



## 2010: *The Summer of Discontent*

By Paul Diegnau, CGCS

September 2010

By the time you read this one can only hope that the "perfect storm" of 2010 has wound down and the temperate days of fall are upon us. Let me share with you what we experienced here at Keller GC over the past three months. I am sure that many of you can relate. To this point, we have experienced: Seven plant pathogens along with the proverbial "the poa annua just checked out"; fried solenoids on many heads in three or four fairways due to lightning; rain, rain, rain; oppressive heat and humidity, and heavy cart traffic and tournaments at the most inopportune times, resulting in wet wilt and heat-related injury.

**In late August, I had the opportunity to catch a Dr. Frank Rossi seminar via Turfnet titled 2010: Summer of Stress and What's Next.** One hundred and sixty five participants listened for over an hour as he reviewed the lessons learned from this past summer. According to the weather data presented by Dr. Rossi, Minnesota was in the region that was the second warmest and the second wettest in the nation between January and the end of July, 2010. Our region, for the same time frame, was the seventh warmest and the ninth wettest for the last 116 years. Some other highlights worth sharing included stay on your growth regulator program during times of stress to avoid growth flushes; get familiar with the symptoms and conditions favorable for Pythium Root Dysfunction (including its preference for well-drained greens) and Bacterial Wilt is showing up in annual bluegrass and on newer varieties of bentgrass. As trying as our summer has been, the northeastern U. S. experienced conditions far more severe, as witnessed by a number of high-end private clubs closing their doors to re-grass. Let's hope for a more moderate summer in 2011.

**Recently, a vendor rep brought the new industry tax to my attention and asked that I pass the information along to the membership.** As of January 1 of this year, a new tax on pesticide sales was enacted as part of legislation affecting pesticide dealers. The legislation requires any person selling restricted use pesticide, bulk pesticide or agricultural pesticide needs a Pesticide Dealer License issued by MDA. In addition, the dealer must collect a .65% on all pesticide sales excluding seed and fertilizer. This tax is mandatory and applies to everyone. If this additional burden upsets you, make sure to let your representatives in the state legislature know how you feel.

**Good news!** I attended a Nursery and Landscape Committee meeting at the MDA and as of mid-August, no new EAB beetles were found outside of previously infested areas. Keep in mind that the purple monitoring traps used by the MDA throughout the state are highly ineffective in attracting EAB but they are currently the only viable monitoring method available. MDA staff said they think the adult beetles actually wander into the traps accidentally. Several bio-control options from Asia are showing promise and could be in the country within the year.

**MNLA/MTGF are teaming up to offer a Pesticide Recertification class on November 19** at the UM Continuing Education and Conference Center in St. Paul. Go to [www.mgcsa.org](http://www.mgcsa.org) for more information.

**Don't forget about the Fall Mixer coming up on October 4.** This is the second annual sporting clays shoot at the Prior Lake Horse and Hunt Club. I attended last year and it was a blast! What a great way to tune up for bird hunting this fall. If we are able to secure the use of the pistol range, we will send out an email prior to the event letting everyone know.

**Congratulations to Jeff Pint on capturing his fifth MGCSA Championship!** Hats off to Doug Mahal, CGCS, and his staff for providing a beautiful and challenging golf course. In spite of the challenging summer weather, the golf course was in excellent shape. Thank you for making your facility available to the MGCSA.

**The MGCSA Harold Stodola Research Scramble will be held at The Classic in Brainerd on September 20.** The host Superintendent and architect of this award-winning layout is Scott Hoffmann, CGCS. I hope to see you there supporting MGCSA-sponsored Turfgrass research.

**The 1st Annual Wee One Tournament will take place September 27** on behalf of MGCSA member Tom Fuller who is awaiting a lung transplant. North Oaks GC has graciously agreed to host this tournament. The format of the event is a two-man scramble, so grab a partner and come have a great time. If successful, we hope to make this an annual event. Remember...all MGCSA-related events are listed or linked to on the [mgcsa.org](http://mgcsa.org) website.

**Applications for the 2010 GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards are now available online.** The ELGAs, presented in partnership with Syngenta and Rain Bird Golf Division, recognize superintendents and golf courses for their commitment to environmental stewardship. The deadline for applications is October 24. We all know that many Minnesota facilities are very active in the environmental arena. It would be nice to get some well-deserved national publicity on behalf of our efforts. I challenge you to take the first step and fill out an application.

**I believe the leaf drop this fall will be extra special, if you know what I mean.** Enjoy it!

*Until next month, Paul Diegnau, CGCS*