



Winter's Work

By Roger Bell



January is one of my favorite months. The snow is fresh and white, and air is clean and crisp, and the snowmobile trails are packed and freshly groomed. I'm into a new fiscal year with a newly-approved budget. The worries of last summer's drought are well behind me and I feel fully confident that the grass out on the course under the fluffy white layer will emerge healthy and green in two or three months.

However, winter, contrary to what some club officials may think, is not a season for a superintendent to sit back and coast. Now is when we have the time and energy to give back to the profession that we work at so hard. Of course, we all want to attain our "per-

sonal best" at our jobs and that certainly is a part of professionalism. Beyond that, though, we can and should work together as a unit to provide a larger and more effective voice for golf course superintendents everywhere. Here's what you can do starting this winter:

Be **involved** with the WGCSA — after all, that is the only organization in our state devoted exclusively to our profession.

Support the O.J. NOER CENTER with dedication, hard work and, most importantly, your checkbook. To date, less than 10 percent of WGCSA members or their employers have donated to this worthy cause. To reach our goal

and make the center a reality, we need everyone's contribution.

Attend the upcoming educational sessions offered with you in mind: the WTA Winter Conference, the GCSAA 60th International Conference and Show in Anaheim, and the many other regional turfgrass shows and conferences. These programs offer the best way to stay current on the latest research and technology.

Winter may be a quiet season on the golf course in Wisconsin — but there is plenty for the golf course superintendent to do. Be involved, support and attend — after all, a superintendent's job is a year-round one.

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Fair Treatment

By Monroe S. Miller

One of the things most of us involved in managing golf courses around the country will remember about 1988 is that it was the year that Daconil 2787 was found innocent of any involvement in the death of a golfer in Virginia. We are probably among the few Americans who are aware of the outcome of the case. Yet **everyone** knew of the indictment.

And why shouldn't everyone who has a television or reads the news magazines know about the charges made against this key material for plant protection in turf disease control programs. You couldn't help it unless you spent the entire year overseas or in a cave. Dan Rather and the CBS News made a **big** deal of it and practically found Diamond Shamrock (manufacturer of Daconil 2787 at the time) guilty of murder.

The gossip journal *People* magazine did a three page piece under their **controversy** department. The title? How does "A Golfer's Mysterious Death Suggest That Lawn Care May Be Hazardous To Your Health" grab you? It sort of suggests that for the pesticide industry it is guilty until proven innocent. There were similar

stories in other magazines and on other news programs, all reported with about equal neutrality.

Any open-minded person, even one with no knowledge of or experience with pesticides could tell that these stories and reports were terribly biased against 2787. No lab reports, no blood tests, no data. That's usually the case in sensational stories like these. You know the kind of story the *People* one was when you see the quotes by Sam Epstein, a pseudo-expert on pesticides who probably thinks pure spring water is not good for your health. To me, he's a real environmental extremist who has spouted off so many times with so little evidence that he's lost the little credibility he once may have had.

As we all know, the case went to trial. On May 9th of last year, almost five years after the incident, Daconil was cleared of any complications in the unfortunate death of the golfer. The judge dismissed the \$16 million lawsuit.

After all the sensational coverage prior to the trial, the decision wasn't to be found anywhere except in our trade journals. Dan Rather said nothing of the innocent verdict. Nor did *People* magazine. Nor did anyone else in the

popular literature. I had to get the news myself first from the July 1988 issue of *Landscape Management*.

The conduct of the news media in this country shouldn't surprise us. They love bad news, sensational news and spectacular stories. It's called the rating game and circulation game, I guess. Although we may be frustrated by it, that's the way it is. For us to get fair treatment we are going to have to demand it.

The news show 20/20's John Stossel, who admits to being more conservative than most news people, says we have a situation where the general conditions are simply and typically stacked against any real positive stories.

"That's what you are fighting in this business," Stossel says. "And if you've got a safe product that improves yields a little bit, you're going to have to be very articulate in enforcing your right to keep using it in the future. As long as you stand up and say the truth, I think it will work out. You need to stand up and speak up for what you believe in."

John's right. Fair treatment will have to be earned and demanded.

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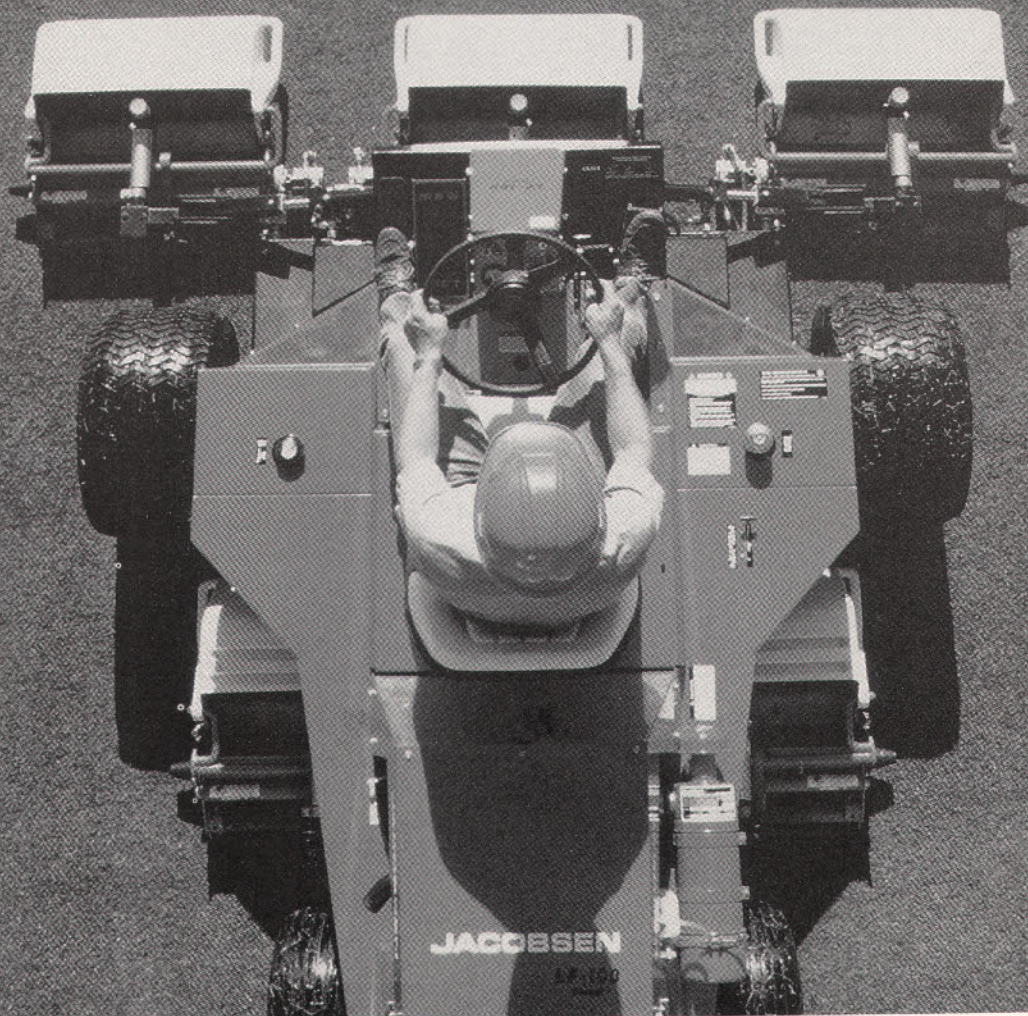
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sion would require expanded reporting to include pertinent information identifying the purchaser and brand name and the EPA registration number for the pesticide.

4. Prevent harvesting crops at improper times. Cases have been reported where agricultural commodities have been harvested before a preharvest interval has expired following application of a pesticide. The rule proposal places the responsibility to adhere to the preharvest interval on the grower.

5. Require loading pads for mixing/loading sites. DATCP and DNR investigations have documented that improper handling of non-bulk as well as bulk pesticides has resulted in ground-water contamination across the state. The requirement mandates that a loading pad or spill containment be constructed at any site where a threshold quantity of pesticide is mixed annually. This provision would apply to any mixing/loading site (private or commercial) that exceeds the threshold amount.

6. Establish a set of rules governing chemigation systems. Chemigation systems incorporate the application of pesticides in an irrigation system. Unless certain protective devices are used, there is a very good chance of contamination from cross connection and contamination of the water supply with chemicals. The rules allow pesticides to be introduced in an irrigation system but require the use of back-flow preventers in the system, of which there are several types.

7. Clarify that veterinarians are not required to be certified or licensed. Review of EPA's policy concerning certification of veterinarians indicates that they are considered to be exempt from individual applicator certification requirements. Therefore, the department proposes to clarify that individual commercial applicator pesticide certification and license requirements do not pertain to licensed veterinarians applying pesticides during the normal course of their practice.

It's fairly clear that we'll primarily be concerned with notice and posting provisions, re-entry periods, and mixing/loading site requirements. The licensing and certification requirements should already be part of everyone's management program. Our own Red Roskopf and the WTA's Terry Kurth are involved in advisory capacities to the DATCP. Russ, as always, will play a key role.

The Agricultural Resource Management Division of the DATCP has a tentative timetable of the changes and implementation of AG 29 revisions. The ARM staff reviewed proposals and analyses in October and November. These were then forwarded to the Pesticide Advisory Council. Below is what the calendar of events for this January and forward looks like:

January 1989

— ARM Division staff, Legal staff and Ad Hoc Committee review and modify rule draft.

February 1989 and March 1989

— Pesticide Advisory Council reviews rule draft prepared by staff and the Ad Hoc Committee

— Secretary's office reviews comments from Ad Hoc Committee and the Pesticide Advisory Council.

— Approved draft is provided to Board Subcommittee and to the full Policy Board Members

— Board Subcommittee reviews draft.

April 1989

— Request Policy Board's approval at April board meeting to take the rule to public hearing.

— Preliminary suggested locations (note these locations may change

slightly depending on the key issues that are identified in the hearing draft):

Milwaukee
Appleton
Eau Claire
Wausau
Madison

La Crosse or Prairie du Chien

— Mail draft to Legislative Council for review the day after Board gives approval for public hearing. Legislative Council has 20 working days to review and comment.

May and June 1989

— Submit to Revisor of Statutes for Public Hearing Notice (10 days notice required).

— May 25, 1989 end of period for Legislative Council and revisor and administrative register.

June Public Hearings:

Location	Days/Dates
Milwaukee area . . .	Tuesday, June 13
Appleton area . . .	Wednesday, June 14
Wausau	Thursday, June 15
Eau Claire	Tuesday, June 20
La Crosse	Wednesday, June 21
Madison area . . .	Thursday, June 22

Scheduled Hearing Times: We will schedule hearings during the morning, afternoon and evening at all locations, if needed, in order to give all interested parties an opportunity to speak.

June 26 thru July 1989

— A.R.M. and Legal staff review and redraft if necessary and prepare hearing summary

— Review with:

1. Pesticide Advisory Council
2. Policy Board Subcommittee
3. Secretary and Deputy

August 1989

— Department Policy Board for final approval

— Pesticide Review Board approval

September 1989

— Early September submit rule in final form to appropriate Legislative Committee (Committee has 30 calendar days to review and comment.)

October 1989


— Submit rule to Revisor for publishing.

November or December 1989

— AG 29 revision published

January 1990

— January 1, 1990 rule becomes effective.



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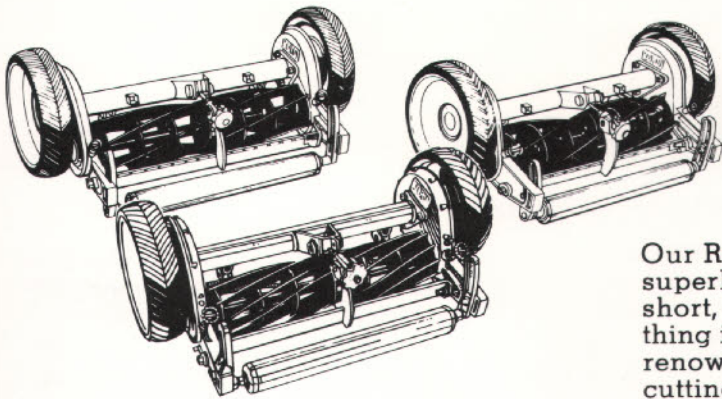
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On Writing Columns

By Monroe S. Miller

"Writing a column," said the late great Red Smith, "is like opening a vein and letting the words bleed out, drip by drip." It has been five years since I started my work with the *GRASS ROOTS* and one of the things I've enjoyed most has been writing columns, whether they were a President's Message, a "Jottings" piece or an editorial. Honestly, I have not found it to be as difficult as Mr. Smith says it should be. But, of course and quite obviously, I don't write anywhere nearly as well as Mr. Smith.

Nor as often. I figure I've averaged a couple of columns in each issue of the *GRASS ROOTS* for five years. I'm not counting news stories — they are entirely different and much easier to write than columns are. Arithmetic tells me that's around 60 columns. Five dozen. Once a month, about, for those five years. Red Smith, for the ten years he worked for the *Philadelphia Record*, wrote a daily column for that paper. That's right — seven columns a week. One a day. Three hundred and sixty-five a year. It's more than I can comprehend — thirty-six hundred columns in Philly!

Smith moved from the *Record* to New York, writing at different times for the *New York Herald Tribune* and the *New York Times*. The move reduced his writing load from seven columns a week to a mere four. But Smith never was convinced that writing less was writing better. He worked, at one time, for publisher John S. Knight and was doing six columns each week for him.

"Nobody can write six good columns a week," Knight told him. "Why don't you write three? Want me to fix it up?"

"Look, Mr. Knight," Smith said, "Suppose I wrote three stinkers. I wouldn't have the rest of the week to recover."

Red Smith was a sportswriter and columnist by profession, the best since Ring Lardner, some say. He fed his family by putting words on paper. I certainly don't and never pretend to have enough writing ability to dot the i's or cross the t's for someone like Smith.

But this business of writing intrigues me, like any hobby would interest other people.

And I am particularly interested in Red Smith. He was a fantastic wordsmith, a great humorist and a brilliant phrase-maker. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1976 and had a reputation as a world famous storyteller. The wealth of his writing includes many, many pieces about golf. His writing has given pleasure to millions. But I'm especially fond of the man because he was a Wisconsin boy. He was born in Green Bay.

His father was the third generation in the family's wholesale produce and retail grocery business. Red has written of a happy childhood in Wisconsin in which his chief interests were reading books and following (and playing) sports. He graduated from Notre Dame and got his first journalism job at the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. The rest is sports-writing history. Red never lost his interest in Wisconsin, however. His summer vacations included annual trips to Door County. I learned a long time ago that even an amateur writer, to do a half decent job, has to be widely read, and many of my favorite stories were written by our own Red Smith.

I'd most certainly starve to death if I had to make a living by writing. Maybe that's why I'm intrigued by the Russell Bakers, Mike Roykos, George Wills and Syd Harris' of the world. It's probably why I have so much respect for the work of journalists like Rob Schultz. But really, I've got the best of it — I don't **have** to write columns or news reports, so I can enjoy it! And when one

is his own editor, well, it just doesn't get any better. The final joy for me is the incredibly rich subject matter given by golf courses — the people, the sport, the seasons, the work. I think it's as varied as the columns I've written in the last five years.

John Ruskin, an author of both serious books and children's stories, said this about writing: "The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something and tell what it saw in a **plain** way." Keep it plain — that's good advice I try my best to follow.

Many people have commented on the time factor — "Don't you spend an awful lot of time writing for the *GRASS ROOTS*?" The time consuming part of an association or professional magazine is the editing. I spend around a hundred hours on each issue of our journal. That makes the writing part of it quite easy. And it is not the writing that takes all the time, anyway. Frankly, putting the words for a given column on paper, the actual writing of it, may only take an hour or two. The thought process, however, often is several days long. Sometimes I may be mulling a topic over in my mind for months before I sit down at my manual typewriter and pound out the column.

In fact, thinking about a column or story through before writing anything down is fundamental to making the writing process an easy one. That part can never be hurried. I've read that the same is true for musical compositions and theoretical formulas. Artists have their creative work completed in their

Continued on page 9

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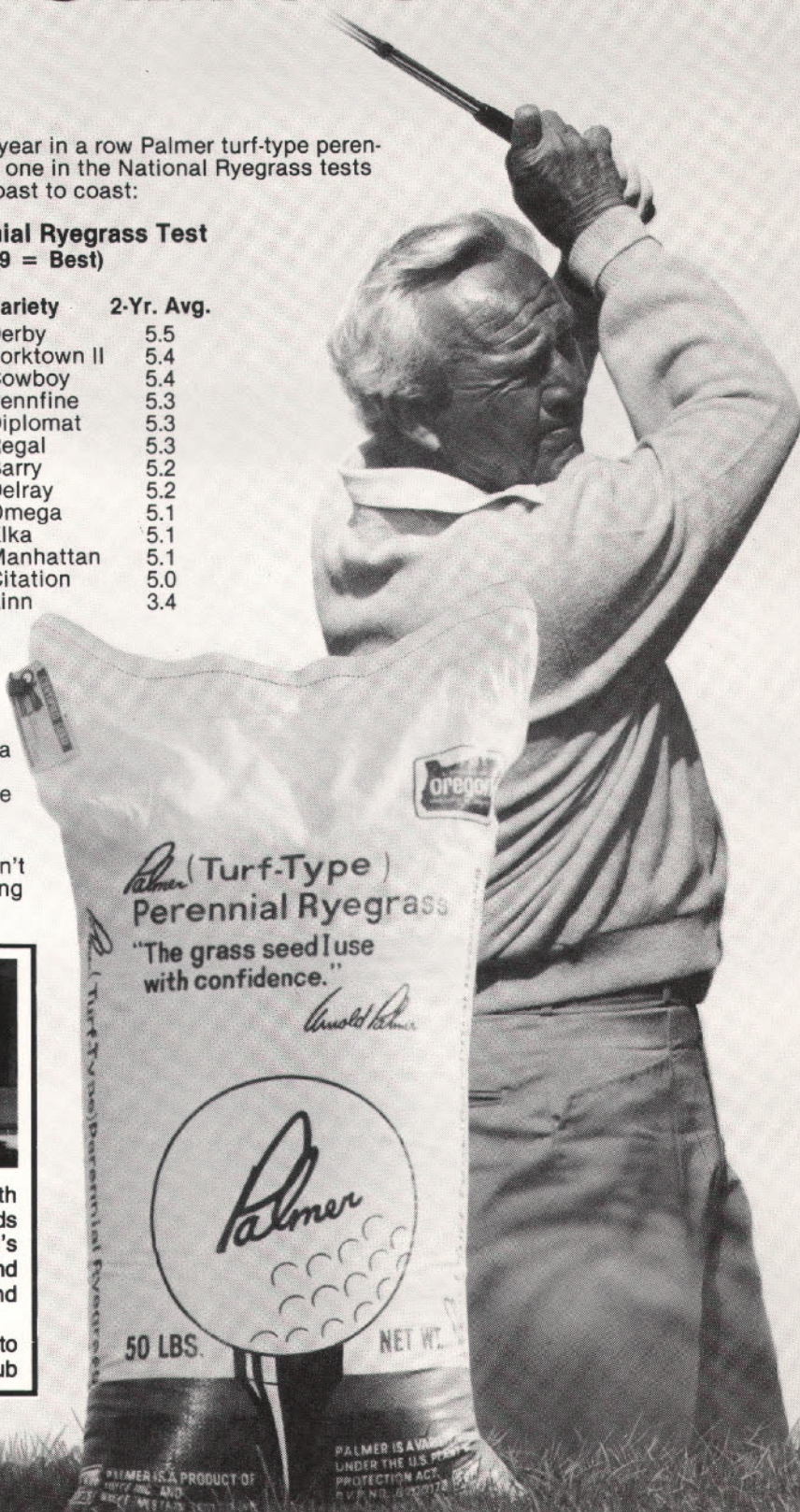
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Continued from page 7

mind before they put paint on a canvas. The mathematical genius, Karl Friedrich Gauss, commented once, "I have been sure of my results for some time; what I don't know is how I shall arrive at them." It is written that the reason Mozart composed music so rapidly was because he was merely "transcribing" the composition from his mind. A final example of my personal discovery comes from President Lincoln. It is believed that he wrote the Gettysburg Address on the back of an old envelope on the train ride from

Washington to Gettysburg. If that story is true, and I suspect it is, you can pretty much assume he had been thinking those thoughts and shaping that composition for a long time.

I have no illusions about the paragraphs I assemble for each issue of the *GRASS ROOTS*. I enjoy putting them together and hope that maybe someone can relate to my thoughts, experiences and emotions, and maybe even enjoy them.

Seldom, if ever, does a writer leave a measurable imprint on our society while alive. That's true for even our

best writers, so you can guess where that leaves rank amateurs like me. Fictional TV character Felix Unger — even you younger WGCSA members surely have seen reruns of "The Odd Couple" — had his proudest poetry used to decorate a dog's tombstone. Red Smith may have put it best for the "ink stained wretches" by admitting that even our best work shortly will be a "shroud for some haddock."

Or maybe it will find a comfortable resting spot on the tank behind the commode in some golf course shop! I couldn't ask for more.

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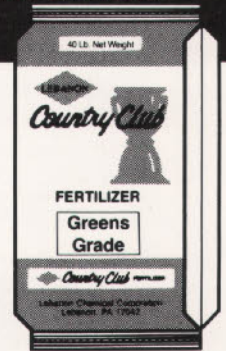


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