



BAN, BOYCOTT, PICKET

By Monroe S. Miller

If you haven't seen it yet, take a look at the Soil Technologies ad in the January issue of *Golf Course Management*. You'll be sickened at first and furious minutes later.

The ad shows three golf players wearing respirators, conveying a picture that even frightens me. Wayne Otto's reaction, upon seeing the ad, was an "oh my God."

My first reaction was to place a scathing phone call to the company. I planned from there to lead a demand to ban this company from showing at the GCSAA Conference and Show in Orlando and to ban them from ever advertising in *Golf Course Management*, again.

I'd have followed that action with a move to lead a boycott of Soil Technologies products (whatever they are — I don't use any of them).

Finally, I was going to organize a picket of the Soil Technologies booth on the show floor of the Orlando Civic Center, if the ban didn't work.

When a company like this does damage like they did, through such an irresponsible ad, they do not deserve a single nickel's worth of business from any golf course superintendent.

There seems little question that the GCSAA needs, desperately, to have a golf course superintendent review ads **and** copy in *Golf Course Management* **before** it hits the newsstand. Ads like the one Soil Technologies used would quickly be rejected. So, too, would the ad for PACE on pages 116 and 117. The Plant Marvel ad showing a sprayman in shorts and tennis shoes, with no safety equipment (page 55), conveys a message that should disgust all of us.

And I can assure you, if I had the authority, no article about anything remotely related to Karsten Manufacturing Corp. would appear in our magazine. This is the company that sued the USGA over its non-conforming golf clubs. The case has been settled; it shouldn't have gone to court in the first place. Karsten knew USGA rules and standards. Yet despite their selfish interests, which ran absolutely contrary to those of golf, there is a story, in full color, on pages 106-114.

I didn't do any of those things, however. Rod Johnson is our spokesman. And he spoke out on this serious problem in a measured and intelligent way. I thought you'd be interested in the correspondence generated on this issue.



WISCONSIN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

Bishops Woods
333 Bishops Way

Phone (414) 786-4303
Brookfield, Wisconsin 53005

January 12, 1990

Joseph G. Baidy CGCS
1891 Richmond Road
Lyndhurst, Ohio 44124

Dear Joe:

I am writing to express my personal concern and the concerns of the WGCSA regarding advertising in the January 1990 issue of *Golf Course Management*. I am directing our concerns to you as a Director of GCSAA and as Chairman of the Publications and Awards Committee.

A full page advertisement appears on page 163 of the January issue with a picture of golfers having to use respirators as "standard equipment". The ad makes the statement that "our industry has an increasing reliance on chemical inputs leading some to feel that a golf course can be hazardous to your health". At the very least, the ad is in poor taste and represents a sensationalistic approach that might sell product to those who are outside the GCSAA audience. The advertisement is short on fact and long on contempt.

GCSAA has made great strides in recent years in areas of governmental regulation interaction and environmental concern. It would be redundant for me to list the number of positive things the GCSAA has accomplished.

For GCSAA to allow advertising that is contrary to our interests and casts doubts on the environment that is created by a golf course is unacceptable.

As professional superintendents, we are able to judge products on their merits and dismiss advertising claims. It is the public's perception of our industry that is damaged by this ad.

As a group, we are often offended when publications which we have no control over question the environmental integrity of our industry. Our own publications need not contain such detrimental advertising.

The Board of Directors of GCSAA must review its policies regarding *Golf Course Management* advertising before further incidents occur. It is my personal opinion that this particular ad should not be allowed to appear in future issues. The company has purchased exhibit space at the Orlando Conference. Perhaps it might be wise to review their handout materials in advance to avoid further embarrassment.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Rodney W. Johnson CGCS, WGCSA President
P.O. Box 1066, Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53082

cc: Dennis Lyon
Bill Roberts



GCSAA

1617 ST. ANDREWS DRIVE • LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66047-1707 • 913/841-2240
FAX: 913/841-2407

January 17, 1990

Mr. Rodney W. Johnson, CGCS
WGCSA President
P.O. Box 1066
Sheboygan, WI 53082

Dear Rodney:

Thank you very much for your letter concerning the Soil Technologies ad in the January issue of *Golf Course Management* (GCM) magazine. Obviously, you and the members of your chapter are concerned superintendents with high expectations of your international association and its official publication. Your points are well taken and appreciated. Please be assured that we are doing everything possible to make sure that such an ad does not appear again.

First, we have communicated with Soil Technologies, which has submitted for the February magazine a new ad that I'm confident you will agree is in good taste.

Second, we are asking the advertiser, as an exhibitor at the GCSAA Conference and Show, to review the materials for its booth in Orlando to see that they are suitable for distribution.

As much as anyone and perhaps more than some, our extremely talented and competent GCSAA publications staff is sensitive to the issues involved. But occasionally, as I'm sure you know, something slips by even the best of us, and that is what happened here. Though neither I nor the staff is offering excuses, I might point out that the January magazine is the biggest in the history of our association, it was packed with good editorial as well as advertising material — and it was out on time. In short, producing the January magazine was a monumental task.

Nonetheless, speaking for myself and the publications staff, I pledge increased diligence and total commitment to the high standards in which superintendents believe and that your letter implies.

Sincerely,

Joseph G. Baidy, CGCS, Director

cc: Dennis D. Lyon, CGCS, President
William R. Roberts, CGCS, Director



GCSAA

1617 ST. ANDREWS DRIVE • LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66047-1707 • 913/841-2240
FAX: 913/841-2407

January 17, 1990

Rodney W. Johnson, CGCS
WGCSA President
P.O. Box 1066
Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53082

Dear Rod:

I am in receipt of your letter concerning the Soil Technologies ad in the January issue of *GCM*. I had spoken previously with John Schilling and expressed my concern regarding the message in this ad. Headquarters has already discussed our concern with Soil Technologies and it is my understanding, they will not use it again.

Staff should have caught it before it went in, but didn't. They regret this error and will watch for this in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to express your concern. See you in Orlando.

Sincerely,

Dennis D. Lyon, CGCS
President GCSAA

DDL:klw



The sign of a proven winner

At Northrup King, we're as uncompromising about turf-grass as you are. That's why every Medalist® Brand Turf Product goes through years of pre-testing in the lab and in the field.

Our grasses establish fast, mow well and stand up to weather and disease. And each one is specially formulated for your climate and geographic area.

If you want to seed with a proven winner, talk to your Northrup King distributor today. For more information call (612) 593-SEED. Or write Northrup King Medalist Turf Products, P.O. Box 959, Minneapolis, MN 55440.

