

## Lake Wisconsin Country Club

# JOSEPH PITTNER: A Golf Course Memorial

By Bill Rogers

All of us, at some time in our career, have had to sit back feeling frustrated and unappreciated. We have listened quietly as members have raved about the food served in the clubhouse or how well a tournament was organized. We wonder if the same gracious things are being said about the job we are doing, if we are appreciated in the same way. We wonder if our members realize the amount of work required by us to maintain and improve our golf course.

Well, I have a story to share that should make all of us feel proud about what we do as professional Golf Course Superintendents. It is a story of a young Superintendent who concentrated his energy and love for the profession into a golf course and a country club. It is the story of a man who **was** appreciated. It is about Joe Pittner.

He was the first Golf Course Superintendent at Lake Wisconsin Country Club who had formal education and training in turfgrass management. He had vision and was capable of seeing the total picture. He knew that there was much more to managing a golf course than just mowing the grass. Through his dedication and hard work he moved the club forward down the right path. He was a patient man, and in three years he had convinced the club that they needed improvements, helped in the planning of those golf course improvements, and got many of them started.

The tragedy is that Joe Pittner was killed in an automobile accident last fall. Members at Lake Wisconsin Country Club were grief stricken that this young man had been taken from them at such a young age. They felt that a permanent memorial should be erected in his honor and in his memory. After much discussion, it was decided that we would reconstruct our second tee for this project. This site was chosen because it was a favorite slope of Joe's. He

had actually laid out a new tee on this site shortly before his death.

This new tee will cover approximately three thousand square feet and will be a free-form, off-set, figure eight design. The new tee will stretch the yardage on this par-five hole from 519 yards to 540 yards. It will require a strong tee shot for even the longer hitters on this dog-leg left hole.

In addition, there will be a permanent marker placed on the site designating it as a memorial project. It will be a large natural stone with one side sawed flat, bearing a bronze plaque stating information about Joe and his dream.

The hole has been aptly named "The Overlook Hole" because of it's location high above the rest of the golf course and Lake Wisconsin.

sin. From this point many of the holes on the golf courses can be seen.

The project has been funded entirely through donations from Joe's family and friends along with our members. We tried to create a lasting memorial to Joe's dedication to his profession and his love for this golf course.

Upon completion of this project this fall, there is a dedication ceremony being planned. It will create a tribute to a young man who put so much time and effort into improving this country club.

I have a dream of my own. It has been an honor for me to follow in Joe's footsteps, and I will do my very best in picking up where Joe left off and improving the golf course in a way he would have approved of.



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