



Some 'Dry' Awards

By Rob Schultz

The votes are in, they've all been tallied and it's time for the results of the first annual Sports Page golf course awards.

The awards are in honor of those who suffered through the long, dreary, hot, humid summer and kept their chins up, or down as the case may be, while maintaining their courses.

Best fairways (public) during the drought: Mascoutin Country Club in Berlin. Outstanding. I played this course in late June when the state hadn't seen a drop of rain for a month and my drives were only getting two or three bounces before coming to a screeching halt. I wasn't skying my drives, either. Mascoutin's fairways also were cut down and beautiful. No bushiness here. If you hit your ball in the fairway, you got an excellent lie.

Best greens (public) during the drought: Lake Shore Municipal in Oshkosh. OK, OK, I might be a bit prejudiced because I grew up and worked there and always thought Lake Shore's greens were the best around. But I played Lake Shore in early July about 5 p.m., the temperature was still around 90 degrees and the greens were soft, true and quick. What else can you ask for?

Best fairways (private) during the drought: it was hard to pick a winner because I played quite a few private courses this summer and most were in excellent condition. But the edge has to go to Blackhawk Country Club, with Maple Bluff a close second. Blackhawk gets the edge because I played better there. How's that for an objective vote?

Best greens (private) during the drought: Tuckaway Country Club. It was mid-July when I played Tuckaway and the greens were just getting primed for the Greater Milwaukee Open. I've never puttied on faster greens anywhere in this state. Plus, they were soft and true. They are a putter's dream. No wonder the pros love to play in the GMO.

Scariest course to play during the drought: Lake Arrowhead. I played it in June and they hadn't banned smoking. But I didn't even think about smoking. Anybody who knows me will be amazed by that little fact. I was just too plain scared to light a match because it was so dry and brittle. Lighting a match in a fuel dump seemed safer. I played other courses where smoking was banned and thought the rule was stupid. I felt like a 14-year-old when I had to duck behind a tree to get a quick puff. I kept waiting for the cigarette police to come 'round with a siren wailing from their Cushmans, primed to confiscate my Merits. But at Lake Arrowhead, I thought a "no smoking" rule should have been mandatory.

Scariest course to play during the drought, a moonsoon, or a perfect 80 degree sunny day: Blackwolf Run. My foursome lost 36 balls during an 18-hole round. (I lost three.) Everyone in my group usually breaks 100, most break 90 and some occasionally break 80. But nobody broke 90 when we played it. I was the only one to break 100. (I shot a 90 from the back tees with a triple bogey on that dastardly 18th hole.) It was a humbling experience.

The funniest (and sickest) sight during the drought: One of the members of the esteemed media who played at Blackwolf Run during Media Day couldn't make it to the bathroom so he just hung over one of Pete Dye's fabulous railroad tie creations and deposited his feelings about the course on some stones below. A footnote to the story: The GMO's media day was sponsored by Waste Management. Do you think the Blackwolf Run folks gave the GMO a call?

Now you see the drought, now you don't: This award goes to wonderful Lawsonia Links. The older east and west courses took the drought hard. The fairways and greens were great, but like most courses, it was hard-pan alley if your shots went awry. The new south course, however, was like an

oasis. It sets lower than the other nines and was lush and green everywhere. It was a sight for sore eyes during the drought. I thought I was back at Hilton Head again.

Weirdest golf hole I played during the drought: No contest. It's the par-3 fourth hole at Plum Lake in Saynor. Playing with my wife, I stood on the fourth tee and searched for the green. The scorecard said it was about 130 unobstructed yards in front of me, but I couldn't find it. Finally, I started walking, searching for the green. It was located in what looked like a huge meteor crater about 35 feet straight down. The pin was three times longer than normal and it still didn't stick out above the ground. I almost aced the hole; my wife, a beginner, got her first par ever there. We both liked it. But it was weird.

Hottest place in the world during the hottest day of the year: The back nine of The Springs. Ugh. I played it when it was 102 degrees and when I reached the valley on the back nine there was no wind, just searing heat and 90 percent humidity. Turkey vultures circled over me as I trudged down the fairways. When I reached the clubhouse, at about 3 in the afternoon, three cars were in the parking lot. They belonged to the pro, the pro's wife and me.

Worst-case scenario becomes reality during the drought: Norsk Bowl in Mount Horeb. This is no joke. I hit a 475-yard drive on the Norsk Bowl's unwatered fairways. And I didn't hit the ball all that well. The next question is: What was I doing there? I was forced by my neighbors to go. I hated it. Did you ever try to cut a sand wedge off cement? Then you get the idea of what it was like to chip off its fairways. The Norsk Bowl's bowling alleys were softer.

Nicest folks to meet during the drought: It's been a long time since I had met folks as classy as those who work at Golden Valley Country Club just outside Minneapolis. Bernie Sturm is the general manager at Golden Valley and he treated me to a day I'll never forget. First-class treatment upon arrival, friendly conversation, first-class treatment while playing a tremendous Tillinghast golf course and a friendly send-off. What else can you ask for?

(Continued on Page 19)

Bernie even sent me a thank-you note for coming up to play Golden Valley. I felt like a heel because I hadn't sent him one back. Bernie, I hope you read this. Thanks a million. You're a great guy.

Best sand during the drought: The Springs. I was in seven of them early in the summer and made six sand saves. Wonderful sand.

Worst sand during the drought: The Springs. I was in six of them during that 102 degree day and I either skulled or dubbed each shot out of them. Horrible sand.

Worst shape during the drought: Brent Fullwood.

Person in the best mood during the drought: Monroe Miller. This column is about a week late and he hasn't hollered at me yet. I'll call him on the hottest days, his equipment will be failing, but you can bet he'll be cheerful. Monroe, don't chop this out of the column. And I didn't write this so you wouldn't be mad at me for handing this in late.

QUAST ADDRESSES TURF STUDENTS AT INDUSTRY SEMINAR FOR 13TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

"It's an exciting time to grow grass, and a great time to get into this business," said Dan Quast, superintendent at the Milwaukee Country Club. Quast was speaking to 38 top graduating turf students from the U.S. and Canada during the annual College Student Seminar, May 22-25, sponsored by Jacobsen Division of Textron Inc.

"You've got the best of times ahead of you," Quast told the future superintendents and sorts turf managers. "The knowledge and tools are so much better today — it makes the job more enjoyable. Turf equipment and chemicals are better today than they've ever been in my career."

Danny discussed management of people as well as turf, and gave the students a few pointers for success. "If you're dedicated and have a professional attitude toward the job, you'll go far," he said.

Quast has donated his time and expertise every year for the past 13 years to participate in the 21-year-old annual seminar. How many current WGCSA members attended the Jacobsen seminar while college students? Undoubtedly, quite a few.



Milwaukee Country Club superintendent Dan Quast responds to a student's question during the open-panel discussion that concluded Jacobsen's 21st annual College Student Seminar. Who's that guy to Danny's left?

Scotts most successful product is not available for sale...

only for advice and support... your ProTurf Tech Rep.



Dick Evenson
Senior Technical Representative
ProTurf Division
O.M. Scott & Sons

443 Woodview Drive • Sun Prairie, Wisconsin 53590
Telephone: (608) 837-6563