

There's a little-known but serious condition that strikes three out of four superintendents which, without proper treatment, can turn them into babbling, shell-shocked zombies incapable of

sleeping, eating or remembering their dogs' names. The scientific name for this condition is *turfotic nervosus linksiensis*. We know it better as "Crazed Summertime Greenkeeper Syndrome."

We recently commissioned Professor Bullwinkle von Moose of the world-renowned Whatsamatta University to conduct a major study of the causes and treatments of CSGS. I'm proud to present Dr. von Moose's findings to you exclusively here in *Golfdom*.

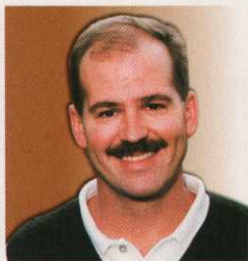
Diagnosis – You may be suffering from CSGS if you experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- You've given your pump station a pet name and visit it four or five times daily to give it gentle, loving encouragement. ("Come on Ethel, you can make it through the member/guest, sweetie pie.")
- Your assistant has standing instructions to clock you upside the head with a cup-cutter if he sees you lunging at the throat of your new, know-it-all green chairman.
- Your crew nicknames you "Watchoutfor," as in "Watchoutfor Jim today, he's ready to blow a gasket."
- You spend so much time at the course, you have to log on to Mapquest to get directions to your house.
- Those hot dogs at the snack bar actually start to look good.
- Your wife or girlfriend accuses you of having an affair with someone named "Pythium" because you keep saying her name in your sleep.
- When a neighbor casually asks if you've been playing a lot of golf lately, you begin to laugh so insanely he quietly backs away and dials 911 on his cell phone.

Causes – von Moose says the leading cause of CSGS is the Johnny Miller Virus, a disease transmitted to golfers via their TVs. "The virus causes golfers to suffer delusions under which they believe they should get Tour-quality conditions for the \$18 they just plopped down to play your course," von Moose says. "They also have a puzzling tendency to yap incessantly about 'grain.'"

This Turf Disease Can Affect You

BY PAT JONES



HOW TO DIAGNOSE

AND DEAL WITH

"CRAZED

SUMMERTIME

GREENKEEPER

SYNDROME"

Once golfers become infected with the Miller Virus (or a related malady called the "I-Just-Played-Somewhere-Else-And-This-Place-Looks-Like-A-Goat-Track-By-Comparison" Virus), superintendents are exposed to unrealistic expectations and wacky amateur agronomic theories. ("We should put out food to attract more geese. The droppings are great fertilizer, and it's free!")

Immune systems already weakened by the usual summertime mix of heavy play, hot temperatures, labor problems, disease and self-induced pressure are easy prey for the virus. Many superintendents develop full-blown CSGS by the end of June.

Treatment – Although there is no known cure for CSGS (except for chucking the whole thing and taking a cushy sales job), there are several effective treatments:

- Get a daily kiss on your nose from your spouse, child or other loved one to remind you of your real priorities in life.
- Attend a summertime chapter meeting for commiseration with colleagues. (Note: CSGS sufferers should *never* host meetings . . . their heads will literally explode from the stress.)
- Practice primal scream therapy in the privacy of your home (if you remember where it is).
- Sit down for an occasional soothing chat with your pal Bud Weiser or his cousin from Scotland, Glen Fiddich.
- Learn to smile and nod patiently while Joe Golfer tells you a better way to do your job — then stroll to the parking lot to enjoy the satisfying *hiss*s of the air accidentally being let out of the tires on his new BMW.

If all other treatments fail, try repeating the following mantra several hundred times daily: "I can make it through Labor Day, I can make it through Labor Day, I can make it . . ."

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