

Last month, my least favorite television golf commentator and fashion icon himself, Johnny Miller, remarked that a poorly dressed golfer “looked like a greenskeeper.” The astute Miller is to be commended for his eagle eye, even if his mouth continues to provoke the mute button on my television remote. But his comment made me realize that you *can* spot turfgrass people from a distance.

When a gathering of turfgrass stars happens, anyone observing with a distant spyglass can see that a special cult has assembled. If you're not sure what I'm talking about, close your eyes and think about the last superintendent meeting, trade show or educational event you attended.

Now, think of the faces you saw. I don't care if it's the middle of the worst winter ever, the turfgrass cult member always has a tanned face. Other workers can't keep a 365-day-a-year Coppertone tan like a true turfhead can. For those of you who immediately think of skin cancer when you think of the sun, may you be delivered a crisp tube of SPF-500 for your paranoia.

Now, with your eyes still closed, think of the logo. You'll remember that somewhere on some piece of a turfhead's clothing is a logo, perhaps from the home base of his or her operation.

However, it's also cool to wear a logo from a course or club that you have visited. Extra points are given for Augusta National. Credit is also awarded to those turfheads who have good stories to go with their logos, but golf stories don't qualify.

A turfhead's story usually sounds like this: “That maintenance facility was like the Taj MaShop, man. They had at least nine of everything.” On the other hand, nobody wants to hear a golf story. We want I-was-there-and-I-saw-their-pump-station stories.

Double extra credit goes to those who sport a logo of a place that no one has ever heard of or will. Your adventure to Papua, New Guinea, to play skins makes for a great story and will surely clog trade show aisles with the bodies of enraptured turfheads.

Are your eyes still closed? If they are, now I want you to think the clothes turfheads were wearing. You'll probably agree that the power

It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's a ...

BY DAVE WILBER



WITH HIS TAN, HIS
WIND SHIRT AND
HIS NEW HAT, YOU
CAN EASILY SPOT A
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A DISTANCE

suit of today's turfhead is the wind shirt. You should be ashamed if you do not own one for every day of the week.

The wind shirt. Say it with me. What a cool thing to roll across the tongue. Our fathers and grandfathers had the sans-a-belt slacks. But we have the wind shirt, and we're better for it.

If you're like me, there's no doubt you've been scolded by your spouse for daring to wear a wind shirt out to dinner or a family event. But, hey, as the saying goes: Clothes make the professional.

While you're thinking of clothes, you'll probably recall the many hats you saw (“Hey Whitey! Where's your hat?” I had to slip that line in from *Caddyshack*.) The general shape and color of the sweat stains on the turfgrass professional's cap is a sign of distinction. In no other circle of life do there exist so many people with so many different hats, yet at every trade show, the turfheads covet the newly scammed hat as the best treasure. You receive extra points and money for your children's therapy bills if you like bucket hats and wear one away from the golf course environment.

Footwear has its own mark of distinction. Our shoes come in two basic acceptable models. One style, of course, is the spikeless golf shoe. Style points go to those who don't polish the shoes — ever.

The second style is a boot with some kind of Gore-tex or form of rubber coating and gum soles. No one on the planet makes better use out of this kind of footwear than turfheads. Boots are tools, I always say, but no one understands.

We stick out in crowds, and you should be proud. I, for one, am proud of my wind shirt collection.

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