

As Spring Changes to Summer

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager, Rolling Meadows Golf Course

Congratulations to Shane Griffith for being named a Outstanding senior student at the University of Madison College of Life Sciences (CALs). Griffith a senior in the Department of Soil Science and in the Turf and Grounds Management Program was given the award in early May.

Dean of CALs, Molly Jahn introduced Shane at the awards ceremony with this praise: "Shane had a very impressive undergraduate career. He served as the Badger Turf and Grounds Club President and participated in numerous internships, one of which was with Torrey Pines Golf Course where he helped prepare the course for the U.S. Open. Shane also led a group of UW-Madison students in a national competition for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Shane's outstanding academic performance and engagement in professional pursuits provides an outstanding model for future students."

Dr. Doug Soldat states "I know I speak for the other turfgrass faculty members and all in the industry who've had the pleasure of working with Shane when I say that we are very proud to see him recognized for his accomplishments. Shane plans to graduate in January 2010, and will continue in the Department of Soil Science working towards a Masters Degree on a project intended to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of sod production using municipal biosolids. Congratulations Shane, and keep up the good work!"

Congratulations also go to Patrick Bastron who authored this month's Badger Turf and Grounds Club Column for receiving a United States Golf Association Green Section Internship for 2009. Patrick a Senior at University of Wisconsin Madison under Dr. John Stier will have the opportunity to travel with a USGA Agronomist for one week this summer. He will travel on the Turf Advisory Visits and receive hands on experience from not only the Agronomist but also the staffs of the golf courses they visit.


Pat is from Pleasant Prairie, WI is currently the Vice President of the Badger Turf and Grounds Club and interned at Interlachen Country Club in 2008.

We have a lot of talented young people in the Badger State as we congratulate Morgan Millies for receiving a GCSAA 2009 Joseph S. Garske Collegiate Grant

Millies, from Big Bend, Wis., earned the \$1,000 third-

place scholarship. She will attend the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse as a pre-med student. Her father, Jeffrey Millies, CGCS, is a 24-year GCSAA member and is the GCSAA Class A superintendent at Edgewood Golf Course in Big Bend, Wis. Jeff also serves as the WGCSA board of directors as Treasurer.

The Garske Grant was established in honor of Par Aide company founder Joseph S. Garske. It is funded by Par Aide and administered by The Environmental Institute for Golf, the philanthropic organization of



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GCSAA. The program assists children of GCSAA members to fund their education at an accredited college or trade school. The grant is renewable for a second year with proof of enrollment and a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

You may be receiving this issue a little later than normal. This tardiness of this issue is my fault. Thanks to the writers for getting things in on time, but I am the one dragging my feet. Family and work come before volunteer activities and it is amazing how busy we can get in our lives. It's not like we are running the country or even the state but we still seem to fill our days up with activities.

Our families year of change continues as our oldest, Kayla graduates from high school. I am just the cheap labor while my wife planned for hours and hours to pull off her grad party last weekend. It seems like such a simple thing, haul some food, buy some drinks and people will show up. But every little thing takes time and effort. We are lucky to have great family and friends to help or I think we would still be cleaning up the shelter where we had the party.

It's hard to believe I am the father of a 18 year old. How can I be so old? They say time flies when you're having fun! Fun times or stress times, life moves by pretty fast. Next week we have registration at college and before long she will be a resident of UW Green Bay. Far enough to miss her, but close enough to visit her when we want.

The year of change also continues at work with one big change that is going successfully. My management style and structure has always been hands on to a fault. 99% of the time I ran the crew, assigned first and second and third jobs every day, while James filled in when I left or was busy. That worked for the most part but left my time overstretched and James in a uncomfortable spot of trying to decipher what I wanted when I was not there for those many

reasons golf course managers are doing something else.

Despite the best of plans and intentions, reality shows at a busy medium budget daily fee golf course we fly by the seat of our pants while trying to get more done with less. Planning and communication is a goal but not always used to its full potential.

Starting this spring, James runs the crew on a daily basis and I fill in when he is unavailable as is common at many clubs. I think I have done a good job biting my tongue when something is not "how I would of done it", although it bothers me to give up some control and actually delegate. In the long run this will be more efficient for our operation and better for the customers.

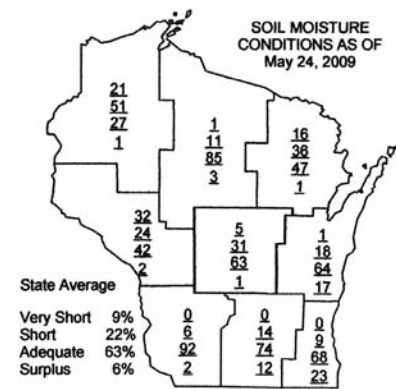
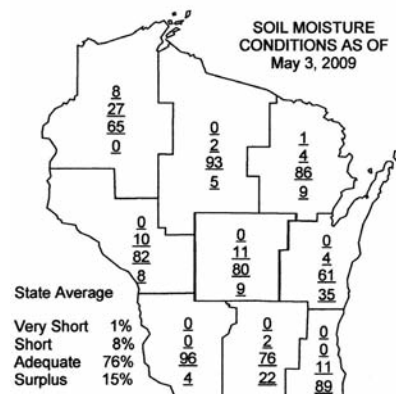
My personal year of change continues with a date at the tattoo parlor. (Don't read that Mom!) Kayla is 18 and was going to get "tatted" with our without me so we are going together much to the chagrin of Mrs. Brandenburg who thinks we are nuts. Just to recap, I jumped in Lake Michigan on New Year's Day, tried a beard for a few weeks and now a tattoo. That's not nuts, just a little mid-lifish. Besides it is all cheaper and safer than a new Harley or sports car!

I am not sure I like spring weather anymore! Although our course came through with less damage than last year we still had an unacceptable amount of dead grass this spring. Green damage was mainly caused by freeze thaw cycles again, and had no rhyme or reason to it as in 2008. Some of the holes we cleared the snow and ice off in midwinter had damage while others did not and at the same time some holes we did nothing to had damage while others did not. On the positive side we did not lose much bent this year as it seems only the *poa annua* died.

Outside of a couple low areas with ice damage most of the

fairway damage was from snow mold. We have never treated for snow mold and usually have little damage from this disease. However the large amount of damage this season forces us to consider our treatment options. Throw a second cold wet spring with slow green up on top of the damage and I am still looking at unhealed spots on May 30! Bob Vavrek if your reading this, why does the *poa annua* germinate on the gravel cart paths and come up with a terrific vigor but will not pop on the fairways or greens?

I think we have had four seasons some days this spring as we have had snow, wind rain and 60 degree sunshine all on the same day. From the attached Soil Moisture Conditions courtesy of the USDA



National Agricultural Statistics Service you can see soil moisture has been adequate for most of the state in May with some areas experiencing surplus water and others dry conditions.

Crop progress (crops planted and/or emerged) is ahead of last year but behind the 5 year average and I am sure golf course work is the same. It has been a challenging year to spray herbicides or any other products between the wind and rain events.

I had many people comment on the deserving story highlighting Monroe Miller's contribution to our industry that ran in the March April issue of The Grass Roots. Gene Haas, retired Executive Director of the Wisconsin State Golf Association and author of the book Caring for the Green sent a nice letter and a caricature drawing of Monroe. Gene expressed that he thought the article missed a commentary from the benefactor of Monroe's work - the golfer.

"My reaction to your article says that the golfer owes a debt of gratitude to Monroe, and all those who are involved in his profession. Too often golfers take things for granted, expecting the norm when much of it is outside the area of control. All in all, course condition throughout Wisconsin is absolutely first class on a day-to-day basis. In most instances, I was the recipient of tournament preparation conditions, which usually involves additional efforts by the maintenance staff. But whenever I had an opportunity to play a course on a business or friendly occasion I found that the courses were usually in identical playing condition. To me, that speaks highly of the concerns and regards that the superintendent has for his constituents, and his profession. Monroe epitomizes this feeling and concern. His legacy

will be passed down to all those who follow in his footsteps - he has helped set the trend for the future of the industry." 🌱



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