



The Anti-Superintendent Takes A Road Trip

By Rob Schultz

Some here's and there's on a late May day while I'm waiting for winter to end:

THERE—Maybe it was my homeboy mentality that gave me the idea that Wisconsin was the crown jewel of the Midwest when it came to beauty and ambience.

But then I spent six days in the northern half of lower Michigan this May and my mind was changed forever. Wisconsin has nice, pleasant views. Michigan has views that take your breath away.

Just stand at the first tee of the new Tom Fazio course at the Treetops resort in Gaylord. You're so high above the gorgeous tree line that you think you can see all the way to Canada. It reminded me of the Appalachians.

Or stand at the 17th tee at Crystal Downs Country Club in Franfort where you're almost as high above the tree line as at Treetops, but you have the added benefit of beautiful Crystal Lake on the horizon.

Or stand at the first tee at Little Traverse Bay Golf Club located between Harbor Springs and Petoskey. Look to the right and you see on the horizon the gazillion dollar cottages owned by the Grosse Pointe elite who spend their summers there. Look to the left and you see the cozy village of Petoskey tucked in a tight, little bay. Look straight ahead and you can see all of Little Traverse Bay all the way to Lake Michigan. You're standing so high above it all that you think if you squint, you can see all the way to Wisconsin.

As for the golf courses, there is nothing in Wisconsin that matches the best the upper half of lower Michigan has to offer. I'm not being critical of Wisconsin's courses. In fact, I came back from my trip with even more praise for our best public-fee layouts because they remain some of the best bargains in the country. It's just that the Treetops courses, Boyne's courses, Little Traverse Bay, the Legend at Shanty Creek, High Pointe and, of course, Crystal Downs, have no weaknesses. I looked. Hard. And I couldn't find any.

Every course worked its way through tall, spindly hills and tight, tree-lined fairways were the norm. It wasn't surprising to find some severe dropoffs; the most dramatic, of course, were at Treetops and Little Traverse Bay.

I was in Michigan with *Golf World* senior writer Gary Van Sickle, who was writing a travel story on the state. He was

extremely impressed with Crystal Downs and also gave his highest marks to the Fazio course at Treetops.

"Instant top 50 in the country," he said of the Fazio course.

The most unique course we played was also at Treetops. It was its par-3 course, designed by resident pro and current guru to some of the top PGA Tour players, Rick Smith. It's called Threetops and it included the resort's most dramatic holes, including the 212-yard third hole called Devil's Drop. It was aptly named since it had a 145-foot vertical drop from tee to green. Another hole had a 75-foot vertical drop. Fun stuff.

Most of the nine Michigan courses I played survived the winter in exceptional shape. The reason, of course, was the relative youth of each place. The exception was old-timer Crystal Downs, which had more *Poa Annua* to deal with than the others. Its members even replaced one of its greens. We played with gracious member Randy Dye and he was constantly apologizing. He didn't need to. Crystal Downs' problems were like a tiny zit on a beauty queen.

HERE—My apologies to Tuck and Tony. First, I never thought I could travel to Michigan without calling Tuck Tate and his wife, Becky. But my trip had to go on without them because they were en route to Frankfort from their winter home in Sarasota.

I'm also still kicking myself for missing out on a second trip to Michigan in May with a contingent of state PGA professionals. Led by director Tony Coleman, the state group was playing groups from other Midwest states in a Ryder Cup format and I was supposed to cover the event for them and my paper. But family matters intervened and I had to stay home.

HERE AND THERE—Golfers are certainly grumbling about the horrid course conditions found around the state from the harsh spring and winter. But most golfers who I've had contact with understand that superintendents aren't to blame. Those who don't understand have been corrected with a sharp blow to the forehead with an 8 iron by those who do understand.

If there's a silver lining to the nightmarish spring, it's that golfers are taking a better look at places like the O.J. Noer

IMPORTANT: Please remember always to read and follow carefully all label directions when applying any chemical. Copyright 1992 NOR-AM Chemical Company. All rights reserved.



Tee to Green—Six Keys to Successful Turf

NITROFORM®

Ureaform, a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer available in three convenient formulations, Powder Blue®, Blue Chip® and Blue Granular®.

NUTRALENE®

An advanced controlled release nitrogen product derived from methylene ureas. This versatile nitrogen source is completely available within one growing season and is released through hydrolysis and microbial mechanisms.

TURCAM®

An insecticide used by professional applicators to control a wide variety of pests including white grubs, chinch bugs, gypsy moths, webworms and bronze birch borers. Also available in a granular formulation.

PROXOL® 80SP

Fast acting insecticide controls most species of white grubs as well as many surface pests in fine turf areas.

PROGRASS® BC

Selective herbicide used to control *Poa annua* and broadleaf weeds in fine turfs such as fairway height bentgrass, ryegrass, bluegrass and dormant bermudagrass.

BANOL®

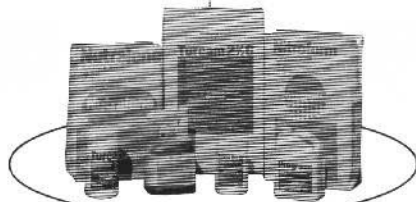
Completely water-miscible fungicide concentrate applied to turf grasses subject to Pythium Blight; it also prevents several fungal diseases that attack ornamentals.



NOR-AM

NOR-AM CHEMICAL COMPANY

Specialty Products Division A Schering Berlin Company
3506 Silverside Road • P.O. Box 7495 • Wilmington, DE 19803



turfgrass center and how it can help us learn how to stop similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

HERE—My wife, Pat, can't believe I'm writing a column for a publication read mostly by golf course superintendents.

"You're the anti-superintendent," she said with a giggle.

She was referring to my constant battle with lawn fertilization. Every year I find a different way to mess it up. Stripes are normal fare on my lawn.

This year, however, was the topper. The directions for the high-powered weed-and-feed said the spreader dial should be at five and three-quarters.

Suffice to say I didn't read the directions.

I ran out of fertilizer shortly after finishing my front lawn. Hmmm, I said to myself. The bag said it should cover more than an acre. My front lawn is about the size of a medium-sized green.

Maybe I should read the directions, I said to myself.

The bag had the number five and three-quarters written on it.

I looked at my spreader and it was on 10.

Whoops.

The anti-superintendent.

My wife walked outside and remarked, "It smells like a chemical spill out here."

Uh, oh.

My first inclination was to call Monroe Miller. I figured he'd have an answer; that he'd tell me somebody on his crew does something like that all the time and I should have nothing to worry about.

I called Miller. He didn't have an answer. He told me nobody on his crew in 48 years—or however long he has been at Blackhawk—had ever done anything that stupid. He also told me I had lots to worry about.

To make a long story short, my lawn survived. It took four days of constant watering to save it, but it's lush and green. Boy is it lush and green. Fish stories don't grow like my grass is growing. Pinocchio's nose can't hold a candle to my lawn. A neighbor's kid walked into my lawn the other day and a search party was sent out to find him.

I mowed it yesterday at noon. Today the grass was above my ankles. It sure looks good during the day, but I wish I could get rid of the glow it gives off at night. 🌟

Answers to the puzzles on page 18.

A K Z E N I B S U R A V E S A E S I
 L E P A V E Q U M E E L B A U L O S
 K Z V A X P P Z Q L H R I Y E D E C
 R I E K E S W C E Z N J A A O D M A
 N L H I Y V L M X R J O C B D A Y T
 W I N S A C E P W L M H G R U S R I
 R T D O F N V M N E Q M I V T P D O
 C R D B T E W A U S T N E I R T U N
 I E O S B R Z M A I K S U R R C E I
 N F D R K U N V J D S I C L E P V A
 A K W P X S U R O H P S O H P I A M
 G K S A B P U E W U B O A K D Y M O
 R I V M O B F L M P V I D T Y W V H
 O S K U W Z O F F R M D R A O O G E
 N I T R O G E N A U E I C O P P E R
 I W P C A R M E Q O R D S J N Y L C
 T Y E S A G R A W T S O N S S E T W

1	S	C	A	L	P		B	E	D		M	G
9	O	H	M		O	D	O	R		S	O	Y
13	D	I	P		S	O	D	A		N	I	P
	P				T	E	E			B	O	S
18	O	S	L	O				W		B	T	U
	V		O	R	G	A	N	I	C			M
27	R	O	L	L	E	R		L	O	Y	D	
32	E	R	I	E		S	A	Y	L	O	R	
35	N	G	U		T	E	D		D	R	I	P
	A	M	M	O	N	I	A		E	E	L	
43	J	N		A	P	I	E	C	E		R	A
47	A	I	R	Y		C	U	T	S			I
50	I	S	A	A	C			O	C	E	A	N
55	L	M		S	A	T	U	R	A	T	E	S

Let The John Deere 2653 Clean Up Your Tough Spots



Introducing the John Deere 2653 Trim & Tri-Plex mower. The 2653 cutting units feature a quick height cut adjustment system that enables changes to be made at 1/8" intervals.

J.W. TURF
 14N937 U.S. Hwy. 20
 Hampshire, IL 60140
 708-683-4653