

# A Long, Hot, Dry Summer

By **Monroe S. Miller**, Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club

Chad Grimm drove up the slight incline to the shop late afternoon on a weekday in early August. He looked bushed, both physically and psychologically, probably because he was. He had a lot of company among those in our profession that time of the season who felt the same way.

"I've just about had enough of this," Chad said in a tone of voice that spoke volumes of how tired he was.

Not many of us, late in the summer, were having all that much fun, especially in areas of Wisconsin that were as dry as we were for the summer months. The effects of heat and lack of rainfall are unrelenting and require constant and unflagging attention, seven days a week. The work can wear you down.

The past two months served as reminders that irrigation systems at

best supplement rainfall. Areas that get 4X coverage dictate a lot of hand watering for areas that only receive 1X coverage. Although the plant disease situation was not overwhelming (except for those up against anthracnose), the Japanese beetles were thicker than flies or mosquitoes, and the cutworms visited three generations on some courses.

This kind of unrelenting weather wears down a young golf course staff, taking a lot of the fun out of the summer for them. In some cases, kids hung the work boots up earlier than they had promised.


But, always, the weather cools, it rains a little and the subsequent relief feels oh so good. Weather inflicted scars begin to heal and one's attitude improves dramati-

cally. The seemingly endless days of heat and cicadas singing and golf tournaments are coming to a close. The rush is almost over. We even find our enthusiasm again!

We are on the cusp of the season when green gives way to gold and red and orange. The tangy smell of autumn - evergreens and leaf mold - will be in the air before we know it.

So, the autumn fun begins - aerifying and football games and even a well-deserved vacation. Here's hoping the wonderful months of September and October are, well, wonderful for you.

The graphics from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service are included here and tell the story of the weather for the past two months.



Agriculture Division

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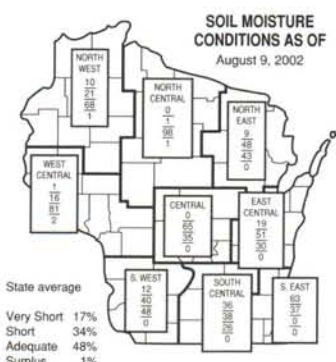
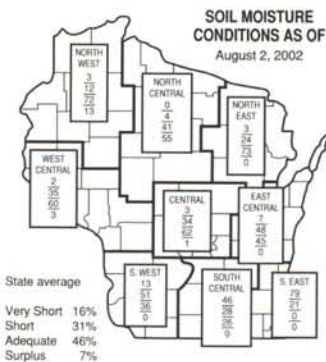
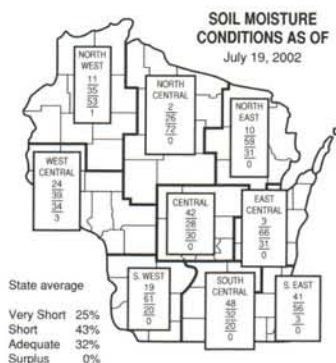
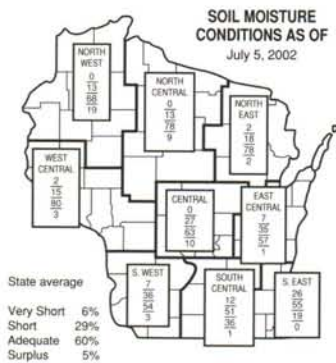
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Congratulations to Lee Bruce. And thanks for all he has done to change and improve and beautify the landscape in his fifty years in business. Not many are able to lay claim to a career as productive as

his has been. The WTA Field Day was a good time to pause and recognize him for it.

Here is a little bit of good news for the manufacturing sector of the Wisconsin economy. John Deere is closing its two-year old Gator utility vehicle production facility in Williamsburg, Virginia. They are consolidating utility vehicle production at the Horicon Deere plant. Part of the reason is the five-month break at Horicon as a result of the riding mower production schedule. This move will allow them to use the workforce all year long. The move is going to take place by October 31st.

Marc Schwarting had a nice treat in July - he was chosen to play (along with The Bridges' owner Greg Rice) in the Pro-Am at the PGA Tour John Deere Classic at Deere Run in Moline, Illinois. Congratulations to Marc.

Like you, I am looking forward to the pleasant days of fall. Before you know it, we will be talking about frost delays and Symposium speakers, the WTA Fundraiser at Blackwolf Run and plans for the GCSAA conference.

Bring it on! ♣



Shirley and Lee Bruce at the 2002 WTA Field Day where Lee was recognized for 50 years of outstanding work in the landscape industry.



Visitors to the Noer Facility for all time will know of the respect his colleagues and peers have for Lee Bruce.



"YEAH. THE BUDGET CUTS WERE PRETTY SEVERE THIS YEAR."