

Summer Fun

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

Losses in the Industry -

Oliver F. Vogel the Founder of Spring Valley Turf of West Bend passed away on August 13, 2012 at the age of 88.

Oliver is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Betty and four children, Kathleen (Gerald) Barbian, Laurie (Alan) Aleksandrowicz, William (Joyce) Vogel and Randall (Susan) Vogel; grandchildren Brian Barbian, Michael Aleksandrowicz, Elizabeth (James) Stamatokos, John (Jennie) Aleksandrowicz, Lawrence (Sara) Vogel, Julie (Paul) Fagley, Daniel Vogel, Oliver R. Vogel, Alexander (Elizabeth) Vogel, Abigail Vogel; six great-grandchildren and other relatives and friends.

He was a lifetime member of David's Star Evangelical Lutheran Church and a past member of the church council. He started the Cedar Valley 4-H Club which later became the Kirchhayn Trotters 4-H Club. He also started the Dairyland Softball League.

After his barn was struck by lightning and killed most of his milk cows in April 1954, Oliver started Vogel Seed & Fertilizer (now known as Spring Valley Turf). He was President for 35 years.

He was a member of the past Jackson Business Association. In 1970, Oliver was appointed a Director of the Jackson State Bank and also became a Director of the Fertilizer Association. In 1976, he was a member of the MATC Advisory Committee. Oliver received the Wisconsin Ag. Dealer of the Year Award in 1988. He was a member of the Town of Jackson Planning Commission for 22 years and also served as Chairman on the Board of Appeals. Oliver helped start the Jackson Senior Citizens organization.

The national turf industry was surprised by the passing of USGA Agronomist Stanley J Zontek on August 28, 2012 from a heart attack.

Zontek joined the USGA in 1971 and was the associations most tenured employee. With 41 years of golf course visits, published articles and speaking engagements Zontek has made friends all over the world.

Stanley's introduction to golf was raking



Stan Zontek at the 1993 GCSAA Conference and Show

(Photo from *The Grass Roots Archives*)

bunkers for his golf course superintendent father for \$1.10 per hour. His fathers course installed the first 'Pennncross' bentgrass putting green in West Virginia.

After high school his interest in turfgrass science led him to enroll at Penn State. He started his USGA career as an agronomist in the Northeastern Region in 1971. He moved to our North Central Region (Now the Great Lakes Region) in 1980 before becoming the director of the Mid-Atlantic Region in 1985.

While in our region Zontek was a contributor to *The Grass Roots* penning a column called 'From The Directors Desk'. In the November issue of *The Grass Roots* Zontek was awarded the best quote at the 1990 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium with the following statement while discussing the most indispensable manager of a golf club. "Golf is played on grass, not on a hamburger or on a Izod shirt".

Stanley was a true friend of the golf course superintendent and was awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the

Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Don A Rossi Award from the Golf Course Builders Association of America and the 2007 Crop and Soil Sciences Outstanding Alumni Award from his alma mater Penn State.

Along with helping thousands of golf courses provide better conditions for daily play or national tournaments Zontek also helped maintain the putting green at the White House.

He will be missed by turf enthusiasts everywhere.

Weather Extremes

This summer can be called anything but normal with the nicest spring weather in years followed by heat and drought for most of the state in June and July. They say politics and weather are local and that was proven this year as the rain was hit and miss through most of July but overall it was dry through most of the state.

In Fond du Lac our average high in July was 90.5 with a average low of 67.5.

EDITORS NOTEBOOK

The heat alone would not have been so bad but with high evapotranspiration rates irrigation systems and water supplies were taxed to the limit or over the limit as some courses had to reduce irrigated acres. From June 19 to July 25th our course had .55" of rain with a total ET rate of 6.22.

Here are the ugly numbers from the United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service *Wisconsin Crop Progress* report.

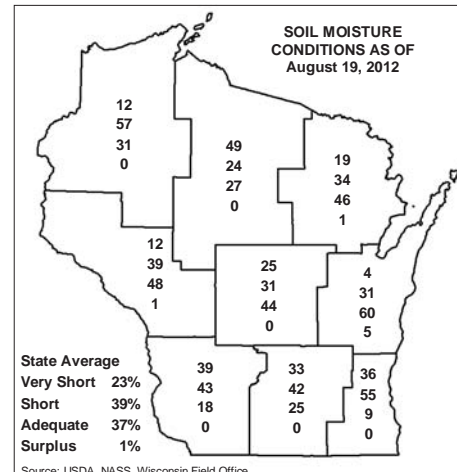
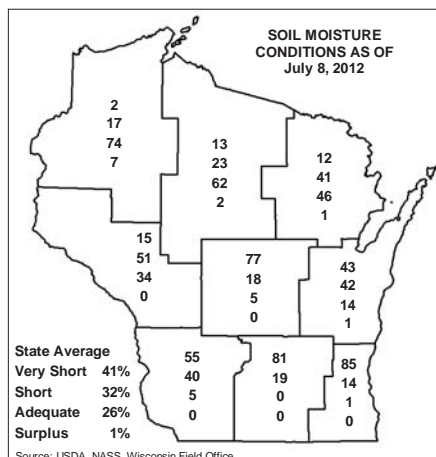
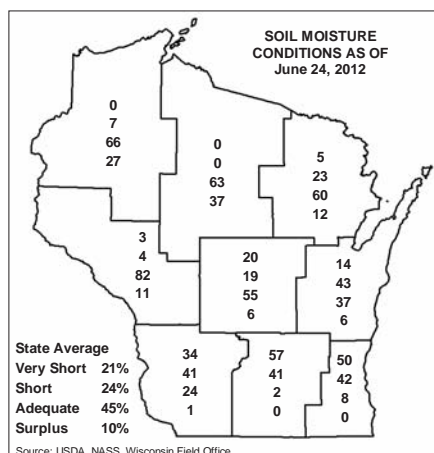
In seasons or periods like this we find every weakness in water supplies, pumpstation output and sprinkler head efficiency. The positives to come out of a stressful summer are golf course manager know where they can improve their irrigation systems in the future or it is time to drill a new well or rehab a old well.

The other positive is most golf courses are doing fairly well with rounds and revenues with few actual rainouts. For us play was

down some days when golfers wisely choose to stay in air-conditioned comfort rather than the steamy links but overall it was a good year to play golf.

GCSAA

Early this summer I was able to attend the GCSAA Professional Development Committee meetings at our headquarters in Lawrence, KS. We were able to discuss ways GCSAA can improve they way they educate members.



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EDITORS NOTEBOOK

Changes in technology has made reaching and educating members easier and less expensive. Webinars allow golf course superintendents around the globe to follow and interact with a presenter in any classroom.

The committee discussed job satisfaction, job security, superintendents relationship with the pro and club manager, the compensation survey and membership standards.

I would encourage any WGCSA member to volunteer for committee service. The only cost to your family or club is your time away as GCSAA picks up all travel cost. It is a rewarding experience and allows you to fully appreciate all the national association does for and has to offer to the average member.

There are some welcome changes coming to the GCSAA golf tournament. Toro will continue to be the sponsor and the biggest change will be having the tournament in the same area as the GCSAA Conference and Golf Industry Show rather than a flight or long drive away. This will be a welcome

change to those looking to save money but still participate in the tournament.

The other major change is to shorten the time away from home and work by having the championship on Monday and Tuesday. This will mean attendees will have to choose between golf and seminars on those days but can still attend seminars on Friday.

Saturday will be practice rounds followed by Fourball on Sunday. The National Championship and Golf Classic will be played on Monday and Tuesday with a new Shamble or similar event on Monday for those who just want to play for fun.

Attendance at the tournament has dropped over the past 15 years especially for Wisconsin players. Hopefully this change will make the tournament more accessible and although I am a casual player I am considering getting in the event.

The format of the conference and show will be the same as last year with seminars on Monday, Tuesday and Friday with the Golf Industry Show on Wednesday and Thursday. Attendees have stressed they want to fit the show in a week to reduce

time away from home.

Having the tournament in the same city as the conference will eliminate any sites with questionable winter weather.

Future Golf Industry Show Sites

2013 - San Diego

2014 - Orlando

2015 San Antonio

2016 - San Diego

2017 - Orlando

Through the new Melrose Scholarships 20 GCSAA members can apply for free attendance and travel to the Golf Industry Show. The deadline is September 15th and it is for members who have not attended the show in the past 5 years.

Awards and Best Lists.

Quite a few Wisconsin courses have been recognized by different golf publications for their quality facilities or architecture.

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Golf Digest recently listed America's "most fun" courses. On the public list The Links Course At Lawsonia in Green Lake came in at number 13 while the Seth Raynor designed Blue Mound Golf and Country Club in Wauwatosa came in at 41 in the private list.

In the *Golfweeks* Best Courses You Can Play in 2012 the Wisconsin list includes:
Whistling Straights, Kohler
Blackwolf Run River Course, Kohler
Lawsonia Links Course, Green Lake
Whistling Straits Irish Course, Kohler
Erin Hills, Hartford
The Bull at Pinehurst Farms, Sheboygan Falls
University Ridge, Madison
Troy Burne, Hudson
Blackwolf Run Meadow Valley Course, Kohler
Geneva National Palmer Course, Lake Geneva.

On *Golfweeks* Best Resort Courses list the following Kohler Courses made the top 100.

4 - Whistling Straights, Straights Course
15 - Blackwolf Run's River Course
38 - Whistling Straights Irish Course
85 - Blackwolf Run Meadow Valley Course

Washington County Golf Course in Hartford came in at 31 in *Golfweeks* Best Municipal Courses.

On the Classic Design List from *Golfweek* Milwaukee Country Club came in at 37 while Lawsonia Links came in at 55.

Making the Modern Design top 100 List from *Golfweek* were Whistling Straits, The Straits Course at number 4 and Blackwolf Run, River Course at 47.

On the *Golf Digest* top Wisconsin Courses the list includes:

Whistling Straits, Straits Course
Milwaukee C.C.
Blackwolf Run River Course
Whistling Straits G.C. Irish Course
Oneida G. & C.C.
Blackwolf Run Meadow Valley Course
SentryWorld G.C.
Blue Mound G. & C.C.
The Bull at Pinehurst Farms

Lawsonia Links Course

Congratulations to these and all the great designs in Wisconsin.

Lets Party and Remember

Kurt Roskopf is organising a get-together to allow friends of his father Don "Red" Roskopf to gather and remember him.

Red was a leader in the golf industry as a active member in the WGCSA, WTA and GCOW along with hours of time given to the Lions Club and Knights of Columbus.

Red passed away on August 3, 2011. The event will be held on Sunday Sept 30th at the Golf Club at Camelot. I will be attending and hope to see you there.

Attendees can just gather at the club for socializing and watching the Packer game or they can sign up for 9 or 18 holes. You can find more information with a quick internet search or by contacting Kurt at 262-720-7031 or roskopf@gmail.com. Reservations are requested by Sept 23.



**Don Roskopf at the 1988 WTA
Field Day with Terry Kurth**
(photo from *The Grass Roots Archives*)

Miscellany

For my time as business manager for *The Grass Roots* issue after issue editor Monroe Miller would tell me this is the latest and issue has ever come out. I am sure some of them were later than normal but I can say I can say I have him beat with this one. The issue is later than I planned but computer and e-mail issues along with summer and everything that goes with it seemed to get in the way of writing and editing.

On the positive the readers will have more time to read the issue thoroughly with the summer stress behind us.

It is hard to believe it will be past Labor day when your receive this issue. Where

has the summer gone? On one hand it feels like it should only be July 20th but on the other hand it feels like it should be mid October and we should be bringing in ballwashers for the winter.

Our summer staff had 5 high school seniors on it and 4 of them left the area for college so the job board shrunk substantially the past two weeks as they and 3 others started school for the year.

We are happy each spring when our hard working well meaning students start to relieve some of the workload but we are just as happy to see them go each September.

They "kids" still make me smile every day but in many ways the smaller staff allows James and I to do actual work and planning for the future without one of them standing eagerly in front of us waiting for instructions.

"Kids" and "Old Guys", what would we do without them? For us they do most of the actual work so we appreciate they choose to spend the season with us.

With both our kids in college Noelle and I are empty nesters for the first time in 21 years so that will start a new time in our lives. I can tell the prospective college parents moving a boy into the dorms is a lot easier than moving a girl into the dorms. Less clothes and a lot less stuff period!

Around our house grocery shopping and cooking will be easier and the house should be a breeze to clean up. I will have to go back to taking out the garbage and cleaning the bathroom.

Hopefully we are not just sleeping in front of the television at 7:30 PM. It will take a few weeks just to get the house to the way we want it and some of the kids "treasures" into storage in the basement. I will stay busy with the magazine and village board and Noelle stays busy with card making and scrapbooking along with keeping up with the kids.

I wish everyone a great fall period with good business and a time of personal recovery as long hot days are replaced with 8 hour cool fall workdays. Good luck with aerification and fall maintenance to your courses to build up healthy plants for winter.

Hopefully the weather allows for continued play and revenue for courses throughout the Badger State well into mid fall.

Happy September! 