

Golf Course Happenings and Update 7/15/2025

Hello Mens Club! I'm incredibly excited to start our bi-weekly updates. This will be a great way to keep you all informed on the happenings of the golf course, as well as any other updates that may need to be conveyed as the unpredictable weather inevitably throws a wrench in our plans.

Over the last 4 months I've had the pleasure of meeting many of you, but on the off chance we haven't run into each other on the golf course or around the clubhouse, I look forward to meeting you soon! A bit about myself, I just wrapped up 3 seasons at North Shore Country Club, where I had the honor of studying under industry leading superintendent Dan Dinelli. My time there was incredibly influential, and I am so grateful for the many lessons I took away from my experience. I had the great pleasure of hosting the 2023 Western Amateur, and starting a successful internship program placing 4 former interns into assistant superintendent positions at prominent clubs across the midwest. Previously, I spent a year at Bryn Mawr Country Club, after completing an internship upon graduating grass farming school in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I grew up most of my life.

1) **Turf grass update** It's that time of the season where golf is in full swing, and about time to really tighten down the screws before 2 important events towards the end of the month and into early August. We experimented with greens mower height of cut as well as addressed excess grain on greens late last week, and figured we gained about 8 inches of green speed between Thursday and Saturday. We're continuing to monitor our progress, weighing the sustainability of low mowing height with an acceptable green speed that can tolerate up to 400 daily rounds in challenging weather.

If you played the course early this week, you likely noticed evidence of some significant topdressing and verticutting on approaches and greens. This was done 2 weeks out from the events to allow for ample recovery time following a pretty invasive process. The goal is to dilute organic matter buildup, and remove thatch in the name of providing a firmer, faster playing surface, while mitigating grain and encouraging a true ball roll. We anticipate this will recover fully within the week, and conditions will return to better than normal by the weekend.

2) **Water Quality Work:** In addition to our turf related cultural practices, we're currently experimenting with some pretty interesting water quality work. Upon pulling water tests in the early summer, we observed a strikingly low dissolved oxygen level in our irrigation pond, as well as a high concentration of algae and cyanobacteria. This pond specifically is of the utmost importance to us, considering it's the water waiting on the sidelines, ready to be put out onto the golf course via our irrigation system as needed. Historically, superintendents will treat the water with heavy dosages of chemicals that can be harmful to wildlife, aquatic life, as well as turf and surrounding landscapes. I will admit we did 2 treatments early this summer to cut down on algae, however the real win in my opinion is in our ongoing treatment plan. 12 bales of barley straw were sourced from a farm in Wisconsin, and strategically placed in ponds around the course. Barley straw contains an anti- microbial enzyme, which does a remarkable job oxidizing any leftover cyanobacteria lingering in the pond, giving us a much cleaner water source to irrigate with. Not all water is created equal. This of course is an ongoing process, and we will continue to see varying amounts of surface algae as weather conditions dictate, however any opportunity to cut down on chemical input is a win in our book.

I'm very excited to continue these updates throughout the season, and will do my best not to get too technical. If we've had the chance to talk, I'm sure you would have recognized I could talk about this stuff all day. Looking forward to seeing you all out on the course soon, and if I don't, best of luck next weekend!

Evan Davis
Director of Agronomy