



The Surrounds

By Wayne G. Horman



So much for a dry summer this year! The flood gates opened in late June, and as of the end of July, the rain hadn't quit. Areas of Wisconsin received more than eight inches of rain in just one week. Just south of Madison, it actually rained for 10 days straight, but in most cases the rainfall was really spotty.

The hot, wet weather provided a number of headaches for golf course superintendents. Algae has been a constant problem on greens, and more than a few superintendents were attempting to dry out their greens. The blackish crust that formed on greens even thinned out some *Poa annua*.

The shallow turfgrass root systems this year has been a big concern. It remains a worry as plans and preparations are made for winter. There is always a substantial risk that Wisconsin will have a hard winter that could really cause problems with grass going into cold weather in a weakened condition.

During June and July, diseases were a constant problem. Dollar spot and anthracnose were very active throughout Wisconsin, and were most prevalent on fairways and approaches. However, at the UW-Madison Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab, five out of six samples were diagnosed as pythium. In most cases it wasn't your typical pythium. The cottony mycelium was missing, and it wasn't taking the turf out very quickly. It tended to just thin out areas over a four to five day period rather than overnight.

The insects also became very active during this period. Cutworms made appearances throughout the summer, and in

some cases had really large populations on greens. The activity of cutworms was different than we've seen in past years. Instead of evening activity, cutworms were more evident immediately after the greens were mowed in the morning.

The summer of 1994 can be classified as the year of the Black Turfgrass *Ataenius* grub for some golf courses. The Mequon area and parts of the Fox River Valley had *Ataenius* activity in mid-July. On some golf courses, no area was excluded from turf damage, not even the roughs. The insect activity, combined with shallow roots, provided a really challenge for those affected.

There were some position changes that occurred at golf courses this summer. At Cedar Creek in Onalaska, Scott Spier became the new golf course superintendent. At Edelweiss CC in New Glarus, Dick Buetl took over as superintendent. It was a short move for Dick—he came from the assistant's position at Monroe Country Club.

Tom Vlach, a 1991 graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is now the golf course superintendent at Pine Tree Golf Club in Boynton Beach, Florida. Brent Lynch, a recent graduate from the UW, was hired as his assistant.

At West Bend CC, they celebrated Roger Baumann's 26 years of service with the club. Baumann started in 1968 as a crew member and has been the assistant since 1976. He was worked for three superintendents over that time, and has seen many changes in the industry. Roger commented to this reporter that the creative innovations that

he has seen impact golf courses the most have been automatic irrigation systems and fiveplex fairway mowers.

One thing that has been noticed is the lack of birth announcements. Not many compared to last year, but one to report this issue.

Paul Derezinski and his wife, Suzanne, are proud parents of a new little boy. Rex Harrison was born on July 11th, and is the third child for the Derezinskis.

I know it is hard to believe, but many golf course superintendents have other lives than their time spent on the golf course. However, very few have acting to fall back on.

David Van Auken, superintendent of the river golf course at Blackwolf Run in Kohler, spent six weeks preparing for his role in *The Pied Piper*. Initially, Van Auken tried out for the play to spend more time with his kids, but was selected for one of the lead roles. His eight-year old son Ben was also in the play put on by the Kohler Youth Theater Company, July 22nd through July 24th.

Meadowbrook CC and Racine CC had their traditional softball game in Racine in July. Ric Lange's MCC team defeated Mike Handrich's RCC team, 10-6.

Finally, Harvey Miller, superintendent at Oconomowoc CC, hosted the July 11th meeting. He wanted to thank everyone for attending. Harvey also commented on how having the meeting was his way to give back to the WGCSA.

The brisk fall air isn't far off now, and snowmold controls will be needed soon. Start counting the days! Don't forget the **Dinner Dance** in early October. 🌱