

The Reporter

From the Rocky Mountain Chapter of GCSAA
Growing Green Since 1936

Colorado Golf Day 2026

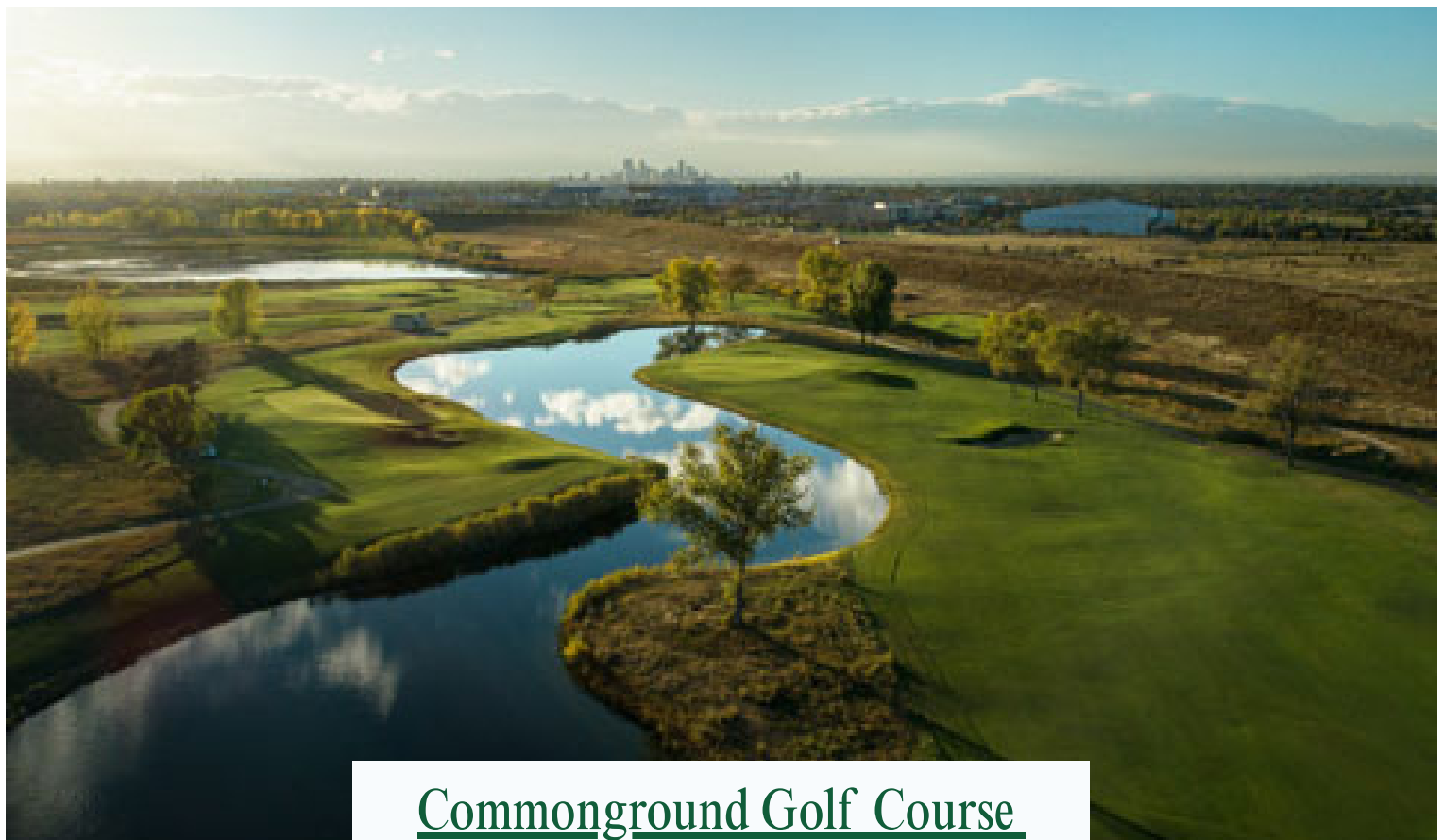


Leaders From: Colorado Golf Association,
CMAA Mile High Chapter, RMGCSA,
Colorado Section of PGA and NCGOA

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Commonground Golf Course

President's Message

Joe Kunze, CGCS, City of Arvada, RMGCSA President

On April 15, 2026, members of the Colorado Golf Coalition attended the annual Golf Day at the Capitol in Denver, Colorado. Representatives from the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association (RMGCSA), Colorado Section PGA, Colorado Golf Association, and the National Golf Course Owners Association hosted tables in the State Capitol lobby. Colorado lawmakers were invited to stop by, enjoy breakfast, and engage in conversations about the many facets and current events in the golf industry. The RMGCSA table saw strong engagement, with senators and representatives asking thoughtful questions, especially regarding water usage. Travis Abitz was also present, showcasing the latest technology available to turf managers. A variety of moisture meters were on display, and he demonstrated how data-driven insights now allow irrigation adjustments to be made almost in real time. These advancements not only conserve water but also help deliver the firm, fast playing conditions golfers value. Water was, unsurprisingly, a central topic across all discussions. One particularly interesting takeaway was the range of responses to the question: "How will water be limited at each course?" Approaches varied widely. Some courses currently face no significant limitations or concerns about their water sources. Others are operating under mandated percentage reductions. Still others are benchmarking reductions based on either last year's usage or a five-year average. What 78% of golf courses statewide, and an impressive 92% of RMGCSA member courses, share is the implementation of facility-level Best Management Practices (BMPs), endorsed by both the RMGCSA and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Water conservation is a cornerstone of these BMPs. Given the wide variability in factors such as shade, acreage, turfgrass types, soil conditions, and infrastructure, facility-specific BMPs are essential. They demonstrate that each course is equipped to responsibly manage current conditions and adapt to future challenges. BMPs also provide critical credibility for golf course operations, particularly in conversations where water usage is under scrutiny. Thank you to the RMGCSA Board of Directors and all who represented our 608 members and the broader industry. Continued education and outreach are essential as we share the positive environmental and operational contributions we make every day.

Joe Kunze, CGCS

President, City of Arvada



Superintendent Spotlight

By Jonathan Worscheck, Broadmoor Golf Club

Describe Your Facility

The Broadmoor Golf Club is a 36-hole facility with intertwined architecture from Donald Ross and Robert Trent Jones Sr. Along with a 12-hole par three course designed by Beau Welling that is currently under construction. The Broadmoor has had a long history with the USGA and has hosted numerous USGA championships starting back with the 1959 U.S. Amateur, which was Jack Nicklaus first career win, and most recently the 2025 U.S. Senior Open with the winner Pdraig Harrington. The Golf Club goes attached with the prestigious Broadmoor Hotel the World's Longest-Running Forbes Five-Star, AAA Five-Diamond Resort

What advice would you offer to someone considering a career in golf course management?

I would without hesitation tell a potential turf manager to pursue multiple internships. They are a great way to bolster your knowledge of different agronomics plans, environments, club cultures and golf operations. I completed three different internships at The Broadmoor, Ballyneal and Sand Hills Golf club. These internships got my foot in the door and led to my first assistant position at Ballyneal and furthermore came full circle landing me back at The Broadmoor managing the West course.

How many years have you worked in the golf industry and how did you enter the profession?

I've been in the golf industry for 13 years. I started washing carts and working in the pro shop at my hometown course. I got my first greenskeeper job on the East course at the Broadmoor and said "hey I like this side of the operation" and ended up obtaining an Environmental Horticulture degree from CSU and completed internships in the process and haven't looked back. Continued on Page: 5

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What do you find most rewarding about serving as a Superintendent?

I love the golf industry and community. We build relationships with golfers, staff, and members, and it feels good to hear that people appreciate the course conditions. On top of that, there's the constant problem-solving aspect, no two days are the same, and successfully managing the course brings a strong sense of accomplishment.

Who has served as a mentor to you or in what way did you first become involved in the industry?

Jared Kalina (Ballyneal), Kyle Hegland (Sand Hills) Freddie Dickman and Michael Sartori (Broadmoor Golf Club) Have all played a role in my career. From people management advice, agronomic views and everything in between. They have all shaped who I am as a turf and people manager today.

How do you prefer to spend your time away from work?

In the winter my wife and I hit the Colorado ski resorts, typically Breckenridge or Winter Park. In the summer the clubs will be slung on my back, and I will play when I have the time and energy. Both of these activities can be paired with a cold IPA from our great local breweries.

What is your favorite film?

Gladiator

What is your favorite restaurant?

In-N-Out – I treated their burgers like they were a delicacy before they opened locations in Colorado.

What is your favorite film?

As a Colorado State University alumni, I support all their athletics – Go Rams!



Jonathan Worscheck & Wife



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Assistant Spotlight

By Conrad Hoover, Castle Pines Golf Club

Describe your Facility?

Castle Pines Golf Club is an 18-hole, high-end private club set along the side of a mountainside. It was the vision of Jack A. Vickers and designed by Jack Nicklaus with championship golf in mind. The club opened in 1981 and hosted The International for 21 years, and most recently the BMW Championship in 2024. The course features elevation changes, ponderosa pines, water features, flower beds, and a wide variety of wildlife that create a special environment.

What do you enjoy most about your team?

The most enjoyable part of our team is the amount of talent and camaraderie we share. It is a privilege to come to work every day, learn something new, and be able to pass that knowledge along. Seeing the growth of our team over time is extremely rewarding.

What do you enjoy doing when you're not at work?

Outside of work I enjoy golfing, camping, skiing, attending concerts, working out, and being around friends and family.

What is the biggest challenge you face at your facility?

The biggest challenge we face is maintaining high-level playing conditions while sharing the property with wildlife. We have a large herd of elk that wreak havoc on the course throughout the year, but especially during the shoulder seasons as they migrate.

In the spring, challenges include thousands of urine spots that we seed and compost, or plug out. Throughout the season damage ranges from hoof damage on greens to full blown destruction during the rut. Leading up to the BMW Championship in 2024, hundreds of urine spots had to be sodded out in landing zones to prepare the course. Continued on Page: 9



Conrad Hoover

How many years have you worked in golf, and how did you get started in the industry?

I got my start in the industry as a groundskeeper in college while studying mechanical engineering. After growing up on a 9-hole country club, I quickly fell in love with being on the course for work. After a brief career in engineering, I found my way back to the turf industry.

I have seven years of experience, with stops at Blue Top Ridge Golf Course (IA), Glenmoor Country Club, Breckenridge Golf Club, and now Castle Pines Golf Club.

Who has been a mentor to you, or how did you get into the business?

I have been fortunate to have several great mentors along the way. Grant Johnson and Alex Kosel played a significant role in creating a program that solidified my career change and encouraged me to pursue a degree in turf.

Brandon Wolleson and John Calendine were instrumental in putting their trust in me and pushing me to get better every day. And lastly, Scott Pavalko has really changed the way I perceive playing conditions and turf health, while setting the standard for how to carry yourself in this industry.

Thank you to all for your mentorship!

What is your favorite hole on the course and why?

It usually changes throughout the season, but #13 is a reoccurring favorite. It is a dogleg right up and over a ridge. Off the tee you can either lay back to the top of the ridge or send it over the bend to a narrowing fairway sloping towards the green. A good drive can leave a short approach into a three-tiered green surrounded by 4 bunkers. The hole features towering pines on both sides, providing a calm setting that breaks up 6 holes of greenside water features.

Favorite Movie?

My favorite Director is Christopher Nolan, and Inception is my favorite film of his.

Favorite Sports Team?

I am a die-hard Iowa Hawkeyes fan!

First Impressions from the 2026 Chapter Leaders & Executive Symposium

By Jake Jacobs, Flatirons Golf Course

I had the opportunity to attend the 2026 Chapter Leaders & Executive Symposium for the first time on Tuesday, March 24th and Wednesday, March 25th at the GCSAA Headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas. With 94 chapters across the country and 29 represented at this year's event, it created a great environment for meaningful conversation and collaboration.

The symposium was kicked off by GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans and COO Kevin Sunderman, who welcomed the group and set the tone for the two days. They provided insight into the direction of the association and reinforced how important local chapters are to the overall success of the industry.

One of the most valuable parts of the experience was the opportunity to connect with other chapter leaders and executives. We spent time discussing both successes and challenges that chapters are facing, and it quickly became clear that many of us are working through similar situations. Being able to openly share ideas and solutions was extremely beneficial.

The breakout sessions for executives and chapter leaders were another highlight. These smaller group discussions allowed for more in-depth conversations and idea sharing. Honestly, they were so productive that I found myself wishing we had more time to continue those discussions.

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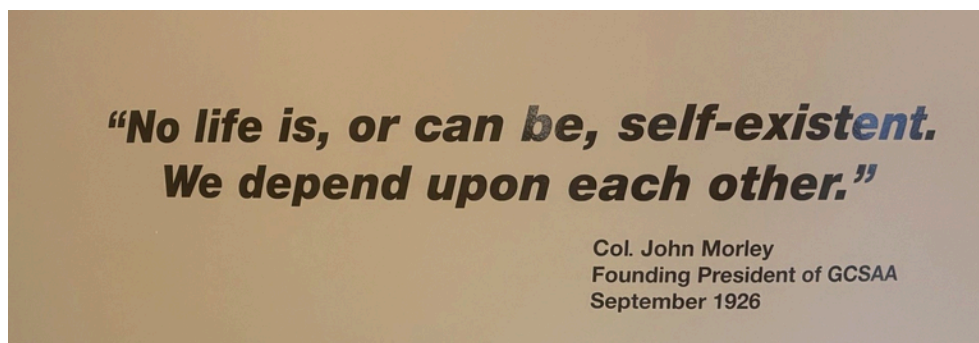
Jake Jacobs

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A standout session for me was led by Amy Leslie of Perspective Consulting, who spoke on talent optimization and understanding both your “superpower” and your “nemesis.” Her message focused on identifying individual strengths while also recognizing the tendencies that can hold us back. It was a valuable reminder that strong teams are built not only by maximizing talent, but also by understanding how different personalities and skill sets work together.

Several key topics stood out throughout the symposium. We spent time learning more about First Green and its impact on education and outreach, as well as ongoing workforce development efforts within the industry. There was also a session on “AI in Action,” which focused on practical tools that chapters can begin using right away this is something that will only become more relevant moving forward. In addition, Rounds 4 Research was discussed as an important initiative that continues to support turfgrass research across the country.

Overall, my first experience at the Chapter Leaders & Executive Symposium was extremely positive. It was a great opportunity to learn, share ideas, and build connections with peers from across the country. I’m grateful for the chance to represent RMGCSA and look forward to applying what I learned to continue improving and growing our chapter.



Colorado Golf Coalition Statement on Winter Operations and Workforce Sustainability

By Rachel Carter, National Golf Course Owners Association

The Colorado golf industry has experienced an unusually mild and dry winter season. While these conditions have allowed many courses across the state to remain open and active far longer than typical, they have also created operational challenges that few facilities planned for. Many courses entered the winter with reduced seasonal staffing levels, as is customary, yet have found themselves operating at near-peak demand for extended periods.

This reality has placed additional strain on the dedicated professionals who keep our facilities operating—from superintendents, grounds crews, golf shop staff, outside services, food and beverage teams, and operations personnel. These team members are the backbone of Colorado golf, and their well-being is essential to the long-term success of our industry. The Colorado Golf Coalition recognizes that operators and owners are working to balance two important priorities: responsibly serving strong customer demand while also protecting the health and sustainability of the workforce that makes that service possible. Neither objective exists without the other.

As an industry community, we have an opportunity to support one another and adopt thoughtful practices that help ensure our teams remain energized, supported, and prepared for the busy months ahead. While every facility operates under different circumstances, the Coalition encourages leaders across Colorado golf to consider the following ideas and best practices that may help maintain a sustainable workforce during this extended operational season.

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Ten Practices to Consider for Supporting Your Team

By Rachel Carter, National Golf Course Owners Association

1. Protect Regular Days Off

Whenever possible, ensure employees receive at least one full day off per week—ideally two consecutive days. Predictable rest periods can significantly improve both physical recovery and mental well-being. This will ensure staff can give 100% when they are at your facilities.

2. Allow Strategic PTO During the Season

For employees who have accrued paid time off, consider allowing a full week of PTO between May and August, even though this has traditionally been discouraged during peak season. Proactive rest can help prevent mid-season burnout.

3. Cross-Train Staff Across Departments

Where feasible, cross-training staff (golf operations, outside services, food & beverage, maintenance support roles) can create flexibility during high-demand periods.

4. Collaborate with Nearby Facilities

Reach out to neighboring courses or operators to explore temporary labor sharing where appropriate. A cooperative approach can help address short-term staffing gaps across the region.

5. Adjust Service Levels When Needed

If staffing becomes strained, consider modest adjustments to service offerings or hours of operation to maintain quality and reduce pressure on teams.

Continued on Page: 14

The image shows two business cards side-by-side. The left card is for Syngenta, featuring the company logo and contact information for Tim Klein, Territory Manager. The right card is for Irrigation Technologies, featuring a water drop logo and contact information for Brian Keighin, Principal. The right card also lists various services and qualifications.

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6. Communicate Openly with Staff

Regular check-ins with team members help leadership stay aware of fatigue levels, morale, and operational stress points before they become larger issues.

7. Reinforce Breaks and Recovery During Shifts

Encourage supervisors to actively ensure employees are taking scheduled breaks—especially for outdoor crews working long hours in changing weather conditions.

8. Recognize the Extra Effort

Small gestures—meals, appreciation events, recognition programs, or bonuses where possible—can go a long way in acknowledging the additional effort teams have put forth this winter.

9. Plan Early for Seasonal Hiring

Given the early operational demand, facilities may benefit from accelerating seasonal hiring timelines or bringing staff on board earlier than in a typical year.

10. Lean on the Industry Community

The Colorado golf industry has always been strongest when operators support one another. Sharing ideas, staffing solutions, and operational strategies can help everyone navigate this unusual season together.

Colorado golf has long benefited from a collaborative and resilient industry community. By supporting our teams and remaining mindful of workforce sustainability, we can ensure that our facilities—and the people who power them—remain strong throughout the season ahead.

The Colorado Golf Coalition appreciates the leadership and commitment demonstrated by operators, owners, and staff across the state, and we look forward to working together to continue strengthening the game and the industry in Colorado.



10 Practices to Support Your Golf Course Team

-  **Protect Regular Days Off** Ensure at least two consecutive days off per week.
-  **Allow Strategic PTO** Offer a fully paid week off between May and August.
-  **Cross-Train Staff** Cross-train staff to increase flexibility.
-  **Collaborate with Neighbors** Borrow staff from nearby courses if needed.
-  **Adjust Service Levels** Scale back services if staffing is tight.
-  **Communicate Openly** Check in regularly with your team.
-  **Recognize the Effort** Show appreciation with rewards or bonuses.
-  **Plan Early for Hiring** Start seasonal hiring sooner than usual.
-  **Reinforce Breaks** Make sure staff take proper breaks during shifts.
-  **Lean on the Industry** Connect with fellow courses for support.

Colorado Golf Coalition Holds In-Person Meeting

By Mitch Savage, CGCS, Commonground Golf Course

On Thursday, March 12 the Colorado Golf Coalition convened for an in-person meeting at Clubhouse Work & Golf in Greenwood Village. The purpose of the meeting was to provide updates on current and ongoing legislative issues related to the golf industry, discuss continuing advocacy efforts, and examine ways in which the coalition can be mindful of the physical and emotional well-being of golf industry employees in light of the busy and difficult winter season and lack of down time in an otherwise seasonal industry. The coalition, which is made up of the Colorado Golf Association, the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the GCSA, the Colorado Section PGA, the National Golf Course Owners Association, and the Mile High Chapter of the Club Managers Association.

Coalition lobbyist Jennifer Cassell provided the group with updates on specific bills that were introduced at the CO State Capitol during the 2026 legislative session. The first, HB26-1111, is a bill that pertains to a voluntary pesticide container recycling program that would be managed by the Colorado Department of Agriculture. The second bill, HB26-1119, is in regard to land value, use, and taxes. Both bills are currently being discussed and debated at the committee level at the Capitol. As always, the CO Golf Coalition remains committed to its advocacy efforts and asks individuals to provide testimony to House and Senate committees when needed.

The golf coalition also had a strong presence and support at the Capitol for CO Golf Day on Wednesday, April 15. This annual event provides an opportunity for professionals within the golf and golf course management community to meet with legislators and their staff members to discuss issues facing the industry and provide education on ways in which the challenges are being addressed. The conclusion of the event includes a reading of a proclamation in the House and/or Senate chambers which outlines the many benefits of golf in Colorado.

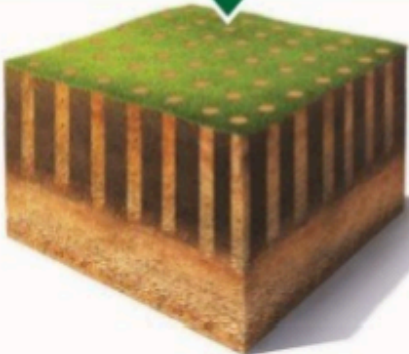


Mitch Savage


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Yes Sir!

By Chet Wilmes, Springhill Golf Course

These two words carry a special meaning in the golfing world, especially every April. The Masters Tournament at Augusta National stands apart from every other event. It is truly the gold standard of golf. But what is it like in person? The short answer: AMAZING!

Each year, our group is fortunate enough to attend. We include both Superintendents and PGA professionals, and the excitement begins as early as March. Our group text is active nearly all day, building anticipation for the trip. We attend on Monday and Tuesday, when the atmosphere is more relaxed and enjoyable. Some of us have been to as many as eight Masters tournaments, while others are first timers, but no matter the experience level, everyone has the same reaction upon stepping onto the grounds: it feels like heaven.

From a Superintendent's perspective, the first thing that stands out is the deep green color of the ryegrass. Augusta National overseeds with a Rye mix over dormant Bermuda, creating fairways that feel like hitting off a perfectly manicured mat. The greens are seeded with a specific, undisclosed bent grass, and one word comes to mind: consistency. While many people say television makes the course look better, the opposite is true. Augusta looks even more flawless in person. The attention to detail is unmatched.

During the tournament, the greens are double-mowed and rolled in the mornings, and often again after play depending on the weather. With its advanced sub-air system, Augusta National can precisely control the firmness and speed of the greens. Another unique detail: you will never see mowing stripes on the fairways or tees, as they mow in a single direction to maintain uniformity. However, one thing you truly cannot appreciate unless you are there in person is the severity of the green slopes. It is remarkable that players can putt these surfaces as well as they do, some of the slopes are downright brutal.

2026 Masters Grass Heights

Greens: 1/8 inch

Fairways: 3/8 inch

Second cut: 1 3/8 inch

Tees: 5/16 inch

Collars: 1/4 inch

Green surrounds: 5/16 inch

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Experiencing Augusta as a Patron is what it's all about. Everything is designed with the spectator in mind. The course is easy to navigate, with crosswalks throughout that allow you to move from one side to the other quickly. Even Amen Corner is easily accessible. Grandstands are plentiful and, during practice rounds, rarely overcrowded. You can get remarkably close to the players, sometimes just feet away from tees and greens.

There are multiple concession stands across the course, and lines move quickly. The merchandise shops, however, are another story. The recent "Gnome" craze has made them especially crowded. The best strategy is to go there first, no matter how long the line is, and get it out of the way early.

Ultimately, the Masters is more than just a golf tournament, it's an experience. We are lucky to share it with a great group of friends who genuinely enjoy each other's company. The excitement on everyone's face never gets old, especially for first timers. That alone makes the trip worthwhile. (Although keeping nine people together can feel like herding cats!) When in doubt, head to the nearest food and beer stand you'll likely find the group there.

The food is inexpensive, the beer is even cheaper, and you might even spot a celebrity or two. Members are welcoming, and it's not uncommon to strike up a conversation. This year, I even managed to shake hands with several green jacket members, something I won't forget.

The beauty of Augusta National is simply unmatched. The vibrant colors, especially the pink azaleas, are the perfect finishing touch. If you ever have the chance to attend, take it. Augusta National does not disappoint. Experiencing the Masters with close friends or family is truly priceless.



Left to right Back row
Kevin Kallas Saddle Rock, Chet
Wilmes Springhill Golf Course,
Cary Callihan PGA, Greg Lake
PGA, Chad Parron
Meadowbrook Golf Course,
Matt Vance Aurora Hills Golf
Course, Justin Moore PGA

Left to right kneeling:
Mike Fengler PGA, Steve
Schommer Indian Peaks

Directors Corner

By Kevin Malloy, CGCS, TPC Colorado

Oh, The Places You Can Go

Recently, I was fortunate enough to be offered a new position as a Competitions Agronomy Official with the PGA Tour—a role that has been a dream of mine ever since I discovered my passion for tournament golf. As I sit in an airport in Amarillo, Texas, writing this, I’ve had time to reflect not only on my journey but on the golf industry as a whole—the highs, the lows, and the unique opportunities it provides.

This industry offers something I believe few others do: truly endless opportunity. When I look at the PGA Tour schedule, events span from Columbia, South Carolina, to Bogotá, Colombia. They are held at world-renowned venues like Muirfield Village as well as smaller, lesser-known clubs. Yet every one of these places shares something in common: people striving to put a small white ball into a 4.25-inch cup in as few strokes as possible. Just as importantly, each has dedicated professionals working tirelessly behind the scenes to maintain the grounds that make the game possible.

The golf industry allows you to become what you want to be, where you want to be. Yes, sacrifices are sometimes required—but life itself is a balance of sacrifice and reward. This new role excites me immensely, though it means stepping away from some of the day-to-day joys of being a golf course superintendent: watching staff members grow into new roles, celebrating team accomplishments at the completion of a project, and sharing in the camaraderie that defines the profession.

During a recent pre-tournament visit, a superintendent asked me, “Will you miss it?” My initial instinct was to answer quickly: “No—I’m excited about what I’m doing now.” But I paused. After reflecting, my response came more thoughtfully: “No, I’m not going to miss it—because I’m not leaving it.” Continued on Page: 21



Kevin Malloy

At our core, everyone in this industry is working toward the same goal. We may measure success differently—through financial benchmarks, conditioning standards, or club objectives—but ultimately, we are all supporting the same pursuit: helping golfers send a ball into a 4.25-inch hole. That shared mission is what binds this industry together. The beauty of the golf industry lies in its flexibility and inclusiveness. There are countless paths, all interconnected, all valuable. Success is deeply personal and intrapersonal. When you define success on your own terms—and pursue it authentically—you’ll find where you truly belong and where you’ll gain the greatest fulfillment. There’s no need to become something you’re not. In this industry, you only need to be yourself.

Certification News
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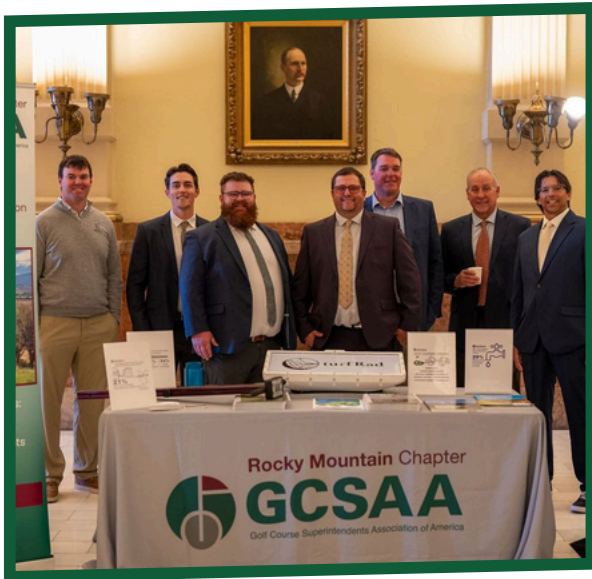
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2026 Golf Day at the Capitol



Affiliate Angle

By Tyrel Muheim, L.L. Johnson

What is your current affiliate company and your position? How long have you been in this position?

I am a Commercial Turf outside sales Territory manager. I have been with L.L. Johnson for 15 years, 10 of which was in Service where I intimately learned all about our Toro equipment and allied lines. 5 years ago the position opened for the Commercial Turf Western Territory manager which I have been doing ever since.

Where are you based out of and what territory do you cover?

I live in Evergreen, CO and cover downtown Denver, West Denver, Northwest Colorado to the Colorado, Wyoming, Utah State Lines. My furthest stop is to the southwest in Telluride, CO.

What are the responsibilities of your company to our industry, and how is your company involved with RMGCSA?

The responsibility of L.L. Johnson to the Rocky Mountain Golf Industry is to assist all our customers in their goals and pursuits. We as a company need to meet our customers where they are located and support them before, during and after any business that we are working on. We are the only business in the area that sells *Toro Commercial Golf Equipment and Irrigation*. This has made us vital in many of our customers operations and we appreciate that so many people have put that much trust in us. We are a large sponsor for the RMGCSA. The top tier sponsor. As we should be. It's a way to support the industry for all the hard work that all these clubs have put in. Continued on Page: 24



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What might we be surprised to know about your company?

We are also in our 50th year of operation assisting customers in our Toro territory. Also, it takes a village for this machine called L.L. Johnson to operate. The amount that goes in behind the scenes is hard to convey in this article. There are so many departments and people that work together to bring together what we focus on being a positive experience. It is challenging yet rewarding to put together every order. With the amount of customization required for each golf courses unique setup, to get the final product our customers expect is what drive all of us at L.L. Johnson.

Did you go to college? If so, where and what major did you graduate with?

I did go to college. I attended Red Rocks Community College while I was still in high school using the Warren Technical College program for power equipment and Motorcycle Technology. It was there I got my associate's in applied sciences. Once I obtained that degree I changed to a general business degree, however, I did not finish that degree.

How and when did you begin working in the golf industry and what do you like most about it?

When I was 18 years old at Warren Tech, I participated in the Skills USA competition. L.L. Johnson regularly participated as judges for that competition. L.L. Johnson was able to look at all the students coming in, make an assessment on each student, which they then offered the top students a job. Usually, the teacher will give an honest opinion which was beneficial to L.L. Johnsons long term interests. One thing I enjoy about the business is that people are generally great people in this industry. They are working to give their best product and are usually willing to help other people throughout the industry. Compared to other industries we work with, this is unique, very tight knit community.

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Tell us a little about your family, and what hobbies or activities you participate in when you are not at work?

I am happily married to my wife Sloane. She is the woman who has supported me throughout my transition from service to sales and she is my rock. She is incredibly hard-working but also wants to come home and have a great family life. We regularly cook together and have dinner together when possible. She understands that I work a job that I love and she supports me, which in turn supports our customers. We have our first child due at the end of this summer, and I look forward to the big change. She has restored my passion for hunting. She likes the extreme versions of whatever she does. We do backcountry archery bivy hunting for elk in the amazing place we call home in Colorado. I also spend time snowmobiling in the winter. (When we have a winter.)

Do you regularly attend RMGCSA meetings or events, if so, why are they important?

I attend every meeting possible. It is a great opportunity to be able to spend time with this great crowd of people we have. It's always fun to celebrate everyone's successes. I think hosting events is a massive undertaking and getting recognized is a big ordeal. Plus, everyone is facing something similar or has faced something like what you are seeing on your course before. This year it appears to be lack of water and events are a good place to bounce ideas off other superintendents / Directors of Agronomy to get different perspectives. Also taking a day away is good for us all every now and then.

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What would you like other people to know about RMGCSA?

With the RMGCSA, you get out what you put in. Some guys only are there for the credits and education. I also see members that are all in and their work to support the industry is incredible. Getting the legislative update (How boring it can be to track what the state legislature is doing) is so important because the local governments that are trying to change things don't realize the downstream effects. Just knowing that the RMGCSA is out there fighting for our industry is a massive undertaking. It's a bunch of little things that might seem small but add them all together and there is an incredible force that everyone is apart of.

What are the biggest changes you have seen in the profession since you began your career? Or, what are the most important changes that the company has seen in the past 5-10 years?

- When I began at L.L. Johnson I didn't even play golf. I would struggle to say that I "play" golf to this day. I haven't spent the time practicing and getting my game straightened out. On the equipment and irrigation side, I have seen leaps and bounds forward. The industry went through a period of rapid transition of equipment containing basic electrical systems to full GPS and autonomous equipment. Where a new product from a manufacturer every few years was normal, it now seems there are expectations that something earth shattering is released annually. With the Irrigation it's a new level of control now with Turfrad Sensors. Having spatial adjust of the irrigation system to get the water precisely where it needs to go. This is also the first time that Toro equipment and Irrigation are communicating in tandem.
- Within our company, as most people know, we have had a change in ownership this past year. The change has been a good change. Like many of our customers there were a lot of internal concerns initially. We were unsure of everything initially, however, after the dust settled, we are still the same company and most importantly the same people. We have had a renewed vision of our legacy mission to meet our customers at their current situation, when they are requesting us, to help them get to where their vision is. I believe this is a good thing for us and our customers. Of course, it will take some time for these improvements to be experienced by our customers. I hope that you as readers and members of RMGCSA know that we view L.L. Johnson's partnership as a symbiotic relationship. The employees here are here for you.

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You know a lot of people in our industry. What are they saying are the biggest obstacles to overcome for them to be successful?

One of the largest obstacles it seems most people are facing is that everyone is getting pushed to do more with less and make the course better. Rounds have increased, so do it in a smaller window of time. The budgets are not increasing enough to cover cost differences across all the expenses for golf course operations. With the cost of equipment people are having to be more selective about what they are replacing and having to plan out farther. Which means more stress and strain on the mechanics to maintain their aging fleets. Also finding good quality labor has decreased in years. People are having to look for at non-conforming options for them to be able to maintain the higher quality of product golfers are demanding with limited resources.

You get to see many facilities and properties. What is an interesting new or innovative practice you have seen?

I do see a few facilities. The interesting thing that I have seen this year is that a lot of the guys who went on the shop tours, offered by the RMGCSA, has seemingly crossed over to other facilities practices. I see things like TVs for schematics showing up in equipment shops. People are refinishing their shops or painting the shop floors. A bunch of small detail work that what always on the list. The shops have been spruced up by the mechanics. Seeing the adoption to autonomous equipment has been generally a positive opportunity for our customers. A lot of guys in the industry like technology and want to see the cutting edge and push towards the future. It will be very interesting where that innovation will take us in the next few years and seeing what sticks and what doesn't.



Tyrel Muheim & Sloane

Equipment Manager Spotlight

By Matt Dell, Class EM, Bella Rosa Golf Course

Describe Yourself:

I moved to Colorado from England in 2014 and began working as a seasonal greenskeeper the following year. It didn't take long for me to gravitate toward irrigation, and I soon stepped into a role as an irrigation technician.

In July 2018, I was offered the opportunity to become an equipment manager—right in the middle of the season, after my predecessor had unexpectedly left. I was thrown in at the deep end. At the time, my mechanical experience was limited to taking things apart as a child (rarely putting them back together) and performing basic service on my own car. The first piece of equipment I worked on was a Toro Greensmaster 3150 with a blown engine and dull reels, hardly an easy introduction.

Fortunately, I had support from superintendents Jeremy Casebolt and Rob Fitzgerald, as well as a few experienced technicians—thank you to Derek Beezub at The Club at Rolling Hills, Chad Rogers at Saddleback, and Tyrel Muheim at LL Johnson—and with their guidance, I quickly found my footing. Before long, I realized I had found something I truly enjoyed. I'm drawn to the challenge of diagnosing issues and the satisfaction that comes with solving problems.

In 2023, I was selected as one of six equipment managers to participate in the Melrose Equipment Manager Experience through the GCSAA, an opportunity that further strengthened my commitment to the profession.

What has kept me engaged ever since is the constant opportunity to learn—particularly when it comes to cutting units and reel geometry. I have completed GCSAA EMCP Levels 1 and 2 and am currently working toward CTEM certification. It's a craft that demands precision, patience, and a commitment to continuous improvement, all of which continue to motivate me today. I still enjoy getting out on the course to check the quality of cut, and if time permits, I love jumping on a mower myself. Continued on Page: 29



MATT DELL &
FAMILY

What hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

I enjoy watching Formula 1, traveling the world with my family and occasionally dabbling in Home Improvement.

What is your favorite piece of turf equipment of all time?

That's a difficult one. I guess I'm still looking for my favorite, I'd be happy to see what vendors can offer for demo! I also have a few operators ready to assist with "durability testing," of course.

When do you prefer spin grind, relief grind, or backlap?

I have honestly never backlapped. I will spin grind as often as required and try to maintain a relief on all my cutting units.

Do you lease or own equipment and what are the pros and cons of either?

We own all our equipment. We are starting to update pieces, but it is a lot of commitment when you're looking at spending \$80,000+ on each piece of equipment. I have investigated leasing and I feel on high usage equipment it makes a lot of sense.

What is one piece of equipment you consider a monumental innovation to golf course maintenance?

Equipment lift, I have been fortunate that every shop I have worked at has had one.

If you could give one piece of advice to someone interested in a career in this area of golf course maintenance, what would it be?

Convey your interest to the equipment manager. If I know someone is genuinely curious about what I'm doing, I make sure they get time in the shop whenever possible, it is the best way to learn, and a little hands on experience goes a long way.

Energy drink or coffee and how much a day?

Coffee and lots of it!

What tool is absolutely essential for every golf course mechanic?

I'd say a Pi Tape. I'm not sure how I got by without one.



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Upcoming Events



<u>Pesticide Workshop</u>	October 22nd <i>*Webinars*</i>
<u>2026 West Slope Meeting & Sunday Social</u>	May 11th 7am, Tiara Rado Golf Course. May 10th 5:30pm, Pour Fellows
<u>2026 Memorial Tournament</u>	June 11th 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM <i>Walnut Creek Golf Preserve</i>
<u>2026 Futures Tournament</u>	June 23rd 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM <i>Mariana Butte Golf Course</i>
<u>2026 Affiliate Cup</u>	August 11th 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM <i>Pole Creek Golf Club</i>
<u>Fall Classic & Challenge Finals</u>	August 31st 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM <i>Pinehurst Country Club</i>
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