

blame is so peculiar to golf.

"Who does the commercial grower blame when the winter weather kills acres and acres of strawberries?" he asked.

"Who does the DOT blame when a cruel winter kills roadside crownvetch for miles and miles?"

"No one," he said, answering his own question.

"Who does the nurseryman blame when a ten acre block of autumn purple ash is killed after a severe winter? No one. How about the apple orchard in Gays Mills or the cherry orchard in Door County that suffers in the winter and has no fruit crop—who do they blame? No one.

"Or how about the farmer who loses 90 percent of his alfalfa—who is he supposed to blame? Himself? Of course not. No one is to blame."

"It's the breaks," Sandy said. "It's the weather. It's the way things are. It's the way it goes. It happens—always has and always will. No one should be blamed."

Scottie glanced up and gestured with his left hand at the same time he quietly spoke. "Look over there fellas."

He was looking in the direction of the western edge of the Noer Research Facility.

We looked and smiled almost in unison at the sight of seven whitetail deer ambling on the far property line. They ignored the civilization around them, heading for the depths of University Ridge to continue grazing and fattening up for a tough Wisconsin winter that would be here too soon for all of us.

Their presence sort of brought the guys out of the thoughtful mood they (and I) were all in. We realized how late it had gotten.

The crowd was mostly gone. Exhibitors were loading equipment on semi trailers. Grad students were disassembling displays and removing plot stakes. The mood was melancholy, a perfect fit for the late summer season.

"Well," Tom said. "Since somebody has to take the rap for winter kill, I propose we suggest that, henceforth, all golfers put the blame on God, whoever He (or She) might be for each individual. And leave the golf course superintendent alone to repair the damage as quickly as he can.

"In most calamities, people look to God. They should for this one, when it occurs, too. I mean, when push comes to shove, golf course superintendents are absolutely helpless before nature, and so is everyone else. So don't blame us.

"There are limits to everything in nature and we shouldn't forget it. Winter kill every decade or so is just a little reminder from the Big Guy of that. He's in charge; blame him."

"Or blame Frank Rossi," said Steady Eddie as Dr. Rossi walked by.

"The Garten Brau is all gone. I'm surprised you guys are still here," Frank said.

"We are talking about winter kill and how we always get blamed for it," Bogey answered.

"By next year we expect you'll remake the genetic codes of the golf course grasses in Wisconsin, manipulate them and control winter injury. Our lives and our jobs will be easier," he continued.

"And if it doesn't work and we still get winter kill, we'll be able to blame you."

Frank smiled. I think he sensed our frustration and anticipation of the win-

ter now really only a short time away.

"Great Field Day, Frank. You and Wayne and Chuck and Julie did a super job. Everybody was pleased," said Scottie.

"Hey, Frank," Sandy offered, "since there isn't a holiday worth mentioning in August, we think you ought to make the Field Day an official Wisconsin holiday. It sure is worth celebrating."

Frank was pleased with the back door compliment. He moved on into the building.

We stood up, stretched and gathered up our empty Garten Brau bottles and headed for our trucks. We were a little tired but still somehow renewed by the sharing of emotions as only good friends and colleagues can. It was one of the great things about Field Day.

"Hope that Chevy starts," Sandy hollered to Bogey.

With that we waved to one another and headed on home. 🍷

## SYMPOSIUM TO EXAMINE WINTER DAMAGE

*By Rod Johnson*

The twenty-eighth annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, November 2 and November 3, 1993. As last year, it will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 333 Kilbourn Avenue in Milwaukee. The Symposium committee has chosen WINTER DAMAGE as the topic for this year.

One of the frustrations of golf course management in Wisconsin is the fickle nature of winter injury. Everyone seems to take "their turn" at damage caused by low temperatures, ice or low temperature pathogens. Some golf course superintendents in Wisconsin seem to get more than their fair share.

This year the Symposium will take an in-depth look at the physiology of winter damage. How and why damage occurs and why some turf withstands injury better than others will be examined. Attendees of the event are assured of leaving armed with a better understanding of the problems brought on by winter and therefore will be better able to plan for the winter season. The hope is to increase

the odds for survival.

An impressive lineup of speakers includes Dr. Frank Rossi, Dr. Randy Kane and Dr. John Roberts. Speakers from other research institutions will be announced as they confirm their place on the program.

The USGA will lend its customary expertise. Jim Latham and Bob Vavrek will both be on the program. Tom Charnok, a golf course superintendent from Buffalo, New York, will relay his several years of experience in controlling snow mold without the use of mercurial fungicides.

The popularity of panel discussions will be expanded upon with a panel each day. A panel will be held on Tuesday, providing our visiting experts an opportunity to expand on their prepared presentations. On Wednesday a panel of three Wisconsin golf course superintendents will discuss "The Politics of Winter Damage."

Mark your calendars now for November 2 and 3, and take part in a WGCSA tradition. This promises to be another good one! 🍷