



Editorial

# A SLOW BURN



By Bill Roberts

The 1985 golf season was an unqualified success, not only for members of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association, but also for Golf Course Superintendents throughout the country. Deserving of special note are those who hosted golf championships on state, regional and national levels. The intense demands placed on one in our profession, not to mention the extraordinary demands placed on tournament hosts are constantly and consistently met despite budgetary restraints, weather conditions and the myriad of "glitches" that can tax one's patience, talents and experience. These events continue to be successful, in fact golf continues to be successful because we are "the best prepared, the best educated and most dedicated professional managers in the industry."

How utterly inappropriate, and perhaps a bit tragic, therefore, that the Professional Golfers Association chose to produce a network television advertisement that many WGCSA members viewed during this past summer's telecast of the PGA championship held at Cherry Hills Country Club in Denver, Colorado.

The advertisement in question implied, by showing a "Golf Professional with a soil probe," that someone other than the Golf Course Superintendent is respon-

sible for the superb playing conditions enjoyed by the American golfer day in and day out. The impression given by this particular piece of advertising seemed to be that the "Golf Professional was the one making the decisions, taking the responsibilities and generally contributing to the game through golf course management."

Of course, such an assertion is ludicrous and insulting. It is, in fact, the professional Golf Course Superintendent, through his experience, education and intensity, who has raised playing conditions and overall golf course management to a standard not conceivable even 10 years ago. The Golf Course Superintendents Association knows this. Individual Golf Course Superintendents have achieved this. Knowledgeable individuals in the world of golf recognize this. Even, we suspect, the Professional Golfer's Association knows this (albeit they appear reluctant to accept this fact). However, we do not believe that the confusion, perpetuated by ads such as the one in question, should be left unchallenged. GCSAA, the Wisconsin GCSA and the game of golf have too much at stake.

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association Board of Directors does believe that the Executive Committee of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has made great strides in promoting the public perception of individual Golf Course Superintendents. Our new "public relations package" promises to be a major step. The ESPN ads have potential to be a "breakthrough." This past summer, GCSAA's appearance at several major tournament appears to have been worthwhile and valuable experience. Generally, membership in GCSAA and the Wisconsin GCSA can be the most valuable positions one can take in upgrading and maintaining one's professional image.

The Wisconsin GCSA Board of Directors also believes that GCSAA, in its essential role as focal point for our profession, must take a specific line of action in a situation where its members' contribution and commitment is downplayed or ignored. While con-

ceding that some of these and/or other actions may have already been discussed or undertaken, we respectfully submit that the following options are available:

- a. communication with the PGA, the PGA Tour and PGA Commissioner Deane Beman, expressing concern over this disturbing attitude apparently adopted by these organizations,
- b. continuing commitment, by GCSAA, to advertising over limited access television such as ESPN,
- c. continued open communication with allied golf interests and associations such as USGA, CMAA, NGF and even, yes, the PGA,
- d. budgetary support by GCSAA for its Communications/Awards Committee including appropriate monies for development of "network type" television advertising in the short term and long range budgetary commitments to insure this advertising reaches the American golfing public on a major network within a two year period,
- e. continued review of all ongoing programs in order to appraise effectiveness and upgrade or delete as needed, and,
- f. timely response by GCSAA, as to the appropriate status and action taken whenever concerns such as these are voiced by the membership.

The Wisconsin GCSA trusts that our concerns and suggestions have been taken in the spirit that they are offered. That is; to ultimately benefit our profession and our Association. We, again, applaud those actions already taken but intensely encourage the implementation of even more. Our future demands it.

*William R. Robert*

**1986 WGCSA Dues  
must be paid —  
NO more separate  
notices will be sent!**