

## AS IT LIES

# Golf's Super Hero... It's ESSSS-MAN

By Jim Walker

Faster than a speeding golf cart. More powerful than a front-end loader. Able to leap over the maintenance building in a single bound. Look, up in the sky. It's a flying mole cricket! It's a crop-duster! No, it's Superintendent Man.

Yes, Superintendent man (S-man) - strange visitor from another planet who came to earth with powers and abilities far beyond those



of mortal men. Able to change the course of mighty irrigation systems. Bend PVC pipe in his bare hands, and who, disguised as

Alan Weitzel, mild mannered regional manager for a great Metropolitan Parks Department, fights a never-ending battle for smooth greens, lush fairways, and level tees. Investigative reporting indicates Superintendent Man is married, has 2.5 children, owns a used minivan, drives a company pickup and lives in a tract house in the 'burbs. He plays golf, watches sports on TV and on undercover assignments may drop in at the local adult entertainment club for a beer.

Known as S-man to his friends, the list of his super powers is endless:

The artist formerly known as S-man is expected to maintain Augusta National conditions on Dog Patch muni-dollars.

S-man should provide perfect greens without ever applying the necessary cultural practices.

S-man should never delay morning tee times to fertilize. The hack-n'-slash dew sweepers will have none of that.

S-man should never ask the greens committee for new equipment. After all, that stuff is made of iron and should never wear out.

S-man should work seven days a week from daylight till dark,

He should never take a vacation. After all, he is the man of steel and only kryptonite (or is it Milorganite?) can hurt him.

S-man should be everywhere at the same time.

S-man should know the name of everyone who plays on his course, as well as their children and family pets.

S-man should never expect a raise. There's not enough money to give his crew a raise and pay higher and higher prices for supplies,

S-man should not get upset because he hears only complaints and never a compliment about anything and everything on the course.

S-man and all his family members should never be sick. That could take him away from his duties.

S-man should know two weeks in advance that his pump station will be hit by lightning.

S-man should know another S-man is trying to steal his mechanic side-kick and be able to talk him into staying on for less money.

Good thing S-man is a man of steel. He may not always like his job but he will always love the game and do his best.

Superintendent man really does have powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal men.

## Letters

### Nutrition Principles Same for Man or Plant

*Editor's Note: While this letter was in response to a Golfdom column, I thought the content worthy of sharing in light of the health issues our members have been facing.*

Dear Mr. Jackson,

You wrote recently in *Golfdom* magazine of your concern for the health of the people in this profession. I wholeheartedly agree with your statements regarding our propensity to place our health as secondary to our jobs.

At the age of 28 I sought help for acid reflux disease. I had to

sleep in a chair for two or three hours each night so my food could digest before I could go to bed without problems.

This helped, but the problem worsened. I did not want to be placed on medication. I contacted a friend of the family, who had developed a line of nutritional products and asked for his help.

He asked questions about my diet. He explained that the high amounts of sugar and soft drinks in my diet were detrimental to the natural digestive process. This was causing my problem. How often do we emphasize that we should treat the problem rather than the symptom in turf? Medications from a doctor would have treated the symptom rather than the cause.

After changing my diet and adding some of his all-natural products to aid in my digestion, I totally eliminated my problem in less than a week and have not even had heartburn or reflux in more than a year. The products have also allowed me to lose 50 lbs. I now look and feel the way I should for a man my age.

In this past year I have done much study and realize that our bodies function very much like the plants we grow. Our bodies require a certain number and quantity of vitamins, minerals, and elements just as the plants do. Our problem is that we eat foods grown on nutrient-deficient soils so they don't contain all the nutrients we need.

We concentrate on N, P, and K for our turf, and the agriculture industry even more so. The problem is that our bodies need much more than the big three. What can we do?

To grow good grass on USGA-spec greens, we must regularly fertilize them in order to maintain proper nutrition. We can use granular, foliar, slow- or quick-release materials.

We can also use granular and liquid products for our bodies. The problem is that we do not have any true slow-release food. We literally need to spoon-feed ourselves daily to obtain our needed nutrients lacking in our food sources.

The lining of our intestines serves basically the same purpose as roots and root hairs (they even look similar). The proper nutrients must be provided and the proper pH maintained for this area of the body to take up the nutrients we

need. A lot of our physical problems are in fact nutritional deficiencies.

The turf disease triangle that we learned also applies to people. There must be a host (person or plant), causal agent (worm, virus, fungus, insect, nematode), and the proper environment. The host and causal agent almost always exist. It is when the host is deficient and not healthy that the proper environment for the causal agent is created. We can prevent most of our physical problems by proper nutrition.

Why do I share this information? I believe that our industry has people who can solve the problems that we have by using information that is available. I hope that you will help educate them so we can start using some preventive maintenance on ourselves.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Brian Sarvis  
River Hills Golf & C.C.  
bsarvis@sccoast.net  
843-602-1396

Brian,

Thanks for sharing your insights into diet, nutrition and health.

Editor

## USGA Green Section Southeast Regional Update

### When it Rains, It Pours, and Golf is Lousy!

*Editor's note: Couldn't resist sharing this bit of irony from the USGA Southeast Region. The area gets 35 inches of rain in 90 days after four years of drought and the golfers want to know why playing conditions are lousy, and now some jobs are on the line. Unbelievable!*

By Patrick O'Brien & Chris Hartwiger

After going through one of the most prolonged drought periods in the history of the Southeast Region, Mother Nature has switched modes and excessive rainfall now has caused economic and playability issues at numerous golf facilities.

From 1998 through the summer of 2002, most areas of the Southeast Region have been under water restrictions due to limited rainfall. The period between September

2001 and August 2002 was the second driest recorded over the past 107 years by the National Climatic Data Center and NOAA. However, since the early fall, most areas have now received in excess of 35 inches of rainfall and the drought restrictions in most areas have been removed. The period between September and November 2002 was the 99th wettest over the past 108 years.

Unfortunately, the frequent rains and below-normal temperatures accompanying the cloudy weather with the rain events has caused wet soil conditions and impacted the health of both cool- and warm-season turfgrasses.

Numerous inquiries have been received by the USGA Southeast Region office regarding golf course playing conditions over the past 60 days. Many golfers are perplexed about why their golf courses have turned into swamps, why the putting greens are not as firm, and why the overseeding has failed. Some golfers are even now questioning the abilities of their golf course superintendents due to their dissatisfaction with the presentation of the golf course.

It isn't a surprise that golfers are upset.

Over the past four years, during the drought, course playability was excellent overall at most golf facilities. Superintendents repeatedly informed us of the positives of the prolonged dry weather including the following:

- The game is more fun to play when it is dry. The ball rolls farther and golfers can play more of a variety of shots.
- Maximized revenues - no tee times lost due to weather.
- Less disease pressure.
- Mowing schedule uninterrupted.
- Maintenance more efficient (i.e. no bunker washouts, debris removal, etc.)

Now with the extended wet weather, superintendents are noting the following negative impacts:

- Lost revenue. Days and weeks of tee times cancelled due to rain.
- Maintenance schedule disrupted.
- Crisis jobs more frequent (debris removal, bunker washout repair, etc.)
- Carts restricted to path more often.
- Ideal conditions for weed seed germination and spread of weed seed.
- Diseases more common. Other pests such as algae, earthworms, and fire ants more problematic.

As we travel around the Southeast Region, every course has been impacted negatively by many of the following: muddy fairways, poor overseeding results, fairway and putting green disease issues, cart damage to fairways and roughs, and thin turf, and tees with lower density turf.

Fairway overseeding ended up being a complete waste of money in many instances and when successful, it was no panacea for these issues. Golfers should be patient and understand that course conditions aren't going to improve much until it dries up and the temperatures warm so the turf can recover.

## MARK MY WORDS

# Beyond Golf

By Mark Jarrell

My apologies in advance to my peers who expect this space to be devoted strictly to golf-course related issues, but I believe most will appreciate some provocative and controversial reflections on our country's future security since 9/11.

The terrorist attacks on our country have shaken us all and changed us forever. Maybe because I dodged a bullet with personal tragedy - my son had been working at the World Trade Center four months prior, and my closest



cousin working at the Pentagon was not on site - I've spent more time than most trying to understand the mentality of people who could commit such acts, and those around the world who cheered. That bastard Mohammad Atta had lived among us - had eaten dinner at The Olive Garden two miles from my house, for God's sake! - and was still filled with such hate for us that he could fly a plane into one of the World Trade Center Towers! Contrast this with my own and most Americans concern and misgivings about the possible

death of Iraqis as we go to war with that country.

Reading an article in *American Heritage* magazine introduced me to an author who not only has the background to offer valid answers and insights about our dangerous world. He is a brilliant, though controversial, strategic thinker who offers sound advice on U.S. military, foreign, and domestic policy. His name is Ralph Peters, and he retired as a lieutenant colonel from the army in 1998. He has served at the Pentagon, the Executive Office of the President, and visited 50 countries from the Middle East to the former Soviet Union to Southeast Asia. He now writes, lectures, and consults. I purchased and highly recommend two of his books - *Fighting for the Future - Will America Triumph?*, and *Beyond Terror - Strategy in a Changing World*.

The books are mostly collections of essays, some of which in the first book were published before 9/11 (eerily prophetic and provocative!). I'm guessing (and hoping) that President Bush and his top advisors are very familiar with Col. Peters' work. Any American who wishes to better understand those who would not hesitate to kill us if they had the means, and revolutionary strategies for dealing with the threat they pose, should read these two books. I found I couldn't put them down, and consider them essential reading for all Americans to make better decisions at the polls, at home, and at the workplace.

You'll also feel better about being an American, as Col. Peters is adept at analyzing the strengths and marvels of our society, while acknowledging our weaknesses and offering strategies for succeeding against those who would exploit them to destroy us. Things like the American work ethic, the freedom of information dissemination, women in the workplace, the tolerance and socialization of our various religions - things we accept without realizing how unique they are to the planet and how central they are to our power and success as a society. Let me quote a few passages that I hope will whet your appetite enough to motivate a trip down to your favorite book store:

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"While Europe sleepwalks toward a thirty-five hour workweek, we are moving toward the thirty-five hour day. The intense performance of our economy

would be unattainable without the torrent of energy introduced by competitive female job candidates. American women revolutionized the workforce and the workplace. Future social and economic historians will probably judge that the entry of women into our workforce was the factor that broke the stranglehold of American trade unions and

## Rub of the Grin

### Creative Thinker Finds Ring. Think like a raccoon.

That's what Kenneth Gollihue thought after a crafty raccoon dashed off with a golfer's green tote bag containing snacks and a \$1,200 wedding ring at the Westin Innisbrook golf resort.

Raccoons and squirrels have been known to grab unwatched food and bags along the course north of St. Petersburg. So Gollihue, a veteran groundskeeper at the resort, knew he would have to, think like the pesky varmint if he was to find Helen Hutzler's missing ring.

"On the way home, I know it sounds silly, but I was starting to think, 'What would a raccoon do?'" said Gollihue, 44, of New Port Richey.

The answer: The raccoon would run about 25 feet into a swamp, unzip the bag, and gobble the airline pretzels and sliced apples. It would then leave every thing else behind in the swamp.

And that's exactly where Gollihue found the half-submerged bag during his lunch break Thursday. The snacks were gone, but the ring was there and was returned to Hutzler, who gave Gollihue \$100 for his efforts.

Source: *The State and Local section, Orlando Sentinel February 22, 2003. Reprinted with permission*

gave a new lease on life to those domestic industries able to adapt. American women were the Japanese cars of business-labor relations: better, cheaper, dependable, and they defied the rules. Everybody has had to work harder and smarter to survive, but the results have been a spectacular recovery of economic leadership and soaring national wealth."

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