



Walter Gooder Distinguished Service Award Winner – Dustin Zdan AGS

Walter Gooder was one of the founding superintendents who formed the Alberta Golf Superintendents Association (AGSA) in 1986. He had a distinguished career as a golf superintendent, becoming President of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) in 1982, sitting on the founding Board of the Alberta Turfgrass Research Foundation (ATRF) in 1984, winning the CGSA Superintendent of the Year award in 1997, winning the AGSA Distinguished Service Award in 2006 and the CGSA's highest award, the John B. Steele award in 2008. He mentored many AGSA superintendents and profoundly influenced the golf course profession, both provincially and nationally.

On November 25th, the AGSA held our AGM, where Dustin Zdan AGS was presented the 2020 Walt Gooder Distinguished Service Award. Dustin has been the Superintendent at the Connaught Golf Club for 16 years and has been a staple within the AGSA, attending every meeting, event and promoting the Alberta Golf Superintendents Association through every avenue he can. Dustin served as the AGSA President in 2014 as well as sat on numerous committees throughout the years.

"We are extremely thrilled to be presenting Dustin with the AGSA Walt Gooder Distinguished Service award, the highest honour within the Alberta Superintendent Industry. Dustin is a staple in our association. His passion, dedication and professionalism exemplify the association and the superintendent role." – Chris Prodahl, AGSA President

Dustin is currently serving his 5th year as our Alberta Director for the Canadian Golf Superintendent Association and sits on numerous committees, conferences, professional development, accreditation, and Finance.

He has overcome adversity, surviving a tornado at Lake Manitoba and just recently during the start of the COVID pandemic where he took a pay cut at his Club but worked the same hours to lead his Club through the uncertain times!

Dustin has been a great role model and mentor within his community. He helped out with the Medicine Hat lawn bowling club, coaching the McCoy girls basketball team, building birdhouses with the grade 5 class, and doing environmental tours at his course with local schools.

Dustin has had a massive impact on his community. Several people, which Dustin is close to, reached out to share their words.

"Dustin has been an integral part of our coaching staff for the past eight years. He is loved by our players and coaches alike. Dustin willingly gives his time to help mold our next generation of leaders into competent, confident women. Not only is Dustin a great coach, but he is a great friend and an even better human being. Dustin leads our team by example with honesty, integrity, hard work... and the occasional "Yes Sir!" We are proud to have Dustin as part of our Colt family, and we are proud of all his accomplishments."

Janice Laing – McCoy High School Girls Basketball Coach:

Dustin has been a huge part of my development, allowing me to continue to grow on the golf course and behind the scenes. The way he handles people and the staff is incredible, and his dedication to not only Connaught but the whole golf course industry is something to strive for. He has a wealth of knowledge and is always willing to pass it along. Thanks, Dustin, for everything you do for me, the Club and the industry!

Justin Olansky – Connaught Golf Club Assistant Superintendent

Dustin drops in from time to time to see how things are going. He'll tell us if our turf needs water or if we need fertilizer. Our greenskeeper was like a sponge, soaking up all the information he could, and we've had a beautiful green ever since. The green has not been as good as it has been since Dustin's first visit!

Curt Moll - Secretary-Treasurer of The Medicine Hat Lawn Bowling Club:

When we all reflect to an article that Dustin wrote In a Touch of Green in 2018, this is Dustin to a tee:

"Our jobs are our livelihood and require a lot of hours to achieve success. Being a Superintendent isn't easy, but it has provided for my family for over 20 years. I wouldn't have it any other way; we have the best office in the world, seeing the sunrise is a spectacular way to start your day. There must be a balance, and I believe our industry has started to change for the better!"

Congratulations Dustin!