



# T G I W

By Monroe S. Miller

The golf season of 1998 will be remembered by me and a lot of other Wisconsin golf course superintendents as the "endless" season. It started early - we were working outside on the course in February - and ended late this fall. Our first hard freeze didn't occur until October 22nd.

Thank God it's winter; I'm ready for Thanksgiving and Christmas and lots of snow. The worry and work went on too long to be healthy, at least if one was maintaining a "mid-season" level of intensity for all those months. And sometimes player demands in March and September almost required it. I am pooped.

September in our town was gorgeous. It was summer-like, dry and warm. We averaged temperatures five degrees above normal and rainfall levels were below normal. We had our only 90 degree day of the summer on September 13th. Playing conditions were super.

The summer-like weather made it difficult for wildlife biologists to explain why Canada geese arrived so early in southeast Wisconsin. They flew into the Horicon Marsh on September 8th, the day after Labor Day. That was one of the earliest dates ever, equaling the early arrival in 1988. September 13th is when the

geese usually begin to arrive, with large numbers building up around September 20.

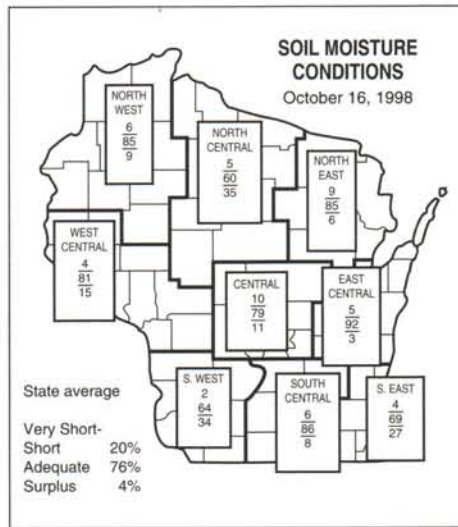
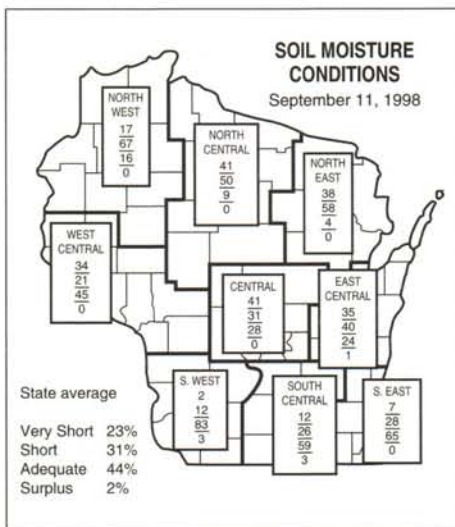
October turned out to be a typical one. We had some drenching rains, the fall color was superb, and regular frosty mornings stayed at bay until November.

Golfers around here should long remember this season. It was a beauty. Details from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service are here to help you remember.

Wind gusts exceeding 100 mph helped make the summer of 1998 a record season in Wisconsin for high-speed winds. We had as much tree damage as we have ever had on our golf course as a result. Others have told me the same.

While the summer-like weather lasted uncommonly long, storms produced 100 mph readings eight times more than normal, according to the National Weather Service. Winds of 100 mph or greater were measured in 13 counties.

The highest ever recorded is 128  
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mph by an amateur observer in Dodge County on May 31st of this year. The previous record was 115 mph in Rhinelander. Hurricane-force winds, described as those exceeding 73 mph, made the April-to-September season the windiest since authorities began keeping records in 1900.

There were 24 tornadoes this year, compared with a 30-year average of 21. Downbursts that create straight-line winds broke 100 mph four times: May 31 in southern Wis-

consin; June 27 in Trempealeau, Jackson and Monroe counties; July 20 in Lake Geneva; and July 21 in Elkhorn. In the last 30 years, thunderstorms created 100 mph bursts an average of once every 2.3 years.

Jim Latham and Dr. Mike Kenna were in Wisconsin in September to review work Steve Millett is doing as part of his USGA Green Section research grant, to tour UW-Madison facilities, and to sort out some admin-

istrative details concerning the grant with WARF. The group had dinner in the midst of the State Street chaos, near campus, in downtown Madison.

For everybody, it was great to see Jim Latham, the ageless wonder in our business. For others, it was a first opportunity to meet Dr. Kenna.

The UW-Madison proved again in the past year why it is a world class institution. The Science Coalition in Washington, D.C. issued its latest report on "Great Advances" in science during the final week of September, and four of those advances came from the UW. The report is released every year, and the Coalition is an alliance of 400 groups and individuals dedicated to sustaining federal support for basic research in our universities.

Close to the top of the list was the completion of a 10-year effort for sequencing the genome of the *E. coli* bacterium by Dr. Frederick Blattner, UW-Madison genetics professor. UW-Madison engineer Marc Anderson patented a technology that helps plants thrive in outer space, a success that could ultimately help citizens as practical applications are developed.

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L-R: Doug Maxwell, Jim Latham, Steve Millett, John Stier, Mike Kenna, Jeff Gregos and Wayne Kussow. To Doug Maxwell's left, out of the picture is Mike Casler.

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Chemist Laura Kiessling created a new class of synthetic molecules that block cellular processes that cause pain and swelling. Her work could offer a new strategy for relief of inflammation and pain that comes from some illnesses.

UW engineer David Larbalestier figured out how to solve a problem that prevents superconductivity wires from carrying power to their potential. The tiny fractures that block electrical flow can be eliminated through his manufacturing process. The result could be wires that carry 10X the energy copper carries, a real big deal.

Like many, I find comfort that our profession has such a close alliance with the institution. Its potential for problem-solving is awesome.

The home run battle between Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa certainly made September a lot of fun, even for non-baseball and even non-sports fans. Both guys conducted themselves beautifully, like real sportsmen.

According to Wisconsin's two-time US Open champ Andy North, Mark

McGwire can hit a golf ball a long way, too. North played golf with the Homer King a year ago in California in a Pro-Am tournament at Pebble Beach. He said McGwire was "a great guy. What you see is what you get. He hits a golf ball a long way, thirty yards past us."

If it was heartening watching two genuine American heroes in late summer and early fall, it was disgusting watching Slick Willie Clinton disgrace the position he doesn't deserve to hold. He has demeaned the presidency and stained the stature of the office.

The picture of Clinton on TV wagging his finger at the world while saying "I never had sexual relations with that woman" illustrated his great capacity to lie. He sounded like some self-righteous tent preacher talking down to his congregation. In fact, Clinton is the weak-willed, spineless sinner. He apparently believes that fidelity is old fashioned and that adultery is the norm.

Clinton has shown he has the morals of a philanderer and the greed of a drug dealer. But what can

you expect from a draft dodger? If he had a shred of character, he'd leave office.

Don't hold your breath. His arrogance and insincerity are breathtaking.

Andy Kronwall gave the most informative lecture at this spring's WGCSA business meeting, alerting everyone to the potential disaster brought on by zebra mussels. Officials from Minnesota have noticed big numbers of this mollusk in the Duluth-Superior harbors in Lake Superior this fall. It has caused no small amount of concern.

That report, and others, have raised the danger flag for courses that use surface water for irrigation. There is no good news on that topic.

So, Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. We may miss many other holidays during the year, but these are two we can celebrate to the max. And if you are a deer hunter, may you bag the biggest buck in the woods! 🦌

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