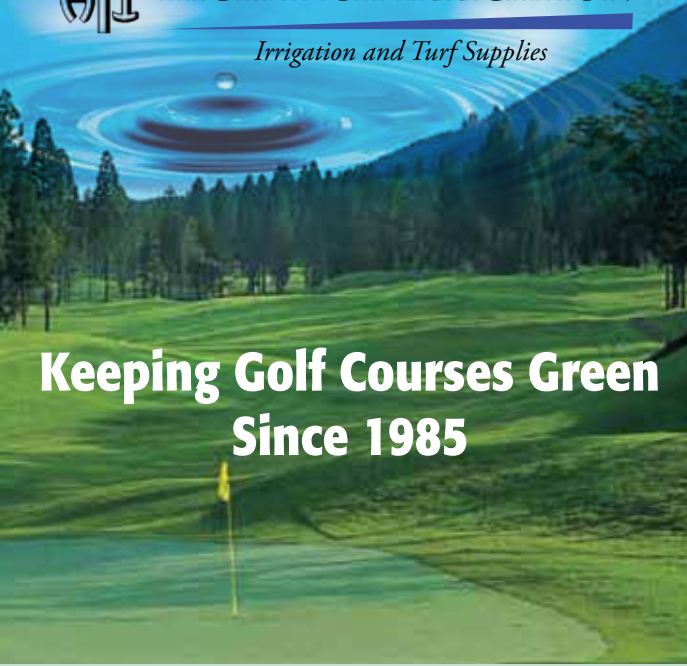


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