



# WINDING DOWN?

By Michael Semler



The first smells of autumn arose this morning when I arrived at the golf course. I had been waiting for this for quite some time. A cool, crisp breeze was blowing and I thought I could hear a few poplar leaves rustling in the trees. It also made me think about all the things we needed to get done before the season ends. I know there are two solid months of work remaining on the course, but if history is a good indication, September and October will go by as fast as the summer did.

It is probably one of the most remarkable things about our business, golf course management, that these subtle changes in the seasons can bring about such a change in the heart of a person. If you remember, I was the one who said that the spring season was the most exciting and enthusiastic time of the year and the summer season was one to forget. Now, I must admit, fall is my favorite season. Spring is alright, and summer is not as bad as I had made it out to be. But autumn is best.

You must also remember that I was one who said that the allure and the prize of this profession was the change in seasons and the "New Year" that each one of them brings.

By now, most of us have aerified our courses, put some of the last of the topdressing materials down, prepared our budgets and have bid goodbye to the summer staff. It

seems like just a few short weeks ago that I hired many of them. We are now preparing for the final assault on winter preparations.

In my estimation, this is the most challenging time on the golf course. Yes, you're right, I have changed my mind again. July and August are not the most difficult.

In addition to all of the winter preparations and extra work loads from incomplete projects, we have lost much of our staff and the grass doesn't have the sense to slow its growth to meet our decreasing work force. And yet, we must continue to meet the high standards we set for ourselves back in the summer.

Every year it's the same thing—a decreased work force and too much grass to cut. Oh well, in a few weeks it will slow down enough for us to catch up to it. Thank God for late fall and cooler temperatures.

But I think what I really like most about the fall is the anticipation of truly slowing down to a reasonable work pace. In addition, it is also a time of football, pumpkins, leaf drop, farmers markets and all the other wonderful signs of peaceful days and cool nights. I am now beginning to think of who the Badgers' opponent in the Rose Bowl will be this year?

My suspicion is that fall will be here and gone before we know it and we'll be in the planning and preparation phase of our year. A forlorn feel-

ing may come to some of us because of the cold winter months that are to come. I hope that everyone takes a moment to breathe a sigh of relief and look back upon the past year and all that was accomplished.

Before long, it will only be a faint memory. 🍂

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