



A Look at the Old and a Look at The New (Year)

By Monroe S. Miller

Now that the holidays are behind us, most Wisconsin WGCSA members are looking ahead to a new year and an exciting season for golf.

Before we look too far ahead, allow me to clean up a few details left over from 1992.

Due to a lack of space in the last issue (and also because of a memory that leaks like a sieve these days), several "Editor's Awards" were omitted. To complete the record, I include them here.

The PI Award. To normal people, the letters PC mean things like petty cash or personal computer or police car.

In this all too often goofy town where I work, PC means "politically correct". PC means you have to be careful at all times about what you say, how you say it and to whom you talk. In Madison it is immoral to aggravate, irritate, offend or annoy anybody. Truth and fact do not enter the equation. PC proponents want to influence how you think, too.

And to be PC, you dare not even look cross-eyed at some people, lest their feelings get hurt. Any form of free expression, unless it is of the PC variety, is stifled to the max.

So given this atmosphere, you can imagine how offended I was when I saw product literature from The Toro Co. introducing their new golf course vehicle—the WorkMAN!

Shame. How dare they? The vehicle should be call the WorkPERSON.

Toro's insensitivity earns them the "Politically Incorrect" Award for 1992.

Congrats!

The SMART MOVE Award. This honor goes to Foley United Industrial Products, maker of tool sharpening equipment, including the reel grinder, bedknife grinder and cup cutter sharpener in my shop.

Foley, in June of last year, moved most of its Minneapolis, Minnesota operation across the river to River Falls, vacating an old industrial building in Minneapolis.

The Foley move brought 45 manufacturing jobs to River Falls and has

the potential to increase that number to 85 in the next few years. The company is keeping its main office in Minnesota for now.

Asked for reasons for the move, a company official pointed out lower worker cost, lower property taxes for manufacturing and commercial operations and lower corporate income taxes. Additionally, they were looking for a reliable work force and rural Wisconsin offered them an alternative.

How refreshing. At a time when many U.S. companies are moving south for a MADE IN MEXICO tag, we have one looking here at home for quality and pride in the MADE IN WISCONSIN label.

Foley gets my applause and my continued business for a smart move.

The PACKAGING Award. Last year Ciba Giegy introduced a unique bulk system for some of their fungicide products. As soon as it's affordable, I fully intend on taking advantage of their conservation effort to reduce packaging waste.

Last fall I was introduced to VIG-ORO's bulk bags and was totally impressed.

Their durable bags hold 1000 pounds of fertilizer. Four straps allow you to pick the bag up with a fork lift or a loader tractor. There is a 24 inch discharge chute on the bottom center of the bag that allows you to control product flow until your Lely or Vicon spreader is full. You simply store what you don't use in the bag.

The bag is returnable and eliminates a mountain of paper bags that are either impossible to get into or so cheap that they allow material to deteriorate or have a plastic liner that precludes recycling at many places.

I predict that options like this one will more and more enter into buying decisions.

While on the subject of awards, I must admit to being remiss in recognizing a great honor bestowed upon the Jacobsen Division of Textron.

The company won the 1992 Wisconsin Governor's Award for Excellence in Hazardous Waste Reduction.

This award was earned by Jacobsen because it was able to reduce the amount of hazardous waste it generates by 75% since 1988.

The reduction was achieved by the installation of a still that recycles cleaning solvents for reuse.

Jacobsen also replaced mineral spirits cleaning solutions in parts washers with water-based solutions.

The company then converted its systems for preparing undercoating and parts painting to use more environmentally safe cleaners, sealers and paints.

Congratulations to the Racine team for such conscientious management and concern for Wisconsin's environment.

As these words are finding paper, there is still a lot of conversation about how snowy the winter will be.

If late autumn and early winter were any indication, we should be getting a lot.

Our town had over 2 inches of snow on October 19th and 20th, shattering the record for one day and tying the record for another. Some areas of Wisconsin had 4 inches of snow from the same storm. Trees were damaged, citizens experienced power outages and cars filled ditches from Grant County to Door County.

Some northern reaches of the state had similar amounts as early as the 16th.

It was the fourth year in a row that Madison's first snowfall of the season set a record.

It all seemed to fit, though. Our July was the third coldest on record. The summer of 1992 was the fourth coolest (since the NWS started keeping Wisconsin records in 1869) with only four 90 degree days.

When November arrived, the sun departed. It left us with a record breaking tie for cloudiness—we saw the sun less than 10 percent of the time.

And with the clouds came the rains, giving most areas of the state three times the normal amount. Just in time for Thanksgiving travel a storm came from the southwest and went northeast through the state dumping anywhere from 8 inches of snow to a light dusting. Our golf course was covered with 4 inches of snow for Thanksgiving.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 5)

Lessons learned by most WGCSA members in the fall of 1991 resulted in purged irrigation systems and applications of snow mold fungicides done before the start of the month of November.

This winter will be one of much less worry than the last one.

With distinctively cooler weather comes the inevitable "why?".

Most put the blame—I'd rather say "credit" since I like cool weather—on eruptions of the Mount Pinatubo volcano in the Philippines in recent years. The volcanic activity spewed ash into the atmosphere and blocked sunlight which affected temperatures globally.

The volcanic eruptions of Mount Tambora in 1815 led to what has become known as "the year without summer". History shows that volcanic eruptions in the 1880s also cooled the temperatures of that period.

Many expect the ash to lower global temperatures for some time; others feel the effect has pretty much passed.

I'm hoping for another cool summer—it would make for another good grass year.

Somebody needs to ask, in the light of the cool weather—what happened to global warming, the greenhouse effect, CO₂ buildup and the many other feared consequences of human

activity that occupied the science press a couple of years ago?

In his president's message in the last issue of *The Grass Roots*, Bruce Worzella mentioned an article I'd written almost ten years ago about my sports hero—Arnold Palmer.

Well, I'm hoping to see Arnie again—soon—in our town, even.

He has agreed to become a spokesman for the Rayovac Corporation in Madison. Rayovac plans to launch the biggest national hearing aid battery campaign in history. Arnie will be in town from time to time to help with that campaign.

Some details may be in order. Palmer describes himself as a "reluctant hearing aid wearer" and admits he waited way too long before seeing a doctor about his hearing trouble. It had gotten so bad that he couldn't even hear the sound track of a movie.

So these days he is wearing a hearing aid and for the first time in years he can hear the click of hitting a putt and the sound of a golf club going through the air. He's experienced an improvement in his golf game, as well.

If anyone is able to convince people to overcome a reluctance to the use of a hearing aid, Arnold Palmer is the guy.

I received the following note from Dr. David Cookson. He rightfully responded to an "award" to the USGA in the last issue of *The Grass Roots* since he was a tourney official at Pebble Beach last year. He is also a USGA committeeman. I include it here for your edification.

Dear Monroe,

Re page 5 of the Nov/Dec issue of your newsletter and U.S. Open greens—they did not appear "in the flesh" as they did on TV (I saw the TV pictures as well as being at Pebble Beach and walking within a few feet of all 18).

They were green and looked like all *Poa annua* greens look cut short. Players complained of firmness of greens, not speed. They became quite firm as winds dried them on Sunday p.m.; before the wind came up (Sunday a.m.) they were not difficult.

Again—Masters greens one year (I've forgotten which one) looked much worse than any of these. The only bad greens I ever saw at any USGA championship I've worked the last eight years were at Merion for the U.S. Amateur.

In regard to your main point (which you know already I disagree with you) obviously players (including USGA tournament people) don't believe what USGA agronomists say about fast greens. For all the hue and cry about it, I've never seen any greens I've ever played suffer ill from efforts to speed them. I think this is an example of over reacting to a theoretical happenstance that doesn't seem to occur in practice. This opinion is shared by most players.

My best to you as always,
Dave

I of course wasn't at Pebble Beach and can only comment about what I saw on TV. But I heard the griping and saw the media pictures, and neither was pretty.

And Dr. Cookson and I still disagree on the downside of ultrafast greens!

That's it for now. Enjoy the winter—it's a great time for hearty souls like Wisconsin golf course superintendents.

See all of you at the WTA winter conference. 🙏

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