

Spreading the Breeze

By Rod Johnson



Off we fly into another wild and wooly season. Grass to mow, weeds to spray, irrigation repairs, etc., etc., etc. and nobody to do it. Most of us still operate with a largely seasonal crew. Unfortunately the seasonal crew arrives about six weeks into the season.

An exciting time for every Superintendent is that first walk around the course. This year's fast melt down provided just about everyone with that opportunity on Monday, March 27. It certainly was amazing how fast 20 inches of snow disappeared. What wasn't amazing was how fast the 70 degree weather disappeared.

The anticipation and excitement of the first walk around usually lasts for about the first 100 yards from the maintenance shop. By then you've spotted the first of many displeasures to be found. About halfway around you start to wonder why you didn't seriously look into the job openings that were available this past winter. This is also the point when you wonder if your legs will be capable of returning you to Point A. An hour or so later you return to your office after zig-zagging across a hundred acres, having mentally made a job list that will keep everyone busy until early September and having developed a Ten Year Master Plan. You collapse at your desk and call your Green Committee Chairman to tell him how great everything looks and to assure him the course will be open by the coming weekend.

On the line of spring displeasures, an early April spot check with several Superintendents found less than complete optimism. The further north you get from the M and M's the more problems reported. At this writing no one is reporting wholesale losses, but a lot of isolated dead spots. True to form the most damage seems to be on *Poa annua* fairways in poorly drained soils and/or in areas where water and ice pocketing is common. The frustration of this damage is that we knew it was coming, but there wasn't a whole lot we could do about it.

The happy side of spring is the return of our regular monthly meetings and the chance to supplement our incomes with wagers of skillability. Rumor has it that the "Hortonville High Flash" has been putting in his living room since Palm Springs.

By your reading of this writing we will have completed our first golf event. On April 17th a "Potluck Scramble" was scheduled for Ives Grove. Thanks to **Mark Hjortness** for hosting this early season event.

We will also be looking in anticipation to our May gathering in Hartford. It's always a pleasure to visit old friends like **Joe Kuta** and **Dewey Dupont** (not to be confused with the Delaware Duponts). May brings out mid-season forms and a chance to air out a few boomers.

Our June meeting will find us viewing the "President's Turf". **Roger "Bush" Bell** will be hosting our meeting on the 19th at North Shore Golf Club just outside of Menasha. We hope that some of the northerners who can't make a lot of meetings because of travel time join us for the day. In any case, grab your sand blasters and head for North Shore.

Before the season rolls along too far and before schedules get too hectic, be sure to take advantage of the "Devinger Deal". During the past winter months when talk is cheap and hockey games are long, a deal was struck with **Ed Devinger**, Turf Division Manager at Reinders. The deal made will enhance the treasury of the O.J. NOER CENTER for TURFGRASS RESEARCH and will keep Wausau Tent and Awning in business for another year not to mention several Georgia cotton farmers. For every X-XL golf shirt sent or delivered to "Fast Eddie" he will make a \$25 donation to the O.J. NOER CENTER. The only rules set to date are that there is a limit of one per club and the X-XL golf shirt must have your club's logo on it. So make a trip to your pro shop, pick out a dandy, get your 50 off, and put it on Devinger.

Congratulations to **Mike and Mary Drugan** of Drugans Castle Mound Golf Club in Holman on the birth of a baby boy, Keegan. The WGCSA family continues to grow with **Jim Spindler** soon to become a papa, and to no one's surprise **Marc and Laurie Davison** are pregnant again. Marc keeps finding time to make babies in between making golf holes.

The WGCSA will be losing one of its most eligible bachelors this fall when **Mike Semler** ties the knot on October 21. Mike, who is Superintendent at Cherokee in Madison and a part-time radio personality, has been secretly in love for quite some time, but was lacking the courage for a trip to the altar.

This issue's swinging door includes several job changes, re-assignments and new faces. Weeks of speculation ended when **Vince Monahan** from Fairlawn Country Club in Akron, Ohio was named Superintendent at Milwaukee Country Club. Welcome to Wisconsin.

Steve "The Rookie" Allen was promoted from Assistant to Superintendent at Villa du Parc in Mequon. A promotion well deserved — congratulations, Steve. Better learn to lift your leg high!

Tim Honeyager is the new Assistant Superintendent to **Mike Kositzke** at Merrill Hills.

On the sales end, **Gary Sorenson** is the new Lesco Man peddling his wares in the Green and White Truck. **Ed Witkowski**, formerly Eddy Lesco, is fulfilling a long time dream and has formed his own company called Pendelton Turf Supply. As of this writing Pendelton included duties with J.W. Turf's John Deere.

In closing, don't forget to mark your calendars for this year's Dinner Dance to be held at Barefoot Bay in Elkhart Lake on October 20 and 21. More info to follow.

P.S. Regarding last issue and the criticism: "Mea culpa."