

# Symposium Better Than Many Expected

By Monroe S. Miller

Let's face it—golf course drainage isn't exactly one of the "sexy" issues in our business. Course superintendents talk a lot among themselves about green speed, computers, irrigation, weather, plant diseases, and soft-spikes a lot more than they do about drainage or engine oils or shelter houses.

But those same golf course managers will readily admit that few things are more important to golf course playing conditions than drainage. As the old saying goes, "the three most important things in golf course construction are 1) drainage, 2) drainage, and 3) drainage."

So most WGCSA members faced that reality and turned out to learn from a really good roster of speakers as much more about the subject as they could.

There might be only one good reason why I would have liked to attend Michigan State University, for a semester anyway. That one reason is Dr. Paul Rieke. Looking for a role model? Pick this man. No one ever says anything but the about him, and I concur. Wayne Kussow extends his greatest respect to Paul, and Frank Rossi considers him a mentor. So I was pleased he took the time travel from East Lansing to Milwaukee and keynote our Symposium.

Dr. Rieke surprised no one with his superb opening lecture on the subject. His view is that drainage is a hidden factor in turfgrass management. He is right, of course.

One of my all-time favorite people in the golf course business is Peter Beaves, co-owner of Midwest Irrigation. Pete put our irrigation system in a number of years ago and it remains the best money we have spent, ever. Peter is old fashioned—he keeps his promises and delivers what you expect. The Symposium committee made a great choice in offering him an invitation to speak to us.



Gary Grigg and Tom Marzolf, seated in front of Jim and Lois Latham.



George Will, columnist and writer supreme, was at the Hyatt, too!



Why is Mike so happy? Because he's turning the WGCSA presidential reins over to Mark Kienert.

Pete delivered at the rostrum, too. He gave a nuts and bolts lecture that profited everybody.

I enjoyed all the other speakers, too. From colleagues (George Frye and Gary Grigg) to architects (Tom Marzolf) to faculty (Dr. Al Jarrett from Penn State) to construction (Paul Eldrige of Wadsworth Golf Construc-

tion) to the USGA (Bob Vavrek), the subject of drainage was covered top to bottom and side to side. Even the DNR was there, in the person of Ron Semmann, deputy director. He was the luncheon speaker.

As near as I was able to tell, most shared my feeling that the 1995 meeting was a good one.

## SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS, SIDELIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

I will admit I am a rubber neck from way back—you'd think I was from Backwoods CC in Hicksville, Wisconsin. I cannot help myself; it is a lot of fun checking out the famous and the newsworthy.

The Hyatt and Milwaukee, and the Phister in years past, too, have given me some fine moments rubber necking. This year was tops.

Hyatt staff were anxious to get us out of the meeting hall after our chapter election. I asked a busboy "why?" He told me that the Medical College of Wisconsin had a banquet and that George Will was the speaker!

I nearly fainted! George Will is one of my heroes—I watch him every Sunday on David Brinkley's show, I buy and read his books and I read his column in the State Journal. Steve Millett feels the same way—he's from the Backwater CC in Nowhere, Iowa. And he's a rubber neck, too.

So we hung out for an hour or so, waiting for George to arrive. I paced around, wringing my hands, wondering if I should try to get close to him once he was in view. He showed up, and while I was busy being indecisive, Millett (who clearly is young and didn't know any better) goes over to the guy, strikes up a conversation and gets his

autograph. My respect for Steve grew exponentially! All I got was the poor quality picture you see here.

The Wisconsin Sports Hall of Fame had its induction dinner when we were there, and NBC announcer Bob Costas was the speaker because Al McGuire was an inductee. I saw Costas up close and can tell you he really is short!

Oscar Robinson was also inducted and I will confirm that the "Big O" really is tall!

**BEST SLIDES** — Gary Grigg showed some of his disastrous situations with water and a golf course, like 65" of rain in Naples, Florida in September and October of 1995. Gary did disappoint me in that he didn't talk about affiliation issues.

**DRESS CODE** — Do we need a dress code for the Symposium? I do not like wearing a necktie, but I realize some occasions require it. I do like wearing hats, but I realize some occasions forbid it.

Imagine my reaction when I was in the back of the hall and saw several people wearing golf hats! It was tactless and crude—the same goes for blue jeans, wrinkled shirts and work boots. C'mon boys, we're in town.

Maybe ties aren't necessary, but work clothes should be outlawed for the meeting.



Ron Semmann, deputy DNR secretary, was the 1995 luncheon speaker.

**A SAD MOMENT** — When Bob Welsh told me his wife had passed away one year ago to the day—November 8, 1994—I knew why he seemed so sad. It made me feel for him.

**BEST QUOTE** — Easy winner—Peter Beaves deserves credit in this category. While discussing the extreme lengths we sometimes go for golf turf, his advice was, "remember, boys, it's only grass!"

**BIGGEST WELCOME** — Goes to Jim and Lois Latham. It was not difficult to see that retirement suits them both. But it was just as easy to see that they were glad to be back "home"! 🏠

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# WGCSA Election

By David Brandenburg

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The annual WGCSA election took place November 8, 1995 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Milwaukee after the first day of the symposium. This format of following the Symposium has been in place for a few years and worked out well with increased attendance and participation.

First, a thank you is needed for past president Mike Semler who has served our association with two years as president and many other years on the board of directors at other positions. His time and contributions have helped make WGCSA what it is today and for years to come. Also leaving the board of directors and deserving thanks for their efforts are Mike Handrich and Joe Kuta.

The nominating committee of Roger Bell, Rod Johnson and Bruce Worzella submitted the following people and they were elected as shown.

<i>President</i>	Mark Kienert - Bulls Eye CC, Wisconsin Rapids
<i>Vice President</i>	Scott Schaller - South Hills CC, Fond Du Lac
<i>Treasurer</i>	Kristopher Pinkerton - Oshkosh CC, Oshkosh
<i>Secretary</i>	David Brandenburg - Camelot CC, Lomira
<i>Director</i>	Andrew Kronwall - Lake Geneva CC, Lake Geneva
<i>Director</i>	Charles Shaw - Nagawaukee GC, Pewaukee
<i>Director</i>	Gary Tanko - Sentry World GC, Stevens Point

Also on the board are Director David E. Smith from Abbey Springs GC in Fontana and Past President Mike Semler from Bishops Bay CC, Middleton 🏠