



AN ACTIVE ASSOCIATION

By Roger Bell



Enclosed in this issue of the *Grass Roots* is a brochure and pledge card for the O.J. Noer Center for Turfgrass Research. I urge you to familiarize yourself with this ambitious project so that you can (1) contribute directly and (2) become a resource person for golfers and other users of turfgrass as they are asked to contribute.

The Center will be a complete facility built in Madison with outdoor research plots and indoor space for meetings, offices, and laboratories. After giving to other research projects for many years, it is exciting to have our research efforts "come home" to Wisconsin. The better facilities will lead to more and expanded research pro-

jects and, ultimately, more turf researchers and students.

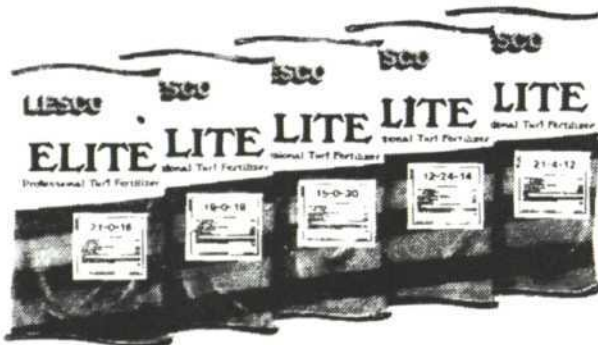
The three year fund raising campaign will raise \$200,000 to be matched with a 100,000 challenge grant for a total effort of \$300,000. The contribution being solicited is strictly individual and voluntary. We are looking for more than an employer-paid contribution. Your personal contribution can be made in a variety of ways as indicated on the enclosed pledge card. Give all that you can.

The WGCSA was well represented in Houston. I am sure there were more of our members present at the show this year than in other years. Congratulations are in order for Bill Roberts who

won his re-election campaign with the highest vote total in GCSAA history. Monroe Miller collected his (annual?) *Grass Roots* award. And the Golden Tee Club had a large proportion of WGCSA members — many of them sporting "charter member" status. Randy Smith and Jerry Kershasky did not get a plaque for hosting a most successful hospitality room, but they certainly deserved one. Thanks, guys!

The WGCSA has a lot to be proud of — we're a bunch of generous, hard-working and successful folks. We made a difference in Houston and we can make a difference in the O.J. Noer Center; so study the enclosed brochure carefully and USE it — don't LOSE it!

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RAISING MONEY IS HARD WORK

By Monroe S. Miller

If you are an antique radio collector like I am, chances are good that you also collect old-time radio shows. I do, and among my favorites are the *Jack Benny Programs*. In one of his most famous routines, Jack was confronted by an armed hoodlum who demanded, "your money or your life". Silence. Hesitation. The aggravated robber shouts, "I said, 'your money or your life.'" Another long pause. Jack replied, "I'm thinking, I'm thinking."

A man's life and a man's money are about the two most important things he has to deal with during time on this earth. Asking for some of that money is serious business, and that is what the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association is doing now, on behalf of the O.J. NOER CENTER for TURFGRASS RESEARCH. It is going to be a difficult task and it will require some hard work. I think I'm like most others — I really would rather not ask people for money. It's a tough assignment I'd sooner avoid.

Efforts to avoid this asking for money inspired some of us involved with the NOER project from the beginning to dream up a plan of "taxation". We thought it would be easy to tax every round of golf one cent. Purchasers of sod would pay an extra penny for each square yard they bought which would go to a fund to be used for building the NOER CENTER. Same with subscribers to lawncare services and landscape contracting. The idea, still valid to me, was that the end user of turfgrass research would pay for it. Although Tom Harrison and I could find no one to disagree with the concept, neither did we find a single person to initiate it. Some clubs (the same ones, always) tied their annual donations to the approximate rounds of golf for the year on their course or to the number of golfing members in the Club, but they'd have given the same amount to the WTA anyway.

What one must conclude is that this project will have to fall into the "voluntary giving" category. We are not go-

ing to be able to do as public officials and politicians can. Taxes won't work. Rather than suffering heartbreak, I am feeling some excitement about the prospect of having to go out and really earn this facility. We will not be able to pass off the responsibility of having to do it all ourselves. It is your business and mine.

I've yet to meet anyone in the golf turf area specifically and the turfgrass industry in general who doesn't recognize the need for the NOER CENTER. Agreement that this is a good project is widespread. However, wanting it and doing something about it are two different things. Our job will be to move good intentions into honest and generous responses.

There are two degrees of participation in the NOER project. Obviously, the first is giving (money). We all will have a chance to make a personal donation to the University of Wisconsin Foundation for this campaign. We hope, however, that giving will not become a substitute for more personal involvement of the WGCSA membership. "Doing" is that other degree of participation. It involves more than just writing a check; time and effort on behalf of the project are the contributions from doing.

For WGCSA members, a lot of that time and effort will be necessary to persuade the Clubs, owners and municipalities we work for of the importance of pledging to the UWF for the NOER CENTER. And I've always felt that to be a good persuader, you need to be a good teacher. Golfers may well enthusiastically embrace the NOER CENTER, once they know why quality research is important to golf courses in Wisconsin. We need to start not from our own positions or understanding but from the position of the golfer. With the help of the informational brochures developed by the WTA and the UWF and an intimate knowledge of what's best for golf, I expect great success in moving players to our point of view. Dialogue, conversation and the give-

and-take of opinions are our allies in this process. We won't be able to manipulate or force people into doing something about fulfilling the need for research. They have to see why it is important to them. Our job is providing that information.

Someone once said, "There are no free lunches." In this physical world we live in, you get nothing for nothing. You must drill through mud and rock and water to get oil; you have to break tons and tons of stone to get one small diamond. No labor, no fruits. It is that simple. Providing a quality golf course requires an enormous effort, usually on a daily basis. Coping, fighting and scarping with Mother Nature, however, makes the successful result even more sweet. We should not expect, therefore, that the NOER CENTER will be completed with little or no effort.

This business of raising money for the NOER CENTER is a tough assignment. Many of us have not tackled such a task before. But I've always felt that the WGCSA never shies away from something just because it is hard work. Collectively and individually, let's roll up our sleeves and get this job done.

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PREPARING THE COURSE FOR A SEASON'S PLAY

By Dr. David U. Cookson

Talking about getting a course ready for play is an appropriate topic for a March newsletter, but also likely to be dull, and perhaps presumptuous for a non-professional to discuss. I will confine my remarks to circumstances I have encountered that irritate the golfer, yet need not happen if proper communication and understanding exist between the green superintendent and his membership.

As most of you are aware, my sympathies generally lie with the golfer concerning golf course matters. In Wisconsin, he or she has been unable to play the course for at least five months when spring finally arrives. We feel cooped up, and then we are released. We don't feel we should be confronted with unnecessary obstacles to a full enjoyment of our first rounds, and we don't feel sympathetic to excuses for poor conditions from the green superintendent. I am fully aware that your crews are understaffed in the spring, but it is the green superintendent's job to utilize his available personnel efficiently and effectively. First of all, the leaves, downed branches, and other debris left over from last fall and winter must be totally cleaned up; not just in the fairways and on the greens, but all over the course. This is top priority; too often I have played Wisconsin courses in *June* that still have large collections of leaves cluttering the course. This work should largely be taken care of prior to the course opening, and certainly completed within a few days thereafter. I include in this that bunkers should be cleaned and raked; too often these are neglected in early spring and remain on the bottom of the priority list. A top superintendent establishes his first priority getting the *whole* course in condition for play immediately.

Secondly, temporary tees and greens should be avoided at all costs, and if absolutely necessary (yes, even I admit this is rarely a circumstance), should be abandoned the moment one can. If a green is partially playable, use that part for cupping; there are not

many situations where significant damage will occur from the few players walking on the unplayable portion, or it can be marked as ground under repair. One can use the front portion of the tee, or the very back, and avoid a temporary tee. Spring growth will quickly erase the effects of overuse; one can be too cautious concerning use of greens and tees that are a little slow in regaining vitality from winter dormancy. If one must use temporary greens, put a cup in the ground and mow the area around it so one can properly putt. The practice of using a plate, or flagstick without a cup, for a temporary green to mark the hole can only be vigorously condemned. Thirdly, if construction projects started in the fall have not been completely done by an early winter, get them done quickly. The membership is not pleased with unfinished construction on the course any more than it tolerates persistent debris. What is left to be done might seem minor to the green superintendent. Be sure to completely finish old projects before starting new ones planned for spring; it is easier to do one thing at a time and the course will be much more tidy. If there is a good reason that old projects cannot be soon completed, it is a good idea that your Green Chairman communicate the situation to the membership so everyone understands it. The reason should be a valid one, and not the often heard lament that there isn't enough time with the manpower available.

Fourthly, not just in spring but all through the season, the ground crew must be made aware that the golfer has a fragile mind, and that he cannot concentrate on his game with noisy and interfering workers zipping around the course oblivious to the distractions they are creating. Annoyance and anger related to this situation ultimately are directed toward the green superintendent. Take time to organize work details that will be out of sight during periods of heavy play, and similarly perform the noisy procedures before play starts. Consider an earlier starting

time in the morning than you have been used to in order to get most tasks completed before the course is being used. Be sure to carefully instruct your crew to be cognizant of the players so that distractions by them can be avoided or minimized.

Lastly, make a resolution to communicate promptly this season with your Green Chairman, Board of Directors, and membership if any significant problems are developing. If the membership understands a problem it will be supportive and sympathetic to it; but if they are unaware of the reasons behind the situation or the extent of the difficulty, rumors will fly and the whole situation deteriorates. It is usually only inertia by either the green superintendent or the Green Chairman that allows a communications failure of this sort to develop, and this must be resisted. An informed golfing membership leads to much easier problem resolution. Another important facet of good communication is to make certain that you are completely aware of the golfing events planned at your club. It is embarrassing and disturbing to all to discover that green aeration is to be done just prior to a major club event, because of communication breakdown between the pro shop and the maintenance building. This kind of problem is totally avoidable, and should be.

By the above, I am not presuming to overlook problems of adverse winter conditions, or bad spring weather and its effect on ideal course preparation. Still, I think intelligent use of time, and defining priorities with the golfer in mind can ensure a smooth and pleasant course opening for all concerned.

Our best to the
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ENJOYING GOLF (WITHOUT CLUBS)

By Monroe S. Miller

Golf, truly, is a great game. It's enjoying some renewed enthusiasm and appeal all across America, and I am feeling a little smug. I could have told you so, several years ago. I guess my love of the game goes back to the summer of 1963, nearly twenty-five years ago.

That was when I was *playing* golf, as opposed to *enjoying* it, like I am these days. A friend of mine would meet me at Craig's Drug Store on Main Street on summer Sunday afternoons. After a cherry Coke or two, we'd throw his clubs in the back seat of my '51 Chevy 2-door hardtop coupe (two tone paint, fender skirts, glass-packed mufflers) and we would head for Lancaster's 9-hole golf course about a dozen miles away.

It didn't take long for me to figure out I wasn't made for playing this game. I never did profess great athletic ability — it was most often a case of more strength and endurance than skill. You know — strong farm kid playing a line position on both offense and defense in football. As long as I didn't have to throw or catch the football, I did quite well; I suffer a total dearth of eye and hand coordination. Can't get a basketball through the hoop nor hit a baseball out of the infield. But I could run; not fast, but nearly forever. My event in track was the 880-yard run — one-half of one mile. It called for endurance, strength and very little speed — just what I could offer. I often left the competition panting in the dust.

Unfortunately, golf requires some skill; skills I do not come by naturally and skills I've never had the time to learn and develop. But I still love it — as a spectator.

Part of my problem with playing golf relates to the fact that I hate doing things — anything — badly. If I cannot do something well, or reasonably and respectably so, I just simply don't do it. And I play golf badly; really, very badly. Funny bad. I'm unable to shake the attitude 'do it well or not at all'. So I don't play golf.

It isn't that some modicum of effort hasn't been put forth — I certainly have given it the old college try. I've taken lessons: 'Keep your eye on the ball! Chin steady! Left arm stiff! Flex your knees! Hit from the inside out! Follow through! Keep your head down!' And so on, and so on, to no avail. I still only manage to "disturb" the ball, usually for very short distances.

That effort to become a player has involved reading, something I *do* enjoy. My office library has books by Tommy Armour (2), Billy Casper, Arnie Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Ken Venturi, et. al., all advising on how to play golf. Not even these great players have helped my "game", if you have the courage to call it that.

Then there is that famous word of advice I have heard untold times — "practice"! 'Hit some balls!' 'Play a couple of holes every night!' 'Play golf at least twice a week.' 'Keep at it — if you don't use it (I assume that means newly acquired skills!) you'll lose it.' During those summers of youth, I was lucky to get that occasional Sunday afternoon free; otherwise my time was spent behind a hay baler, or a combine, cultivating corn or any one of the many other jobs farm kids spent time at in the summer. In my adult years, including those as a college student, my days have been occupied by golf courses and I seldom have been able to find the energy to return to the golf course to either practice or play.

That brings up a fundamental point, for me at least. I've never found it quite logical to go back to recreate where I've worked all day. In fact, it is very illogical; I can't think of any other professions where that is true. The 60 and 70 hour work weeks on my golf course leaves me with an emotional need to get away from it, not to come back in the evening for a little "fun". In fact, on those few occasions when I've been persuaded to return, my meager skills are diluted even more because of the distraction of working mentally instead of trying to play. I'm planning the next

day in my mind, reminding myself of things needing attention and generally have found myself miserable as I am tromping from tree to fairway and through the rough looking for my golf ball. I just cannot focus the needed attention on playing. Golf is of great value to millions because it brings relief from the cares of business. For me, it *is* business and I'd much rather be home reading a book.

As I look back on my life, I cannot believe some of the things I have accepted as truths. At one point, prior to starting at Blackhawk Country Club, I actually believed the theory that a Golf Course Superintendent needed to play golf to do his job well. Of course I realized very quickly that that was a maxim proposed either by Superintendents who learned to play golf really well in childhood or by players who never gave such silly babbling any depth of thought. To promote the idea that you have to play in order to provide the finest of playing conditions is the same as saying that Dr. Spock couldn't possibly know anything about babies because he never had one! The world of sports is full of examples of great coaches and managers who couldn't play the game that gave them fame. Neither would most of America's greatest sports writers have a shred of credibility in the pieces they write, analyzing games and giving comment, if they had to be accomplished players in all the sports they address. Obviously what is important for obstetricians, coaches, sports writers and Golf Course Superintendents is *understanding* what you are dealing with; that is critical. Execution is far less important, even insignificant.

The theory really falls apart when I consider it during one of my infrequent rounds of golf. When you play as badly as I do, it doesn't matter if my shot is coming from bare soil, a closely cropped ½" fairway or a 3" deep rough. The results are the same. It matters not if the pin is front or back, right or left. It is inconsequential if greens

are fast or slow. So where's the advantage of playing? In my case and many, many others like me, drawing a relationship between playing ability and competence as a golf course manager is perverse; that relationship just is not there.

They say a lot of what is required to play golf is psychological, and with that in mind I once tried, a long time ago, to overcome my dislike of doing things badly by following the advice I read in a short essay. The premise of that wonderful little composition was that the poorest of golf players had the best of it. It's the greatest game in the world to be bad at because, unlike other sports, the poor player gets the most strokes! With football, in my case, I never got to touch the football by throwing, catching or kicking it. But in golf, I get to do everything a good player does, only more often! If you are a bad player in softball, you might spend a game on the bench; a bad player in golf can play as often as he wishes. The theory sounds great and had a powerful appeal to me, the classic and chronic bad player. But the embarrassment of being bad remains to shake my senses back to reality very quickly.

So I've pretty much given up playing golf. Oh, each March I think to myself that maybe this year I'll take some lessons again and practice some and try to be a better player. But that is all a matter of dreaming; it never happens and I know it probably never will. But I do *enjoy* golf; I enjoy it tremendously. It is a spectator sport for me, not unlike football, baseball or basketball. And why shouldn't it be?

What is finer than, on a cold and dreary winter Sunday afternoon, to sit in one's study, fireplace flames flickering quietly, and watch a televised golf tournament? The afternoon passes quickly, the sight of green grass sends shivers of excitement and anticipation up your spine and the thrill of a close match at least equals that of any other sport or game shown for spectators.

I contend that you don't have to play to enjoy a close match between two players on the 11th fairway at Merion. Certainly non-players can be flushed with nervous excitement as their favorite player lines up a victory putt on the 18th at Augusta. For me, enjoying golf is visiting golf courses wherever I travel, and I have seen some of our country's greatest. Actually, I've gone to great lengths to see some courses; I recall being turned away from the Augusta National Golf Club by the guard at the gatehouse while I was in Military Police training at Fort Gordon, Georgia, just outside Augusta. On one rare Sunday afternoon off-duty while I was in the Army overseas, I armed myself to the teeth, got travel orders to Saigon, signed for a jeep at the motor-pool and took my life in my hands just to see if I could find a golf course I'd heard existed in that teeming, filthy war-torn city. Later that same year I took an eight-day R & R trip to Japan. First order of business? Find the golf course another GI had told me about that was in the shadow of Mt. Fuji. You really *do* have to enjoy golf to go through all of that.

A large part of the appeal of golf has to be the sheer aesthetic pleasure of

enjoying the beautiful surroundings of the golf course. You don't need clubs for that experience. Wasn't it even Bobby Jones who felt that, if golf was to be enjoyed, attractive scenery was the essential ingredient in the recipe for that pleasure? And if I am unable, physically, to execute the shots of a good player, I certainly do play holes and courses mentally, much like an architect must do during his design of a golf course. I like to fancy myself a great player, carefully weighing the risk and reward equation, planning ahead several shots and dropping forty-foot putts. What fun such daydreaming can be when one is walking his course, enjoying the exercise without even a single golf club in hand.

And the reward of being associated with this great game, even though I cannot play it well, is powerful — the game of men like Palmer and Nicklaus and Jones, Eisenhower and Hope and Old Tom Morris. The history and the mystery, the literature and the lore all exist in a state like no other sport.

Let there be no doubt that I wish I did play well. It would be so wonderful. But then, I wish I could dance, too; I might at times wish I was 6'2", 180 pounds with blond flowing hair. But I pine for none of these and cannot ever imagine being a happier man than I am today. So they cannot be very important, can they?

I agree with Doug Sanders, who once said: "To get the most out of golf you have to enjoy, not suffer through it." For me that means not playing. I doubt I'll even get my clubs out this year.

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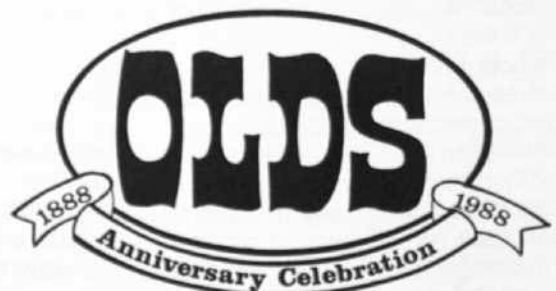
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FUNGICIDE MIXTURES — WHAT ABOUT THEM?

By Gayle L. Worf
Department of Plant Pathology
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Whether fungicides should be combined in the tank for turf disease control is a question I have been asked many times. The answer I usually give is "it depends upon the situation". That's something of an evasive answer, of course, but what are some of the reasons for putting chemicals together — some advantages, and why should I *not* consider it in some other instances?

First of all, the jury is not in on the question in many situations. It becomes a matter of arm chair judging and guessing, based on a little bit of information and a whole lot of speculation. Here are some thoughts about it, from my perspective.

1. The right combinations offer the chance of broadening the number of pathogens that can be controlled at any one time. An example of this is any of the Pythium-controlling chemicals such as Aliette, Banol or Subdue with almost any other fungicide. That's an easy one, and something you might consider when the weather patterns call for it. A better example might be when you've been using a sterol inhibitor, such as Bayleton or Rubigan, and you have a hint or concern that *Helminthosporium* might be ready to cause some damage.

2. The right combinations might increase the efficacy of both chemicals through some form of synergistic reaction. This is often hinted at, but I really doubt if it occurs very often. In the summer trials where we've looked at combinations, the results are always about the same as the *most effective* chemical member of the mixture. This is true both from the standpoint of effectiveness and period of activity. Adding two compounds has seldom given any indication that the benefits last longer than the better of the two compounds. This doesn't say it couldn't happen, and as a matter of fact we keep looking for that possibility. But most chemicals have their own chemical mode of action, and there's little reason in my opinion to expect

something unusual and beneficial to occur.

We have seen an exception to this with some regularity, and that is with snow mold control. It often happens that we get better results when any of several compounds are used together, either for gray or pink snow mold control. So I think combinations are clearly the way to go for winter disease protection. We often get better results using half-rates of two or more compounds than we get with full rates of either product alone.

3. Another reason often considered is the need to prevent buildup of resistant strains of pathogens. It's a shame we didn't know about this potential when the benzimidazoles first came on board. But this is a very difficult question to deal with. There's no sure-fire way to know what's happening. The chemical industry advocates this approach when using products that are particularly prone to this potential, such as the dicarboximides or metalaxyl. Metalaxyl has been used for several years now in potato fields as a formulated mixture with several contact fungicides for late blight control, and there's been no evidence of problems to date. And some Pennsylvania greenhouse work that looked at buildup of resistant strains of turf Pythium in alternating versus tank-mixed metalaxyl (Subdue) plus mancozeb (Fore) showed an advantage of the combinations over alternate applications to keep the resistant strain from increasing. Also suggested in some circles is to use the resistance-prone but premier fungicide *only* when the disease problem is most intense or most likely, and limiting the number of applications per season, thus leaving to other periods the fungicides that are less effective but also less subject to resistance problems.

If tank mixtures are to be used, and one wants to keep down the chance of resistance occurring, the combinations and the *rates* ought to be properly selected so that they are using different

modes of action *and* so their period of efficacy covers the same time period. Using Daconil or Dyrene with lower rates of a benzimidazole or sterol inhibitor is an example. If one uses the full rate of the systemic and allows 21-30 days for dollar spot control, there will be a window of 10-20 days when the contact fungicide offers no help at all, the buildup of a resistant strain theoretically could emerge.

Alternating fungicides is certainly a simpler approach, in that one knows what to expect from each compound, including the anticipated activity period. It is likely to be the more economical approach, and in my assumptions at least, will require less total fungicide, and thus less potential insult to the environment. But you may want to look at the results we had over the past several seasons alternating between Daconil and Bayleton for *Poa* decline control. The failure of the alternating applications to be as effective as either product used alone throughout the season leaves us scratching our heads for an explanation.

I think we have a lot more to learn about using our fungicides most effectively. In the meantime we are extremely fortunate to have an arsenal of chemical weapons that really are quite remarkable in their capacity to give us good quality turf while we ponder what is the ideal way to use them most effectively!

The 1988 Turfgrass Conferences, sponsored by the UW Extension and the University of Wisconsin College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, are fast approaching. The meeting schedule (and location) follows:

Milwaukee — Monday, March 7, Extension Office on Watertown Plank Road.

Madison — Tuesday, March 8, Holiday Inn, SE

Appleton — Wednesday, March 9, Columbus Club

Eau Claire — Thursday, March 10, Holiday Inn

All programs begin with 9:00 a.m. registration and conclude at 4:00 p.m.

For more information, contact Dr. Robert C. Newman, Department of Horticulture, UW-Madison.



TOURISM BUREAU IS HERE TO HELP STATE GOLF, AND WE NEED IT

By Rob Schultz

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Every golf course in the state should have such a group backing it. Kohler's public affairs people have an 800 number set up for advance registration, they have weekend get-away packages—albeit expensive—to lure golfers from the urban areas of Chicago and Milwaukee, and they are friendly. Call it marketing extraordinaire.

Forget the expense, forget the drive. After talking to these people, you can't wait to play Pete Dye's new golf course.

Even though Blackwolf Run hasn't fully matured, it will be extremely difficult and outrageously expensive (\$51 for 18 holes, \$11 more for half a cart) for conservative Wisconsin tastes, it will draw droves of people this summer because it's new. But it also will draw because of its marketing program.

Hopefully the rest of the state's golf courses will watch this scenario closely and pick up some needed tips. Maybe then everyone connected with golf courses and their associations in this state will get out of the dark ages and join the big-time, too.

Wisconsin used to be the home of the Progressive Party. But this state has been regressive politically, socially and economically for years. Need examples? Just ask Chrysler workers in Kenosha what their politicians were doing when Lee Iacocca snowed them into thinking they'd build Omnis into the Horizon. Just ask your neighbor, as he belches up a beer while chewing on some sausage, what he thinks about the state's ranking as the second-most obese state in the nation. And just ask yourself—especially if you're a Dink (double income, no kids)—what the state has done for you next year when you pay more state taxes.

The same situation plagues golf in this state. Few know how many wonderful courses we have. And there could be, and should be, more of them.

Talk golf to most golf course architects and they'll tell you Wisconsin's environment is perfect for building golf courses. We have just about anything a course needs, except the know-how to produce, manage and market it on a large scale.

As far as golf is concerned, a glimmer of hope rests with the Kohlers, Lake Arrowheads, Lawsonias and other golf courses that seem to be on the ball. It also rests with the state division of tourism and anybody who has an idea and is connected with a state golf course association.

This month's *Sports Page* phone call was dialed in the direction of Winfield McDonald, the state division of tourism's advertising manager.

For the first time in its history, the tourism bureau is trying to pump up added interest in golf in Wisconsin. Taking a page from the Michigan tourism bureau's phenomenal success, the Wisconsin bureau connected with *Par Excellence Magazine* and Marshfield's Chip Acker of the state's Golf Course Association to drum up business.

"I think there is a great future in it," said McDonald. "To be quite truthful, these are our initial stages. We've had them in books before, but as far as getting into the promotional and advertising part and getting something to hand out, we haven't done it before. This is our first step."

The tourism bureau can promote golf now that its budget has increased dramatically. Two years ago, the bureau had a \$1.25 million budget for promotion and advertising. Now it's \$5 million.

"Before, all we had to do was take a shotgun, generic approach (for everything). Now we're starting to focus in on specific activities, also specific target markets and our customers," McDonald said.

But that doesn't mean the tourism bureau has money to burn and is looking for new business. That's why it's

important for all the golf courses and its state associations to unify and present a marketing and advertising plan for the tourism bureau.

"It's important to start a relationship and keep it going," McDonald said. "We're pulled about 8,000 different directions."

"Groups are the key. If we can do it on a group basis it would make it a lot easier for us instead of just one golf course. That would be the best. Then you've got somewhat of a responsibility to help them. Otherwise it's piecemeal and you can't help them all."

McDonald said golf courses should get together and try to present a package deal that will lure golfers from all over the state and its surrounding areas. Basically, his advice is exactly what the folks at Kohler are doing with Blackwolf Run. At Kohler, however, the package deal is all within the same company. It has a hotel and a total recreational package on its grounds. But that doesn't mean other courses without such amenities can't create a package just as attractive.

"It's real critical to package," McDonald said. "If they can get together with local hotels, motels, restaurants, anything, that would be good. Anytime you can take as many of the unknowns and the hassles out of your customers' decision to come as well as the experience once they are there, you're all going to be a lot better off."

"If I was in a golf course association, I'd think about having an 800 number to call, too, and have one clearing house for reservations."

There is no reason why the state's golf courses shouldn't grow in popularity. But it all boils down to the approach that you have to spend a little money now to make more of it later.

Think of it. Michigan's golf courses have been successful by sending promotions to its one main drawing card: the Detroit area. They also promote nationally, but the Motor City is where they get the most golfers.

Wisconsin has a much larger drawing area. Golfers from Chicago, Milwaukee, Iowa, Minnesota and Indiana will make the drive if they think it's worthwhile. All golfers need is someone to tell them it is worthwhile. The state tourism bureau is waiting for you to call.