



Great Start to the 2003 Season

By **Dustin Riley**, Golf Course Superintendent, Oconomowoc Golf Club

In the past, the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association has held its Spring Business Meeting in Fond du Lac in early March. The WGCSA Board of Directors utilizes the spring meeting to jump-start the season by educating attending members and providing the "state of the association." However, this year a unique opportunity was presented to the WGCSA. The USGA was scheduled to hold their regional seminar in Wisconsin also this spring. In attempt to provide a most valuable educational experience, the WGCSA and the USGA joined forces and presented a joint USGA Regional & WGCSA Spring Business Meeting. Due to the "joining of forces", old traditions have been broken to accommodate both parties. The date and location were changed.

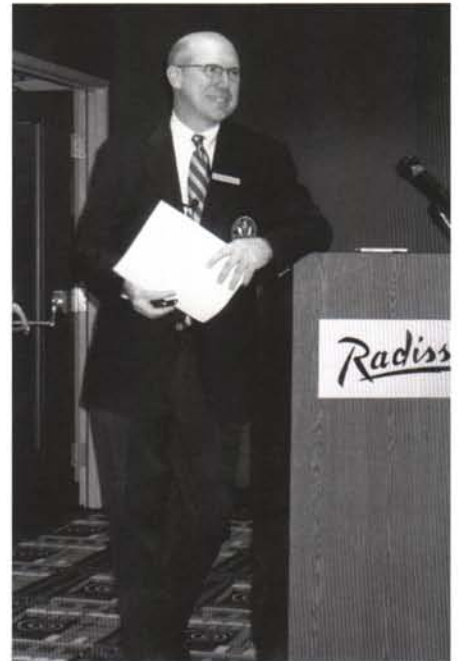
On Tuesday, March 11th, 2003 the USGA Regional Conference and WGCSA Spring Business Meeting was held in Pewaukee. The USGA arranged an education-filled morning designed to target golf professionals, golf course superintendents, and their respective guests. This joint meeting provided opportunities for golf professionals to learn a little about turf-grass management concerns, and also a chance for golf course superintendents to learn about USGA matters.

Dr. Chris Williamson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, presented "Managing Earthworms and Other Insect Pest for Flawless Fairways." Although earthworms are living proof of healthy soil, high populations can interfere with a golf course superintendent's intentions on producing a perfect playing surface. Dr. Williamson

presented a history of data that earthworm populations could be affected by chemical applications targeting other pests. Since earthworms are beneficial organisms, Dr. Williamson concentrated his presentation on a non-chemical approach to discouraging high populations of earthworms. Extending a topdressing program into fairway acreage has become one of these alternative approaches. Producing a surface layer of angular sand has been shown to reduce earthworm populations. The sharp edges of the angular sand are believed to injure and irritate earthworms. University studies have recently begun to look at other products that may produce the same desired effect as angular sand. One of those products is "Black Jack" a coal slag byproduct. However, these studies are very new and the

chemical and physiological properties have yet to be determined.

Bob Vavrek, Agronomist, USGA Green Section, NC Region provided the second turf related talk concerning "Green Covers: Benefit or Boondoggle." Bob provided several instances in which green covers could or could not have worked. Turf winterkill can occur through several processes



Jim Reinhart, USGA Executive Committee member, lectured on the activities of the USGA Foundation.



John Spitzer, a physicist who is the USGA Technical Director, gave a very informative lecture on equipment testing.



Bob Vavrek and Chris Williamson were on the WGCSA educational program.



NCR Regional Affairs Director Bill McCarthy shared a creative approach on golf rules and correct calls in the field.



Dennis Robinson accepted a 50-year member plaque on behalf of Horst Distributing from the WGCSA.

such as desiccation, snow mold, cold temperatures and crown hydration. Green covers have been shown to protect turf against winter desiccation. However, even green covers could not protect the turf in Alaska when temperatures dropped to more than 50 degrees below zero. The comfort level provided by the greens covers will vary among golf course superintendents. However, research and field studies have yet to provide a sure thing in regards to green covers. The USGA is currently researching green covers with various colors. Hopefully, this research will reveal an additional



Steve Schmidt and Dave Hills were on hand to receive the 25-year membership plaque from Jack Tripp.

tool to superintendents in our frustrating attempts to beat Mother Nature.

John Spitzer, Technical Director, USGA, discussed a few of the thousands of pieces of golfing equipment (golf clubs, golf balls, etc.) submitted to the USGA for their review. These products are reviewed, researched and tested to determine whether each piece of equipment falls within the equipment specifications or rules of golf. John spent the majority of his presentation discussing titanium drivers and the new golf balls. Today's new equipment has begun to exceed the intentions of past restrictions. Those restrictions are being reanalyzed for future modifications.

Jim Reinhart, USGA Executive Committee, presented the purpose and success of the USGA Foundation. The Foundation has grown to encompass additional needs in the golf community. Today, the Foundation operates as the broad-based philanthropic arm of the USGA. One of the Foundation's goals is to maintain and improve the opportunities for all individuals to take part in the game of golf. The USGA Foundation has been awarding grants through its "For the Good of the Game" Grants Program in an effort to make golf more affordable and accessible. The First Tee program is another opportunity created to increase the number of youth participating in the game,

with an emphasis on those who would not otherwise have access, by developing affordable golf learning facilities where kids can learn the game of golf at places where they are welcome to play. Although this paragraph does not do justice to all of the USGA Foundation efforts, please feel free to visit the USGA Foundation website to learn more.

Bill McCarthy, Director, Regional Affairs, USGA North Central Region called upon attendees to "make the call" regarding actual rule violations. In his "So, You Want to Be a Rules Official" presentation, Bill presented video coverage of PGA/USGA golf tour-

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naments illustrating obvious and not so obvious rule violations. Hand picked volunteers were put on the spot as a "rules official." It became evident that many of the attendees need to brush up on the rules of golf.

The WGCSA Spring Meeting followed lunch. Laura Schoesser, Milwaukee County, reminded golf course superintendents of the need to provide "Workplace Safety." Although Laura's talk was just a brief overview of OSHA requirements, it was sensed among the audience their workplace safety needed to be improved. She provided significant information regarding hearing protection and also the use of respirators. OSHA requirements are not easily memorized. Please utilize the OSHA website or the state contact to educate and update all

workplace safety concerns or requirements.

President Brandenburg presented the meeting agenda and all areas were addressed. All committee chairpersons presented their reports and the expectations of the upcoming season. Treasurer Michael Lyons reported the final 2002 financial figures. The Association finished the year \$15,250 ahead of budget. The approved 2003 budget was presented again.

Jack Tripp presented the membership report. Jack presented 25-year plaques to members: Dave Beno, Dave Hills, Steve Schmidt, Pete Van De Hey and Roy Zehren. A 45-year member plaque was given to the Reinders Brothers; Wisconsin Turf received a 47-year plaque and Horst Distributing received a 50-year plaque. This is

the first year the Association has awarded affiliate members. The WGCSA would like to thank all those who support the association.

President Brandenburg introduced the Club Relations Committee. This committee includes Rod Johnson, David Brandenburg, Pat Sisk, Kris Pinkerton, Wayne Otto, and Dustin Riley. This newly formed committee will serve as a resource to clubs searching for a superintendent and also desiring to find ways of improving their golf courses.

David also reported that Monroe Miller has received the Newsletter Editor Award from GCSAA at the conference in Atlanta. This is the 19th year in a row Monroe has received this award for his outstanding work with the Grass Roots. The association greatly appreciates Monroe's outstanding

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contribution to this fine magazine. We can all be proud thanks to Monroe's efforts. The Grass Roots had income during 2002 of \$32,359.50 and expenses of \$34,671.98. This results in a negative variance of \$2,312.48. We feel this is a small expense for such a nice magazine. Thank you Monroe!

President Brandenburg spent the remaining minutes of the Spring Meeting discussing the implementation and requirements of GCSAA's PDI, which is set to begin in July. These requirements and how they may affect each member can be found on the GCSAA website. If Internet access is not available, please contact President David Brandenburg for any concerns.

Dustin Riley and Brian

Zimmerman presented the 2003 monthly meeting schedule and related educational opportunities. The schedule is listed below.

The WGCSA would like to extend an appreciation to all superintendents and their respective golf courses in their generous offering to host a monthly meeting. Meeting sites for 2004 are already being requested. If anyone is interested in hosting a WGCSA monthly meeting please contact Dustin, Golf and Arrangements Chair, at 262 567-6212 or ogcriley@voyager.net.

The monthly meeting notices will be arriving soon. Please consider participating in these events and getting involved with the association. Have a great season. ♣

2003 Monthly Meeting Schedule

Mon, April 28: Trempealeau Mtn. GC, Trempealeau, WI
 • Speaker Dr. Geunwha Jung, "Snow Mold Research"

Wed, May 28: Wilderness Woods GC, Wisconsin Dells, WI
 • WI PGA - Super-Pro Tournament

Mon, June 30: North Brook GC, Luxemburg, WI

Mon, July 21: Crystal Springs GC, Seymour, WI

Tues, Aug 12: WTA Field Days, OJ Noer Center, Verona, WI

Mon, Sept 22: Nakoma GC, Madison, WI
 • Superintendent Tournament
 • Speaker Bob Vavrek, "Year in Review"

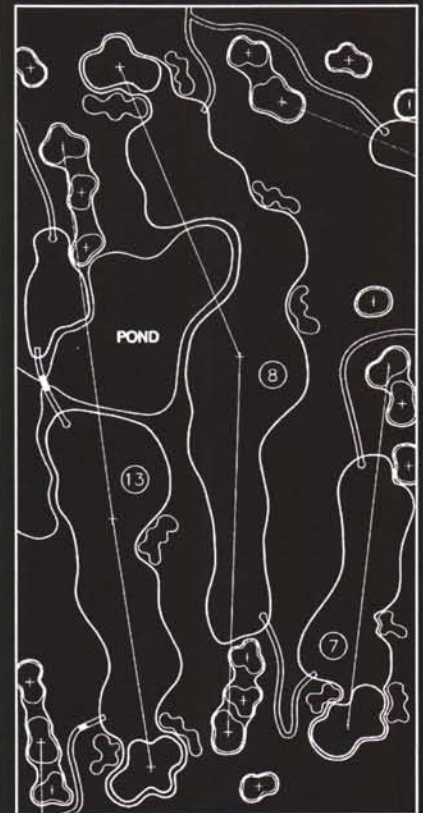
October 3/4th: Greenwood Hills CC, Wausau, WI
 Dinner Dance

Wed, Oct 8: The Bull at Pinehurst Farms, Sheboygan Falls, WI
 • WTA Fundraiser Golf Outing

Tues, Oct 14: Racine CC, Racine, WI
 • Superintendent/Guest
 • Speaker Mark Kuhns "Restoration and Renovation"

Tues/Wed, Nov 18, 19: Symposium American Club, Kohler, WI

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