



# Hi Mom!

By Rod Johnson



Don't you just hate it? It's Bowl Time — Rose Bowl — Cotton Bowl — Orange Bowl — Super Bowl — Pro Bowl. The games are fun to watch and believe me I watch my share. It's the extracurricular that gets to me. Every time a television camera is aimed at the sideline for a close-up of one of the players, the 275-pound animal turns as if on cue and with all of the intelligence he can muster, waves, signals being #1, and says, "Hi Mom!"

So here I am, the proud new President of this organization. The duty at hand is clear; write your first President's Message. Put your best effort forward. With your message, let the membership know that you are on the right track and that their trust has been well given. All these thoughts, and yet one keeps coming forward — "Hi Mom!"

Maybe the sideline jocks are more intelligent than I had thought. The phrase has worked pretty well through the years. A slam of the kitchen door and a loud, "Hi Mom! I'm home!" always got attention when I was in grade school. "Hi Mom", whispered quietly so as to not wake Dad, calmed some nerves when a high school kid missed curfew by a couple of hours. It didn't lessen any punishments, but did serve to calm my worried mother's worst fears. "Hi Mom!" even works long distance today, just like in the commercials.

I guess "Hi Mom!" doesn't always mean just "Hello Mother!". The center stage athlete and the new President is also saying, "Hi Dad!, Hi Wife!, Hi Kids!, Hi Family!, and Hi Everybody Out There Who I Care About And Who Cares About Me!" It can also mean that something very important to me is happening, and I want to share it with you.

I want to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as President of this organization. Being President of our organization is important to me, and I do not take the trust that has been given to me lightly. I have long had the de-

sire to see our organization, and moreover, our profession succeed. Serving as a Director for the past several years, and now as President, has given me the opportunity to put that desire to work.

The opportunity to serve as President of this organization is important to me; just as I am sure it was to the twenty-nine Superintendents before me. It is appropriate that I thank Roger Bell for his untiring efforts over the last two years. I suspect that any eager newcomer knows little of the drudgery that goes with the territory. During his term, Roger never missed a beat or, for that matter, a meeting. His perfect attendance record is most admirable when you consider that many meetings

necessitated long drives for meals that could have easily been eaten at home. Being Vice-President under Roger was easy; just do like Dan Quayle — show up and play golf. Contrary to his own humble opinion, we do owe Roger a great deal. I for one owe him twelve nickels for the President's Messages that I have read in the past two years.

Roger wrote of a hard-working Board of Directors. I agree, and look forward to working with many of the same people, in addition to seeing new faces and hearing new ideas. It is my intention to involve as many new people as possible. People get involved in WGCSA because they share the enthusiasm and see the importance of this organization.

The new year, and for that matter the new decade, promises numerous challenges to our profession. Membership in this organization will continue to help Superintendents meet those challenges. With a solid Board of Directors, and an outstanding membership, how can the new guy go wrong?

So what the heck, everyone all together now — "Hi Mom!"



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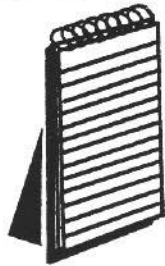
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# ANOTHER NEW YEAR

By Monroe S. Miller

Could it be that we're going to have a long, snowy winter? Some meteorologists who work in the state believe it is a real possibility, especially for south-eastern Wisconsin.

That part of our state had its sixth snowiest November since records have been kept — 104 years. Milwaukee (Mitchell Airport) had a foot for the month, compared to that elusive "normal" year total of 3 inches for November.

The 90 day outlook released around December 1 showed the state on the edge of an area where unusually heavy precipitation is expected.

Our town could use a lot of snow. It would help lower the formidable 1989 precipitation deficit of over 7 inches. The forecasters say if the weather patterns continue, we should exceed the 40.6 inches of snow we've received by the end of a normal winter. Frankly, many of us aren't so greedy that we'd be happy with that normal amount. We've reason to doubt the optimism — we were below average snowfall through November and December.

Have you been looking for the Wisconsin connections on the educational program at the upcoming 1990 GCSAA Conference and Show in Orlando? There are some — I've counted five. Here are the ones I found:

1. Dr. Lois Berg Stack will give a lecture on Friday, February 23 at 8:30 a.m. entitled "Annual Flower Beds: Designs That Work." Anyone who reads *The Grass Roots* knows Dr. Stack — she's on the faculty at the University of Maine in Orono. A Wisconsin native, Lois received her B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Dept. of Horticulture.

2. Dr. Milt Engelke is instructing one of the two-day seminars on Wednesday and Thursday (February 21 & 22). It's called "Turfgrasses: Qualities, Uses and Sources." Additionally, he is giving a lecture on the 23rd at 10:40 a.m. entitled "Snake Oils or Legitimate Products."

Milt is a native of southwestern Wisconsin (God's Country) and received a B.S. degree from Platteville. He came to the UW-Madison and earned M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the Department of Agronomy. He is currently an Associate Professor of Turfgrass Breeding and Genetics at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in Dallas.

3. Bob Lohmann, along with Brian Silva, will teach the "Golf Course Restoration, Renovation and Construction Projects" seminar on February 21 & 22. Bob, a golf course architect from suburban Chicago, is a University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Landscape Architecture graduate.

4. If we consider the USGA Green Section Conference, we can add two more Wisconsin connections. Bull's Eye Country Club golf course superintendent Mark Kienert will address this timely topic: "Can We Cope with Mother Nature and Government Regulation?"

5. The USGA Green Section meeting will also feature our own Jim Latham. He's going to help other

Green Section staff agronomists in offering "Turf Tips" for 1990. The Green Section Conference meets on Monday, February 26.

The advance of science has found yet another use for trees — they are helpful in measuring air pollution. Scientists from the University of Stockholm have found that some compounds (e.g., PCBs) can be measured in the waxy sheaths around pine needles. That discovery makes it easy to compare needles from different regions and determine how widespread pollution is.

Some insecticides can also be measured, too. The application of that to golf courses could be useful in determining whether or not applications to turf are staying there.

Ever wondered whether or not other countries have to deal with as many opponents to issues in the environmental arena as we do? It's a thought that has occurred to me, and that is why I found this report from Australia so interesting.

An Australian court of law heard a case where local opponents to spraying of 2,4-D had brought suit to stop use of the product to control noxious weeds along Byrriil Creek in New South Wales. The court upheld the safety of 2,4-D. While the legal issues were narrowly defined, the case was apparently used by some in an attempt to revive old public controversies and as a forum for generating an informal public referendum on Australian pesticide use in general. Starting to sound familiar?

According to the decision of the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales, "the weight of prevailing scientific opinion worldwide and in Australia is in favor of the continuing use of 2,4-D as a pesticide subject to continuing scientific review and scru-

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(Continued from page 3)

tiny." The decision, which was handed down on October 20 and described by the Australian press as "a major precedent", also noted "the insignificant potential risk from exposure to 2,4-D by occupational workers, bystanders or the environment."

At issue in the trial was whether use of 2,4-D for noxious weed control at Byrrell Creek, located southwest of a town called Murwillumbah, required an environmental assessment under Australian law. The judge dismissed the suit on the grounds that the law required no such assessment and ruled that the Far North Coast County Council authorizing the spraying was simply fulfilling statutory requirements to eliminate noxious weeds. Given the controversy that had attended the proceedings, however, the judge also chose to comment on other issues brought before the court.

Specifically citing a 1984 World Health Organization review, the judge rejected claims made during the proceedings that 2,4-D posed a significant risk to health and the environment. "Rather," he concluded, "I accept the prevailing review of the relevant regulatory authorities (worldwide and in Australia) that from the data available at the present it can be concluded that there is no health risk for the general population from the recommended use of 2,4-D. When appropriate safety measures are taken, there is also no health risk for workers."

The judge further noted that "2,4-D is a proven successful herbicide which has been used successfully all around Australia, and overseas, for many years. It is a cheap and readily available herbicide and is very selective in its operation, i.e., it will not kill other nearby plants.

Many studies have been done over many years and it has been cleared of any relevantly adverse effects by the World Health Organization (1984 and 1987), the Evatt Royal Commission on the Use and Effects of Chemical Agents and Australian Personnel in Vietnam (July 1985), the Canadian Center for Toxicology, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It is under review at high scientific levels. At this time scientific doubts have been resolved in favor of its continued use subject to controls and subject to ongoing reviews."

In answer to claims that 2,4-D causes cancer, the judge cited the response of an advisor in toxicology in the Commonwealth Department of Health, that "there is a considerable body of information on 2,4-D which has been reviewed at the national and international level. The overwhelming conclusion is that when used in accordance with recommended practices the phenoxy herbicides present no undue health effects and did not give rise to these effects in man."

A legal decision is, of course, not a finding of scientific fact, and the opponents of spraying in Australia have called for a government inquiry and say they may appeal. But the decision is heartening in that once again the weight of the evidence has been considered on this product, this time in a highly publicized proceeding, and the mass of scientific work conducted thus far has been recognized for what it is — good cause to believe in the safety of 2,4-D.

Somebody should send a copy of the decision to one T. Dawson of the Wisconsin Public Intervenor's Office. On second thought, I'll bet Russ Weisensel already has.

The following couple of paragraphs should have the title CAUTION: FOOD MAY BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH. That is especially scary to read right after the holiday when most of us have done plenty of (over)eating. According to the American Council on Health and Science, that Thanksgiving and Christmas turkey you enjoyed contains mutagens that can cause mutations in the genetic material in your cells. Bread stuffing contains carcinogens like benzopyrene, ethyl carbamate and safrole. Coffee contains benzopyrene, too, along with chlorogenic acid, caffeine, hydrogen peroxide, methylglyoxal and tannins. Those compounds all cause cancer.

Lima beans contain cyanide. How much more poisonous can you get?

The ACHS releases these facts not to scare you, but to illustrate that "It's the dose that makes the poison." That fact is conveniently forgotten by most environmental zealots.

You would have to eat nearly 4 million tons of turkey to ingest a toxic amount of those mutagens. Likewise, you'd need 100 cups of coffee at one time to suffer from the contents. The same is true for fruits, vegetables, meat and other foods.

The council is also trying to get people to put man-made chemicals into a clearer perspective, since many of them are naturally occurring as well.

There are several University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty members on the American Council on Health and Science: Robert Cassens, Judith Marlett and Michael Pariza.

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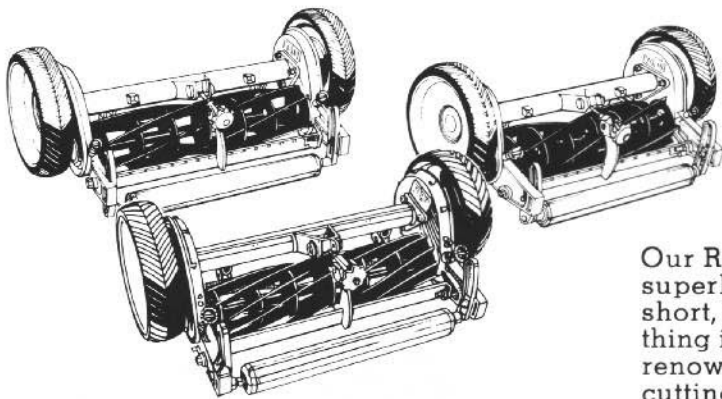


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# Substance Over Symbols

By Monroe S. Miller

*"Labor disgraces no man."*

U.S. Grant

It's a curious emotion I'm experiencing this winter morning. Despite the fact that the golf course belongs to winter for a couple more months, I'm feeling a sense of deep satisfaction. Usually that comes during the season when the first player of the day hits his golf ball or when a project has been well executed.

This satisfied feeling swept over me after this morning's visit with my crew, something we do every morning. I sort of stepped aside and more carefully listened to what each man had planned for his day.

David had an engine in hundreds of pieces and expected to get it reassembled and running before day's end. Val planned on completing the rebuilding of the last Greens King cutting unit. And if his work went well, Brian would have it in the grinder, squared up and ready to sharpen first thing tomorrow.

Joel was putting the finishing touches on some signage for the golf course — woodworking done in our shop. These beautifully crafted redwood pieces that are cut by sandblasting cost our Club about one quarter the square foot cost of commercial work. And ours are better; we have Joel's pride in each one.

Pat was going to complete loading some changes in the irrigation system into our Network 8000 program. That involved the IBM PS/2, Model 30 computer that has become pretty important in our golf course operation. Then he was going to check on the tree trimming crew and be certain their skyworkers were traveling in safe areas on the golf course.

The serious approach to their work told me, or reminded me again, that they care deeply about their work. It's more than a job; it is serious business. Their pride was obvious albeit unspoken. They considered how one's activities affected another. They understand that the payback for good winter work comes in the golf season.

This satisfaction from what was going on in our shop reminded me on a typical winter day of that feeling you see so often in the summer. It's a pleasure to watch an employee stand back and enjoy his work while putting the flag stick back in a green he has just mowed. What a miracle it seems when we transform mountains of soil into beautiful new golf course features. Satisfaction is a marvelous emotion to experience. It is also a great motivator.

We are lucky in our profession to have the opportunity to experience these feelings ourselves, as well as the chance to see staff people relish the results of their efforts, frequently manual efforts.

There, I said it — manual labor. Those dreaded words. Those dirty words — manual labor.

The sense of satisfaction from manual efforts is something this country is losing, in my view. And it is extremely unfortunate. We seem to be leading our young people to an attitude that manual labor is like the plague; that it is contemptible and should be avoided.

It's like Victor Hugo said: "Nothing is more dangerous than discontinued labor; it is a habit lost, a habit easy to abandon and difficult to resume."

Too many don't want to "work" for a living. That attitude is quickly picked up by the younger generation. So often I hear from colleagues complaints like, "I've got the money in my budget for this program but I just can't hire the people to do it." Or, "Kids don't seem to want to sweat anymore."

I see it, too. Manual labor avoided seems to imply some sort of weird status.

It's difficult to believe that we have intentionally inflicted everyone with a "white collar only" mentality. Three generations ago, few people reached that status. Our leaders were farmers and storekeepers and repairmen. People were proud of their specialty and their skills.

But the deep desire to improve one's lot through education led to a sort of snobbery that I'm starting to resent.

Too often the white collar worker clings to the petty and fictitious notion that he is somehow superior to the manual laborer. My crew, however, chuckles when the paper shufflers who work in the state offices around us flood out-of-doors during the noon hour, even in the dead of winter. There are few happy or smiling faces; there is a grim look about these "white collar" workers. There are many more satisfied looks and far more smiles on the faces of my crew as they come in for lunch, despite a morning of "manual labor".

I don't know why it is, but American parents don't seem to want their kids to be artisans or craftsmen or electricians or skilled golf course staff. They push them to be "businessmen" (whatever that means) or "professional" people. I have even less of an idea what that word means in this generic context.

Too many are pushed into a college program that interests them little. But they hope that degree will propel them into some job that will confer proper "status" in our society. Prestige instead of job happiness or satisfaction becomes the chief motivator. And it is a very poor one.

This attitude, which is becoming so pervasive in this country, that there is something unworthy about non-intellectual work leads kids into jobs they are ill-suited for. It is as if labor which involves manual or mechanical skills is something to be embarrassed about or ashamed of. Nothing is farther from the truth.

Such a stupid, backward attitude has to have a lot to do with the trouble we have getting good, skillful employees in our golf course businesses. It also goes a long way in explaining why more and more we are losing manufacturing jobs to the Japanese and others. They are not insulted to have careers as welders, assembly specialists or painters, like we seem to be.

Maybe we have to take a look at some of those other countries and  
*(Continued on page 9)*

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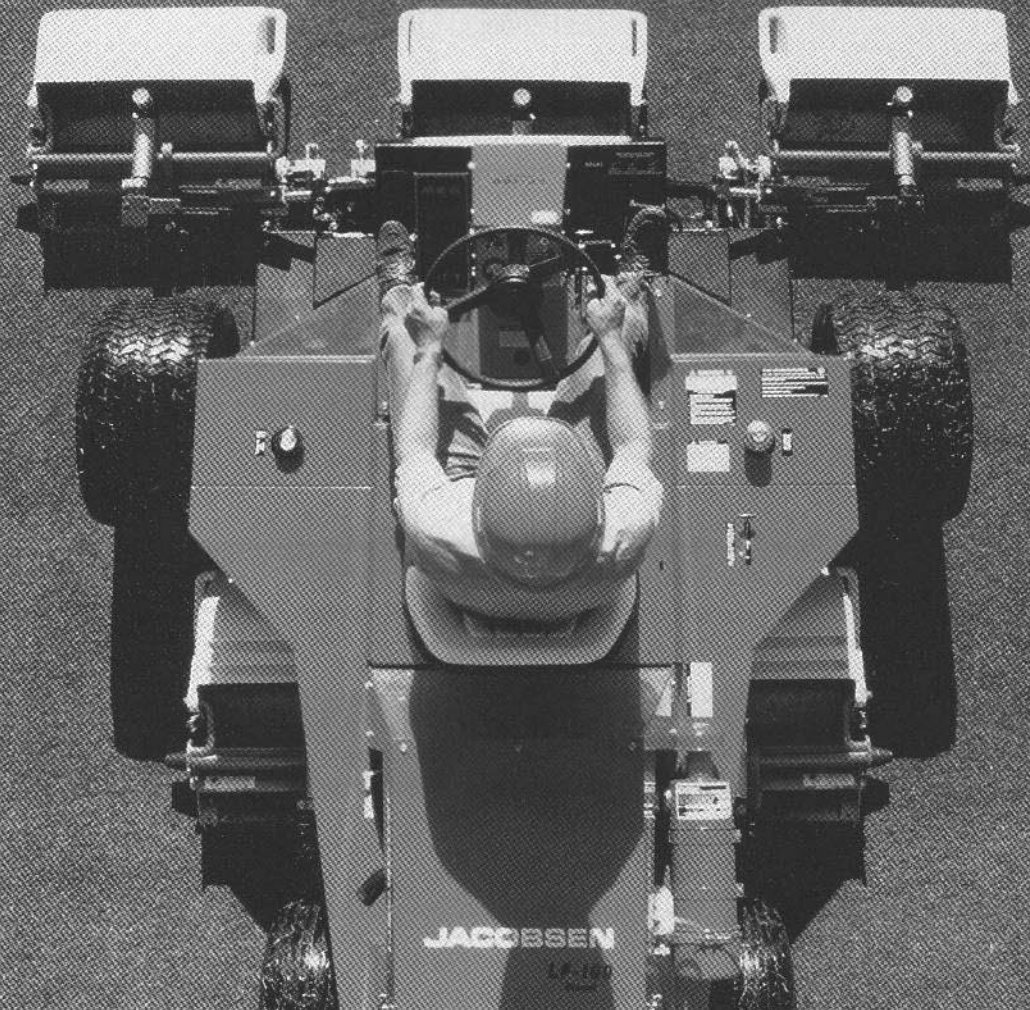
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learn (again) from them. In Europe today, a craftsman is a person of high order; he is proud of his work. The work we see often in our country is that of negligence and sloppiness. It probably won't change until we change our attitude.

In our operations and our own shops, we can do something to help in this matter. Good work should be rewarded. Full time staff people who have a career based on our golf courses deserve a wage they can live and prosper on. That gives them dignity.

Good work should be recognized — openly, honestly and sincerely. Recognition is a powerful motivator for even better work and craftsmanship. Like-

wise, sloppy and mediocre work should not be accepted. If that is all a person gives you, then that person should be dismissed. He is an insult to those successfully making the effort.

Good work should be expected. It should be the clear goal of everything that goes on within the work boundaries, every day of the work week.

There is some truth, I think, in that old saw that says "you don't hire good people, you train and make them." A good golf course superintendent should be a Pygmalion for all his employees. I try hard to do that. And I have had some success. It is wonderful to have a person who worked on our golf course 15 years ago come back to tell you that "many of the lessons of hard work and effort I learned on the golf

course crew have helped me in my own profession."

A lot of what we can do is psychological. There also needs to be some prestige in the work our key staff people perform. That prestige, if you figure out how to extend it, is powerful incentive. It is a matter of honor.

Understand that I believe you should be all that you can be, if you **want** to. For some that includes college and a button-down shirt and necktie. Fine.

But for others, like this wonderful group I get to work with, it is a variety of crafts and skills that deserve the highest respect and honor, despite the blue jeans they wear to work.

I think I'm going out and watch Joel work with those redwood signs; there's so much I can learn from him.

# THE GENTLE GIANTS

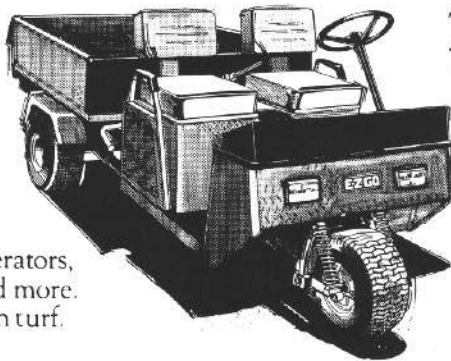
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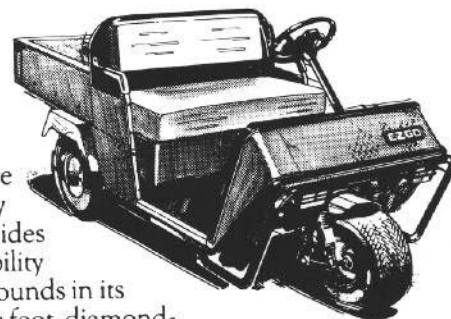
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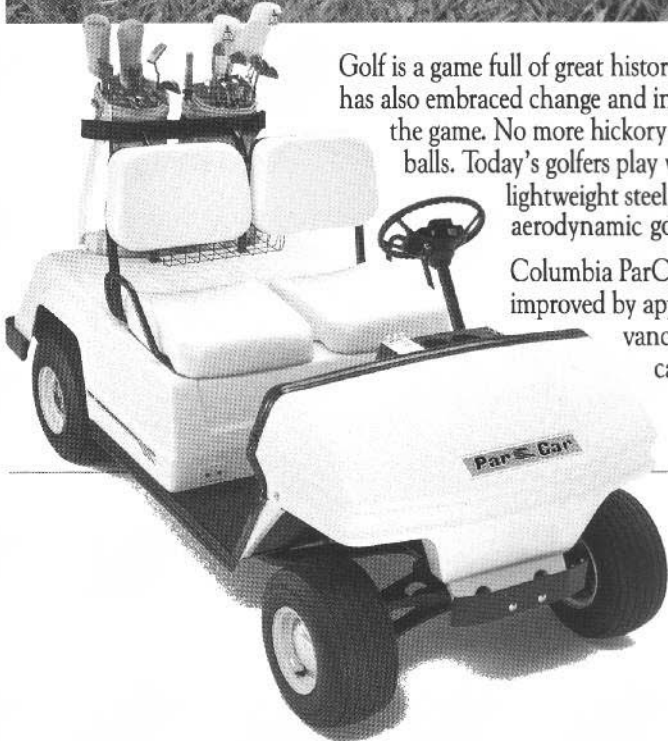
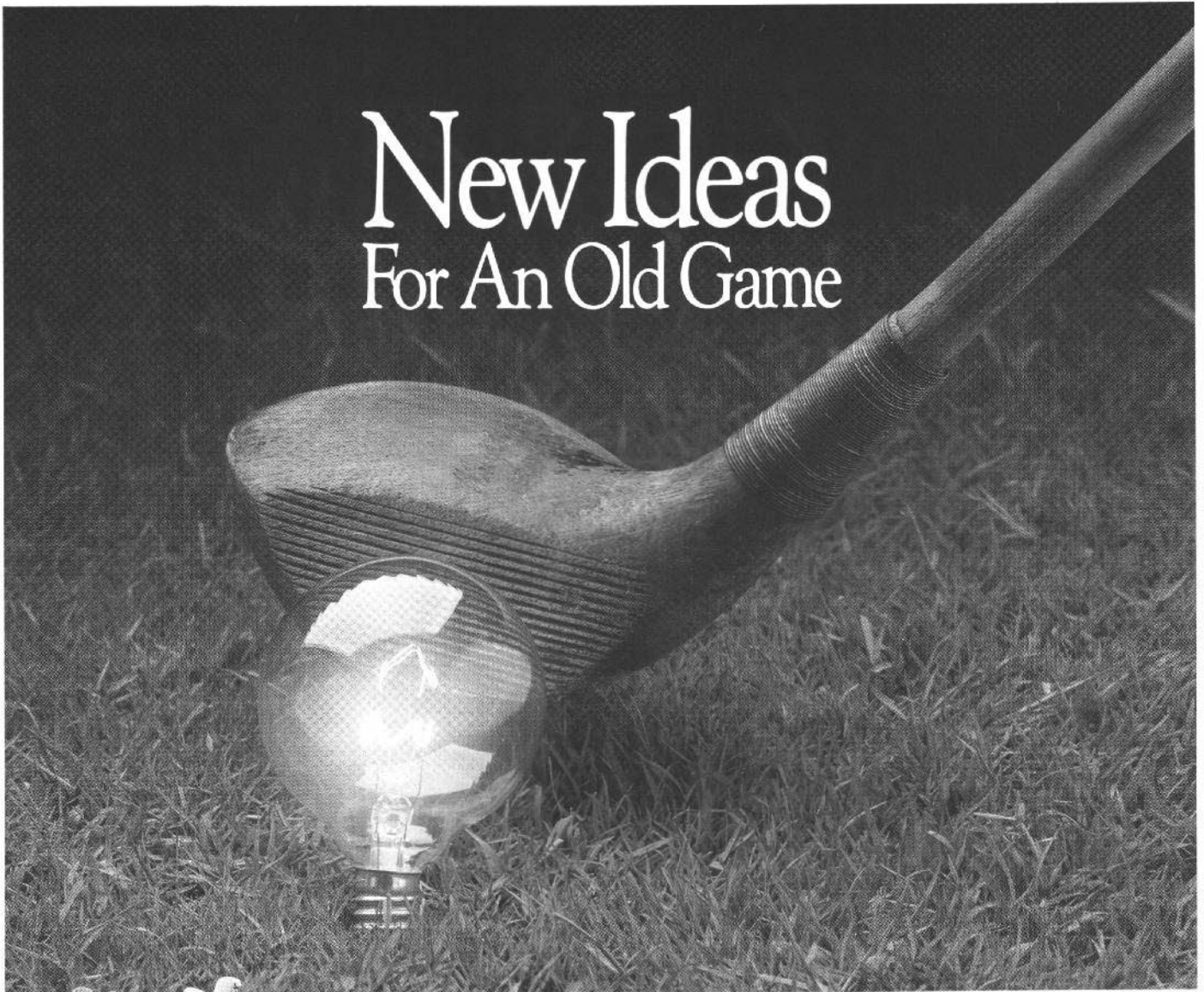
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