

## Superintendents' Journal Winter 2023-24

El Nino has dominated our winter weather pattern. Repeating low pressure systems continue to bring us unstable weather, days of clouds, rain, low temperatures and limited sunlight. These combined variables are creating unfavorable growing conditions for our turf grass.



Preparations were made last summer for the upcoming winter with attention on turf grass quality. Water management, increased aeration with our new Toro 648 S, late season October greens Dry Ject, topdressing and timely fertilization put our greens in their healthiest condition heading into winter.



Our maintenance staff have been rebuilt and trained with experienced dedicated employees whose mission is to ensure quality work with a greater attention to detail. Their combined efforts and pride with their work has made a significant improvement to course conditions and presentability.

Continued efforts to control invasive plants and weeds have continued. Left of the new cart path on #17, numerous invasives and 2 dead pines were removed. The wetland between

#2 green and #3 Tee had a rotten pine tree, and vines removed, old fence replaced and topsoil installed to backfill erosion loss. Ornamental grass, 'Muhly Grass' installed to reduce erosion and add to the beauty of our surrounding ecosystem.



We have many species of trees and plants on our golf course. Some of which are very old and tall. We maintain in house until safety considerations are made and we out source those concerns to professional arborists. Many of our Palm and Oak trees have been pruned. Targeting those more in play or decreasing turf quality around their bases due to shading.



Green speeds have increased. We are Stimping 10.5 on average. Greater attention to the greens have increased their playability and ability to endure poor environmental growing conditions. The addition of our new Nursery green has allowed us to use its turf to plug out weak spots on our greens.



Overall, coming to the back half of our winter season, I feel we have met expectations and continue to improve. We will put forth the efforts required for golf course conditions to peak by the end of the winter season. The maintenance staff is very grateful for the employment opportunities and look forward to continuous improvement of Riverbend Golf Club, for our members and guests.



*Thank you for your diligence in following golf cart regulations, it really makes a difference.*

Jeff Heward, GCS