



# WHAT'S WISCONSIN'S MOST POPULAR GOLF COURSE TRACTOR?

By Monroe S. Miller

Bob Erdahl started it and everyone enjoyed it. So I guess I'll carry it on. His two-part *The Wisconsin Survey* answered scores of questions, really pertinent one, about our state's golf courses. But I have many more questions.

Some aren't very important ones — they're more of a curiosity than anything. Interesting? Maybe that, too. So during the two months between issues of *The Grass Roots* I'll be asking anyone and everyone in the WGCSA I happen to see or talk to the poll question for an upcoming issue.

The first question of this feature is one it seems I've asked an awful lot of people in our group: What's the most popular golf course tractor in Wisconsin? To get that answer, I asked my colleagues how many of each tractor brand they had. F-10's, F-20's, Parkmasters, etc. weren't counted.

The results didn't surprise me much. Even setting my deep prejudice aside (two Ford cars, two Ford trucks, four Ford tractors), I knew Ford tractors would win in a big way. A real big way. As a matter of fact, they had more than double the next most popular tractor — Massey. Frankly, second place surprised me. I'd have put my money on John Deere. Enough golf courses were considered that I'm convinced there is statistical significance of this trend that would hold up if all golf course tractors in Wisconsin were counted.

Here's my data:

Ford	50
Massey Ferguson	20
John Deere	14
International Harvester	12
Jacobsen	4
Oliver	3
Kubota	2
Allis Chalmers	1

Case	1
Case IH	1
Toro	1
Deutz-Allis	1

Ford's overwhelming dominance can be traced to several fundamental reasons. The first is that for decades they've been very affordable. Secondly, in the early years of tractor use on golf courses, most manufacturers were making new crop tractors while Ford's wide front 8N was about all they offered. It was much safer. In subsequent years right through present times, their specialty has been the wide front tractor. And those older Fords were sized about right in terms of horsepower. They really were the ideal golf course tractor.

This unofficial poll seems to indicate they are still in the "driver's seat"!

# GYPSY MOTH NIGHTMARE

By Monroe S. Miller

My office and shop are adjacent to a lot of activity. We see a lot of wild things at the State Crime Lab next to us. The Department of Revenue is in the same office building as the Crime Lab. And so are several Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection laboratories.

That includes Julie Nara's entomology lab. She called me about a month ago with panic in her voice. "Would you please go and check the gypsy moth traps on your golf course? If you find anything suspicious, bring it over to me."

I asked her what she was so upset about.

"We're finding a lot of gypsy moths around the state. It's turning into a nightmare."

Pat quickly checked our traps and found nothing even resembling this dreaded insect, thank goodness. But more than 1,000 male gypsy moths

have been caught in the DATCP traps. Most of them have been found in Milwaukee, Dane and Ozaukee counties, but small numbers have been found in the Fox River Valley, too.

The good news, if you can call it that, is that single moths are being found here and there. That's an indication that there isn't a general infestation. These moths can be moved several hundred miles in a strong wind and survive.

As a point of reference, about 600 gypsy moths were caught in our state last year. The WDATCP has 9,000 traps set throughout the state. Most of them are in Kewaunee and Door counties, where the greatest numbers were found last year. This year almost no gypsy moths are being found there.

The gypsy moth, a concern because of the defoliation it can cause, was brought to America from Europe in 1869 for an experiment. It eventually

escaped confinement and has caused serious damage to oak, maple and other trees.

Fortunately, because of the dedication of people like Julie Nara, Wisconsin has been successful in controlling the gypsy moths. The entomologists in the Department of Agriculture have control-trapped infestations in several locations with traps in the past. If the male gets caught in a trap before he finds a female, a population of them can be trapped out in one year.

The potential disaster that exists if this pest should become more widespread points out how important it is for WGCSA members to help with trapping when the call is issued each spring.

It's easy, it's quick, and it's the responsible thing to do. There isn't very much that's pretty about a defoliated tree in the middle of the summer on a golf course.