



How Do We Compare?

By Monroe S. Miller

Here's a new twist to the SURVEY feature: I'm going to show you how Wisconsin rates and ranks in various golf course management categories with other states around the country.

The source of this information is the 1990 "Golf Course Superintendents Report." It was prepared by the Center for Golf Course Management (CGCM). CGCM is a subsidiary of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

The organization's primary function is to collect information about buying habits and maintenance practices of golf course superintendents. The information is especially valuable to industry manufacturers and suppliers.

But it is also valuable to all of us in the field. The data gives us a chance to see how our own operations compare to the averages in Wisconsin and the 49 other states.

Since labor constitutes over 50% of most golf course budgets, the pay rates take on particular importance. The report gives detailed information by course type and position for the four general categories of positions most of us have. The average base hourly wage on a national basis for those categories of employees are as follows:

Position	COURSE TYPE			
	Private	Semi-Private Daily Fee	Municipal	Resort
Assistant Superintendent	\$9.32	\$8.82	\$10.95	\$9.68
Mechanic	\$9.70	\$8.72	\$9.86	\$9.79
Full-Time Crew Member	\$7.16	\$6.70	\$8.46	\$7.10
Seasonal Crew Member	\$5.46	\$5.26	\$5.35	\$5.65

The figures for Wisconsin are tabulated as an average of all different golf course types:

POSITION	HOURLY WAGE
Assistant Superintendent	\$8.49
Mechanic	\$8.52
Full-time Crew member	\$7.13
Seasonal Crew Member	\$5.09

Draw your own conclusions; they seem rather obvious, however. We pay lower wages than most states, making golf an especially good bargain in Wisconsin. Personally, though, I don't view low wages as something you can brag about.

Averages and medians are one thing; sometimes it is better to look at highs and lows. The top 5 states by wage at each position are shown below.

Assistant Superintendent	Mechanic	Full-time Crew Member	Seasonal Crew Member
Connecticut \$12.18	Wyoming \$14.79	Idaho \$11.06	Idaho \$8.00
Hawaii \$11.50	Connecticut \$12.49	Connecticut \$9.82	New Jersey \$7.12
New Jersey \$11.43	Idaho \$12.26	Massachusetts \$9.67	Massachusetts \$7.01
California \$10.99	Massachusetts \$11.76	Vermont \$9.00	Connecticut \$6.97
Rhode Island \$10.93	New Jersey \$11.60	New Jersey \$8.77	Rhode Island \$6.94

The five lowest paying states by wage at each position are:

Assistant Superintendent	Mechanic	Full-time Crew Member	Seasonal Crew Member
North Dakota \$6.75	New Mexico \$5.00	New Mexico \$5.00	West Virginia \$4.14
West Virginia \$6.81	South Dakota \$6.17	West Virginia \$5.40	Mississippi \$4.29
South Dakota \$7.15	West Virginia \$6.20	Kentucky \$5.53	South Dakota \$4.39
Michigan \$7.61	North Dakota \$6.31	Texas \$5.55	Louisiana \$4.41
Kentucky \$7.74	Arkansas \$7.40	South Carolina \$5.64	South Carolina \$4.44

The final table of information about golf course staffing is closely related to a SURVEY question we had in a previous GRASS ROOTS—the average number of employees by position and course type for 18 hole golf courses. Remember—these are national averages:

Position	COURSE TYPE			
	Private	Semi-Private Daily Fee	Municipal	Resort
Assistant Superintendent	1	1	1	1
Mechanic	1	1	1	1
Full-Time Crew Member	5	3	3	6
Seasonal Crew Member	6	4	6	6

There is a lot of other good information contained in the 1990 CGCM report. It is available to members of the GCSAA free of charge. For others, there is a \$15.00 cost. Either way, it's a bargain!

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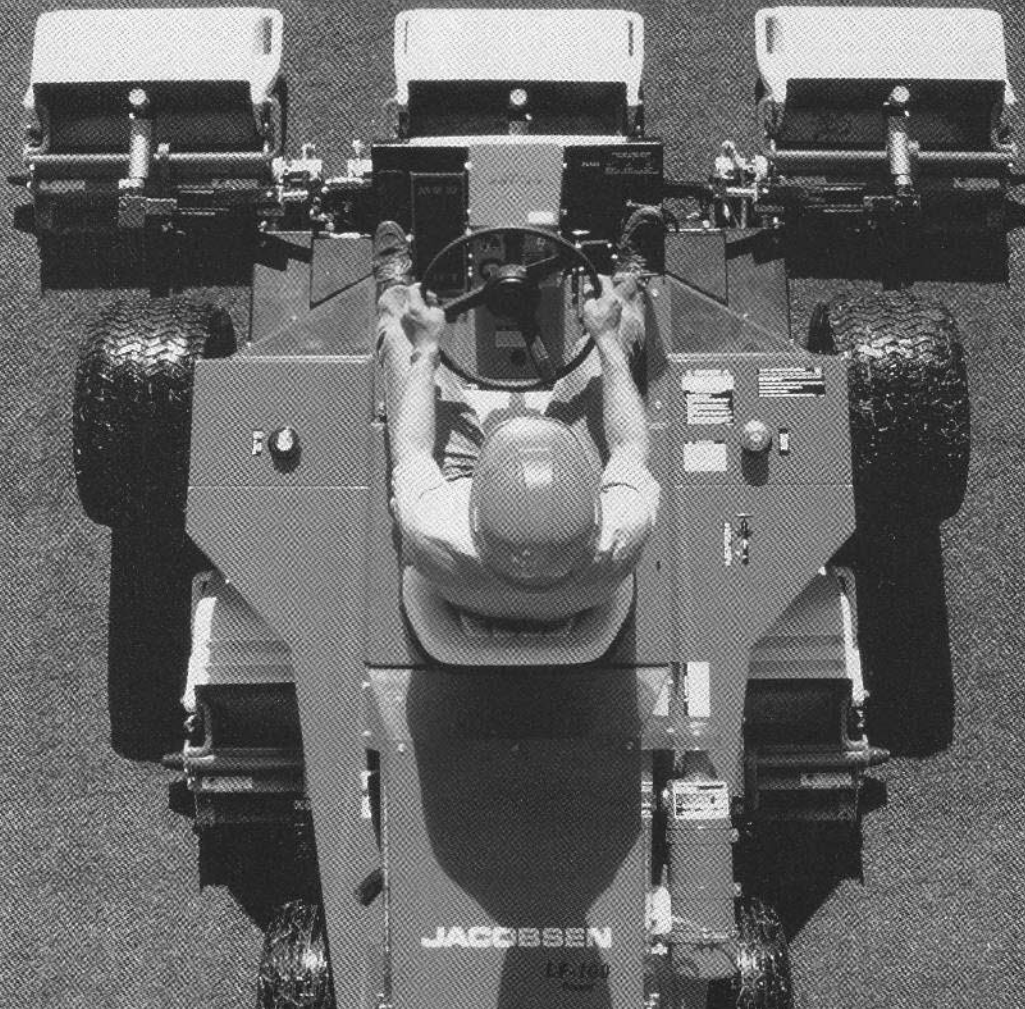
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The Human Element Is What Makes Golf Great

By Rob Schultz

Sometime this week I'll be forced to answer the same two questions I've been asked each week for what seems to be the past zillion years.

The first question will come from my wife after she has observed me writing at home in my office for 12 straight hours: "Why don't you find a normal job with normal hours and a normal salary and start a normal life?"

The second question will come from a complete stranger who reads my newspaper. "You've got the greatest job in the world. Wow, would I love to cover a pro football team. Don't you think you're lucky?"

My answers are always the same. To my wife I'll answer: 'Cuz.' Then I'll turn around and stare back at my home computer screen and search my brain for a lead to some story on a defensive lineman from Hicksville, Miss.

To the good-natured soul on the street, I'll answer: "I am lucky because I love to write; I enjoy the camaraderie of some of the reporters I work with on the beat; I enjoy flexible hours and there's nothing better than finishing a big project and knowing you've done a good job."

Then I'll really shock the questioner with this last statement. "And finally, although I could do without covering football, I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't cover golf."

Both answers are always met with blank stares.

Nobody seems to understand, especially in football season, that covering a pro football team can be drudgery. It's simply something to do when I'm not covering golf. Covering golf is my passion. Everybody always seems to get that backward.

When I'm asked what it's like to write about pro football, I always think of Frank Deford's comments about the subject in his book *The World's Tallest Midget*: "The technology of sports, the bane of sportswriting, is pretty much on account of football, especially professional football. To my mind, without a doubt, the worst sportswriting in the United States is devoted to pro football. I suspect the seminal problem is that

there are simply too many people involved in a football game. It's like the House of Representatives. Nobody writes very well about that either."

"It's so difficult to personalize pro football, what with offensive teams, defensive teams, suicide squads, taxi squads, and even great numbers of coaches. As a consequence, writers are obliged to write about strategy and statistics, to the exclusion of the human element. Generally speaking, the smaller the number of people involved in a competition, the better it lends itself to writing."

Aah, golf. The human element pours out of the sport. Man vs. golf course. Watching a goal-line stand from the press box at Lambeau Field just doesn't match standing five feet away from a golfer who is trying to sink a three-foot putt on the 18th hole to win some tournament. It doesn't have to be the U.S. Open, either. The local city tournament provides the same kind of personal drama that always makes a good story.

If the golfer misses the putt he won't tell the writer he has to look at film the next day to determine why he blew it. He will bang the putter next to the bag, slump to the ground and tell you how much it hurts. And everyone can identify with that.

Last July at the state women's amateur match play tournament at Maple Bluff, Nicky Tiziani was destroyed by a whirlwind named Peggy Kelly during the championship match. Tiziani had just painstakingly climbed back into contention through the 10th hole then watched Kelly make four incredibly long putts on the succeeding holes to bury her. Tiziani didn't do anything wrong. Kelly just played better.

After the round, leaning up against a tree in the pouring rain, Tiziani sniffed back the tears.

"It just hurts to get drummed that bad," she said.

I knew readers would want to reach out and hug Tiziani after they read that. That's why I write. That's why I love covering golf. That's why I don't desire

a normal life with a normal job with normal hours.

Golfers don't even have to talk to writers to describe how they feel. I'll never forget Payne Stewart at last June's U.S. Open in Medinah. He had just missed the cut after missing a putt at the 18th hole during the second round. A youngster who idolized Stewart was waiting over an hour by the 18th green just to get his autograph. Stewart walked off the green in a huff. The youngster stuck out a piece of paper and a pen and asked, "Mr. Stewart, can I have your autograph?"

Stewart walked right by him and said, "Get a job kid."

Great stuff. A writer can't find that covering professional football. Someone might ask Jerry Rice why he dropped a pass that could have won the game for the San Francisco 49ers. More than likely you'd get a no comment. At best he would explain the zone the opposition was in, the kind of pass that Joe Montana threw, the pass rush on Montana, that kind of thing.

And the reader goes on to the next paragraph with an empty because there's no human element to identify with.

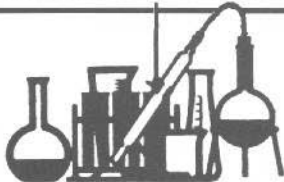
As I write this, it's nearing the end of the football season. I haven't held my one-month old baby girl in four days. Last night I got three hours of sleep. I just finished my 60th hour of work, and that doesn't count the six hours of travel time.

The coach of the football team that I cover for my newspaper is condescending toward reporters and several of the overpaid, pampered players are becoming increasingly hostile toward us.

I wouldn't mind the hassles so much if, just once, I got a football player to react to a situation just like Nicky Tiziani did at Maple Bluff last summer.

And I'd love it if, after asking a football player a question, he's just look at me and answer, "Get a job kid."

The golf season starts again in Wisconsin in four months. I can't wait.



SOIL BUFFER pH

By Dr. Wayne R. Kussow
Department of Soil Science
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Concern is being expressed these days regarding soil buffer pH. This is particularly true for sand-based golf putting greens and tees. What is the nature of this concern? In order to answer this question we first need to review soil pH, acidity and pH buffering.

Soil pH is measured by immersing an hydrogen ion sensitive glass electrode in a soil-liquid suspension and reading the pH on a meter. The reading obtained depends on the ratio of soil to liquid used in preparing the suspension and the composition of the liquid. The greater the ratio of soil to liquid, the lower the pH reading. Likewise, the higher the soluble salt content of the liquid used, the lower the pH reading.

Different soil testing labs use different soil to liquid ratios. Some measure soil pH in pure water while others use a dilute salt solution. Therefore, a sure-fire way to get confused or lose faith in soil testing is to send your samples to more than one laboratory. Chances are the results won't be the same, even for something so simple as soil pH.

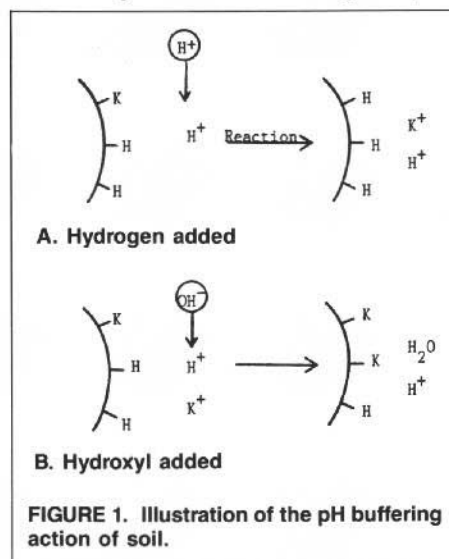
When soil pH is measured in a dilute salt solution, it is referred to as "salt" pH, but you probably won't be told this on your soil test report. Why is salt pH lower than soil pH in pure water? The reason is that positively charged ions in the salt solution displace a small amount of hydrogen ions from soil particle surfaces into solution. These hydrogen ions are then sensed by the glass electrode. This brings us to the correct concept of soil pH. It is a measure of hydrogen ions actually in solution. Soil pH does not measure hydrogen ions chemically bonded to soil particles.

Why do some labs measure soil pH in a salt solution rather than pure water? These are the labs that recognize that water in soil always contains dissolved inorganic and organic substances. In essence, soil solution is a dilute salt solution. Measuring soil pH in a dilute salt solution mimics the true situation in the soil much better than does pH measured in pure water.

The numbers of hydrogen ions that exist in soil solution at any given time

are but a tiny fraction of the chemically reactive hydrogen ions actually present. A preponderance of the reactive hydrogen is chemically bonded to soil constituents and to organic matter in particular.

There exists in soil a unique relationship between hydrogen ions in soil solution and the reactive hydrogen ions bonded to organic compounds. This relationship gives rise to what is known as soil pH buffering. What the term "pH buffering" means is that the soil has ability to resist in change in pH.



To understand how soil pH buffering works, look at Figure 1 and imagine two things happening: (1) first, hydrogen ions (H^+) are added to the soil solution; and (2) second, hydroxyl (OH^-) ions are added. When hydrogen ions are added, some of those already in solution bond to organic matter, thereby keeping the solution concentration of the hydrogen ions fairly constant. This response "buffers" soil against a reduction in pH. When hydroxyl ions are added to soil solution, the reactions are a bit different but the net result is the same. The hydroxyl ions chemically combine with hydrogen ions in the soil solution to form water molecules. This would raise soil pH if it were not for the fact that as the hydrogen ion concentration is reduced by reacting with the hydroxyl ions; the reacted hydrogen ions are replaced in solution by hydrogen ions bonded to

the organic matter. Thus, the solution concentration of the hydrogen ions has been "buffered" by the soil and pH remains relatively unchanged.

Soils do not have unlimited pH buffering capacity. If they did, we could adjust the pH just once and never worry about it again. As this buffering capacity is exceeded through continuous additions of acids or bases, the soil pH begins to change and the soil becomes acid or alkaline. The smaller the pH buffering capacity of a soil, the more quickly its pH changes over time.

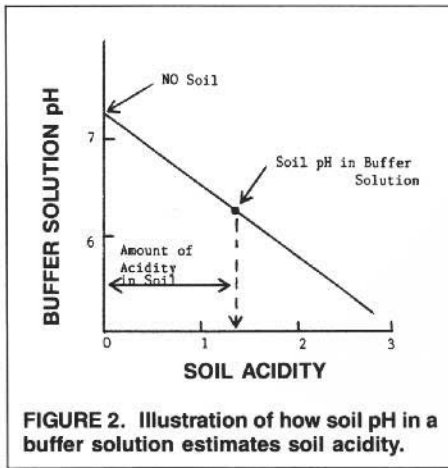
So what determines the pH buffering capacity of soil? Below a pH of 5.5, aluminum ions can be a contributing factor. However, at all pH levels the primary source of pH buffering is organic matter. The greater the amount of organic matter present in soil and the greater its degree of decomposition, the higher the pH buffering capacity of soil.

Herein lies some concern about sand-based golf putting greens and tees. *Sand itself has virtually no pH buffering capacity. The pH of pure sand is essentially uncontrollable and fluctuates widely, even within a single growing season.*

The pathway here has been fairly long, but the stage is now set to talk about soil buffer pH. Many years ago soil scientists saw the need to devise a rapid means for estimating the amounts of acidity in soils. These estimates are required to arrive at accurate liming recommendations.

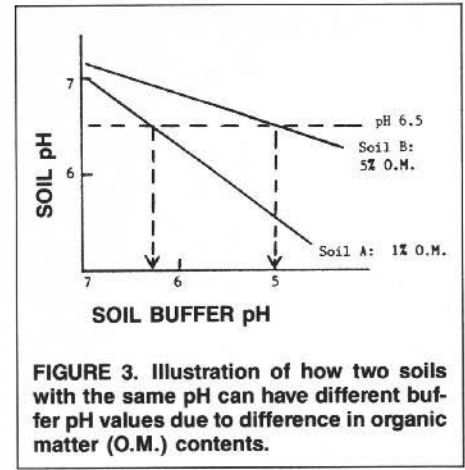
The technique developed for quickly estimating the amount of acidity in soil involved measurement of soil pH in a solution that itself is highly pH buffered. This buffered solution is first adjusted to a fixed pH. When added to soil, the buffered solution reacts with soil acidity and the pH of the soil-buffer solution suspension decreases in accord with the amount of acidity in the soil. Hence, the amount by which the pH of buffered solution is decreased is directly related to the soil's acidity (see Figure 2) and to the amount of liming material needed to adjust the soil pH.

So what is soil buffer pH? It is an estimate of how much acidity resides in the soil. This, in turn, depends on the existing pH of the soil and the amount and nature of the organic matter present. Soil buffer pH is not a measure of actual soil pH. In fact, two very different soils can very well have the same pH but quite different buffer pH



values. This is illustrated in Figure 3. Soil A with 1% organic matter and soil B with 5% organic matter have the same pH but very different buffer pH values.

This returns us to the question posed earlier: why the recent concern about soil buffer pH? Very frankly, I don't know. Soil buffer pH is not the actual pH of soil and, in and of itself, conveys no useful information to you other than a general sense of how much acidity is present. What's important for you to know is salt pH. This is the best estimate available of the actual pH of your soil.



GCSAA Recognizes *THE GRASS ROOTS* with "Best Editorial" Award!

For the seventh consecutive year, the Golf Course Superintendent Association of America has presented *THE GRASS ROOTS* an award in its annual editor's contest.

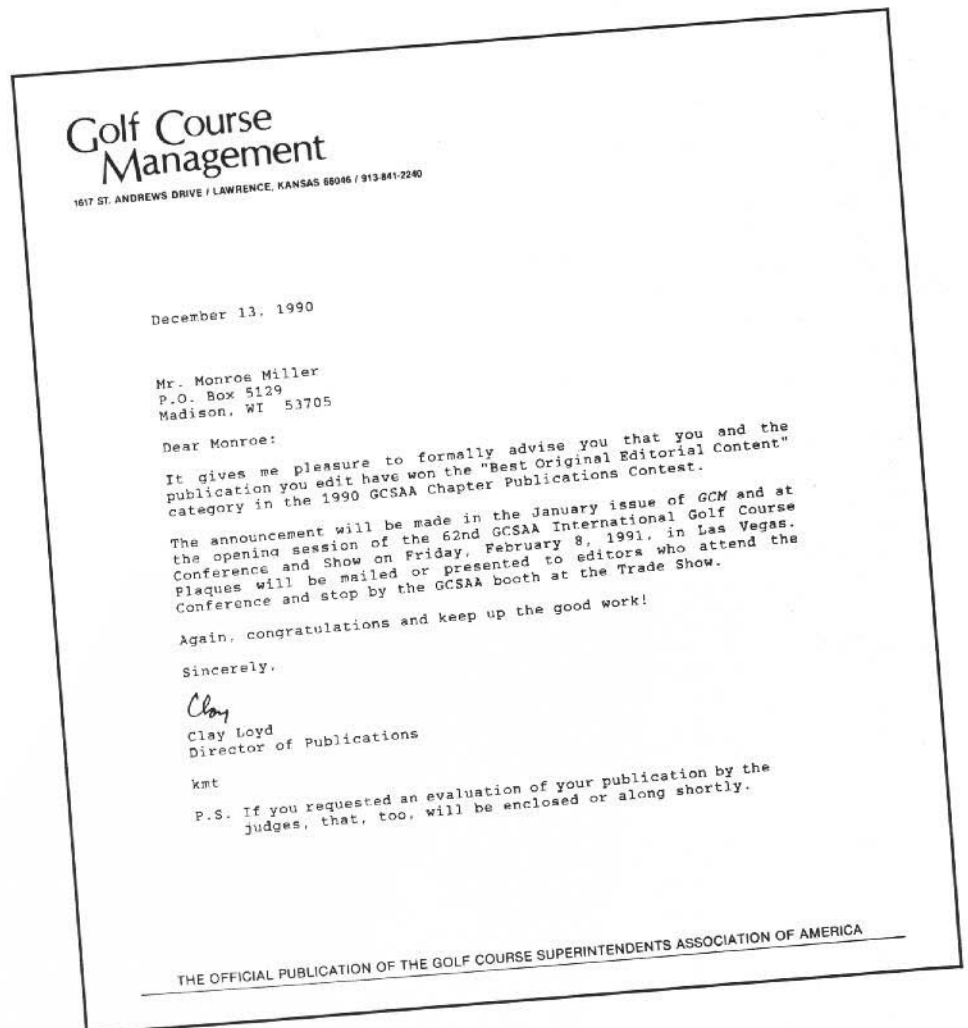
The 1990 award is for "best original editorial content", a category that our journal has captured several times before.

The contest award is, obviously, a focus on original writing. Personally, this category is the one coveted by this editor.

The credits are well documented in the new feature in this issue—the 1990 article index. The authors noted there earned the recognition for the new and fresh and timely material which contributed so much to the award.

The evaluation, requested by this editor, has many points that received high grades that only our printer could be responsible for: things like layout and design, photo placement, and typesetting. The entire staff at Kramer Printing in Madison contributes; special thanks to Sherri Livernash Milani of the art department. Her talent and concern are evident in every issue.

On the right is the letter from GCSAA headquarters notifying us of the results of the contest. Read and enjoy!





TURF'S UP.

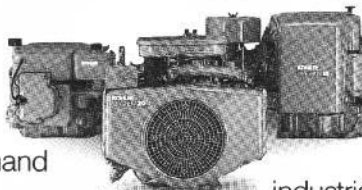
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As Usual, It's Politics and Weather

By Monroe S. Miller

As we drove past the golf course on the way to church on December 2, Cheryl remarked "the golf course looks like it usually does in May."

She was right on; my main thought was that the fairways actually needed mowing. The entire one hundred acres was a beautiful shade of green.

What a fabulous autumn 1990 gave us. We actually had two Indian summers—the entire week of the Symposium and the week surrounding Thanksgiving. What a treat!

And what a time of golf players to enjoy the golf course. Pretty decent conditions were at hand right into the month of December.

When I take pause, however, I remember another oddity of the past couple of months—the record 3" snowfall on October 10th in our town. It was the earliest snowfall recorded where I live and work, and quite obviously set the record for the amount of snow for the date. There was considerable damage done by that storm—accidents, electrical outages, broken limbs and branches. Funny how nice the weather turned afterwards.

I should have knocked on wood the minute Cheryl's comments came forth. I didn't, and sure enough, Monday, December 3rd saw a blizzard move across the state. Record amounts of snow for a single day welcomed everybody in town that morning. Schools, government and even shopping malls were closed.

While others were grouching, I was cheering. A warm, thick white blanket of snow makes almost every golf course superintendent in Wisconsin smile from ear to ear.

The first snow (actually second snow in this case) almost always begs the question of "how many more snowfalls will we have?"

An older fellow in Madison, who is usually quite accurate, says we have 29 more snowfalls coming our way this winter. To count as a snowball, there

Must be enough snow to tract a cat.

He uses an old Indian formula to predict the number of snows. It involves the age of the moon and the day of the month when the first snowfall arrives.

I never have liked the politics of state senator Russell Feingold, but once he took what was (and still is) essentially a scientific issue and turned it to a political one, I dislike him even more. He used the bovine growth hormone issue for his own petty purpose—he lusts to become one of Wisconsin's U.S. senators.

His campaign to cloud the real issue included bringing an anti-BGH zealot to Wisconsin. That person is Jeremy Rifkin, and he came to Wisconsin from Washington, D.C. to meddle in our affairs.

The group Rifkin works for has now sued the National Dairy Research and Promotion Board over some technicality relating to the bovine growth hormone.

Rifkin, like Feingold, doesn't really care about BGH, Wisconsin dairy farmers or the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the UW-Madison. Feingold is a selfish politician. Rifkin is a hardcore "animal rightist" who won't be happy until all animal agriculture ends, along with all hunting. To him, it's no big deal to threaten a \$20 BILLION industry in our state.

In our business, we must be on guard for similar attacks by radicals using the environment as a front.

The disgusting tactics of people like Rifkin and Feingold may be part of the reason why there was so much pleasure in reading about a different lawsuit.

From Yakima, Washington comes the news that Washington state apple growers are suing CBS and an environment group over a "60 Minutes" report they say damaged their livelihood by creating a cancer scare about the growth chemical Alar.

The lawsuit seeks unspecified damages running to millions of dollars for losses caused by the program's "false, misleading, scientifically unreliable statements."

The industry has estimated growers lost more than \$100 million following the 1989 broadcast which was based on a report by the National Resources Defense Council, a group supposedly representing "consumers".

Russ Weisensel tried to reason with legislators in our state, but they imposed a ban on Alar anyway. It was banned nationally last May.

Alar is sprayed on trees to improve the appearance and shelf life of apples.

My hope is that they win their suit and that the judge triples the damages.

Cases like this which are successful will go a long way in impressing on radicals that all any of us wants is a fair presentation of the facts. We want them to understand that scare stories full of untruths can be costly.

Victory is always sweet, but seldom more than on the day following the November 6th election.

That's the day we learned the "Big Green" proposition was soundly turned away by voters in California.

The sweeping proposal, supported by the likes of Tom Hayden (imagine that!), would have banned pesticides even if they contained only a trace amount(s) of some chemical.

Estimates were that the first year, had Prop 128 passed, would have cost consumers in California nearly \$100 million; the cost would have risen after that.

What a relief that the California voters weren't frightened by the phoney bogeymen promoting this initiative. There is little doubt similar legislation would have hemorrhaged into other states, especially states like Wisconsin, if the voters had okayed it.

'Tis the season for educational conferences. I'm looking forward to the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association Winter Conference and the GCSAA Conference and Show. Additionally, there are GCSAA seminars being held all over in the north central region, including right here in Wisconsin.

I was flattered when Wayne Kussow invited me to be an ex officio member

of the examining committee that graded Larry Lennert's Masters Degree thesis. That committee included Professors Kussow, Helmke and Lowery.

It wasn't an easy task; it required, for me, the very deliberate reading of Larry's thesis. But what an educational experience that was!

Larry's thesis was extremely well written; it turns out that I wasn't the only one who noted that. Each professor commented on the same.

The document is absolutely loaded with information—practical and pragmatic information—that will help turfgrass managers in Wisconsin and elsewhere. Golf course superintendents will be especially helped.

Part of a thesis defense in the Department of Soil Science is a seminar open to anyone. It was clear during Larry's lecture that this young man is also very articulate and an excellent speaker.

My primary concern is that Larry and his major professor get this information published, first in a "juried" technical journal so that it can be referenced. Then they need to write about a half dozen articles for the popular literature for use by people like me.

As you know, the subject of his research project was "iron and its use in turfgrass management in Wisconsin". It was supported by the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association.

By the way, he passed his examination, and was given permission to pursue a PhD if he desires.

Quite frankly, I was very proud of the kid. You would have been also. Our business needs bright and educated people like Larry Lennert. His dedicated performance in completion of his thesis will make it easy for the WTA to fund another project in the future.

Nice work by the major professor, too!

The whole world probably knows by now that Jim Spindler left the Milorganite Division of MMSD. He left his position as Marketing Director there for a similar position with ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Jim, his wife Missey and daughter Kiersten will move to the Lancaster area around the time you receive this issue of *THE GRASS ROOTS*.

Spindler has become one of us since he accepted the MMSD position in 1985. He started as field agronomist, moved into the market development

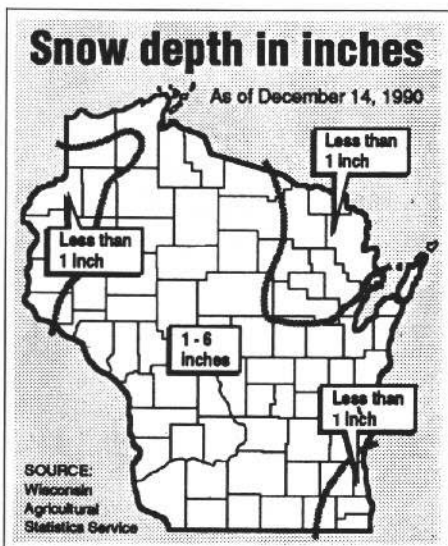
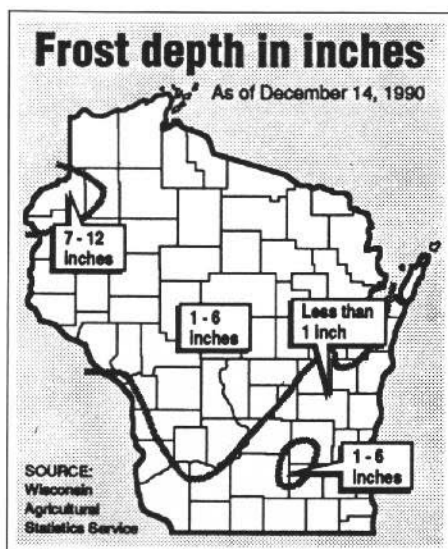
manager's position and finally was appointed Acting Director of Marketing.

We also knew him as the coordinator for the annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium. He will continue to serve as research director for the O.J. NOER RESEARCH FOUNDATION.

Jim was a very active, capable and visible person in our Wisconsin golf course industry. We are going to miss his presence. He has promised to return to next year's Symposium, a promise I hope he'll be able to keep.

Congratulations and good luck.

The accompanying graphics showing frost and snow depths around Wisconsin at mid-December indicate why state climatologist Pam Naber offers up such positive reports these days.



The mild weather that followed the December 3rd snowstorm across Wisconsin really helped to recharge underground water supplies in our state. We are continuing to recover

from the prolonged drought.

The snow fell primarily on unfrozen ground. The warm temperatures melted a lot of the snow and it infiltrated the soil instead of running off.

The water tables in most parts of Wisconsin have gradually risen through the wet periods of autumn. The deficit has shrunk so significantly that in many areas the water level is within a few inches of normal.

For three consecutive years, rainfall lagged behind the normal total of 31.3 inches, causing the water table to drop and topsoil moisture to disappear.

It is always sad to learn of someone's passing; it may be more true when that someone made unusual contributions in a way you appreciate. Such was the case when Bob Sommers sent USGA Green Section Committee members the obituary of Fred Grau.

This is as it appeared in the December 6, 1990 issue of *The New York Times*. Dr. Grau was a former national director of the Green Section.

Fred Grau, 88, Dies; Developer of Grasses

Fred V. Grau, an agronomist who developed a grass that is used widely to prevent soil erosion and beautify highway slopes, died Saturday at Prince George's Community Hospital in Cheverly, Md. He was 88 years old and lived in College Park, Md.

He died of congestive heart failure, his daughter, Ellen Mentzer of Silver Spring, Md., said.

Dr. Grau received his doctorate in 1935 at the University of Maryland. He was the founder of Grasslyn Inc. and developed crownvetch, a perennial that is widely cultivated for its pink flowers and tenacious roots. He also helped develop zoysia varieties that require small amounts of water and fertilizer and are used on athletic fields.

He was a specialist in turf grasses and from 1945 to 1953 was director of the United States Golf Association Green Section. Dr. Grau was an agricultural extension agent at Pennsylvania State University and was later with the Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Station of the Department of Agriculture.

In addition to his daughter, he is survived by a son, Fred Jr. of State College, Pa.; a sister, Edith Reynolds of Pensacola, Fla., and six grandchildren.



She Keeps the Office Running

By Lori Ward Bocher

It may be Jim Latham who visits your golf course once or twice a year as director of the Great Lakes Region, USGA Green Section. But it's his wife, Lois, who scheduled that visit beforehand and who sends out the reports afterward. It's Lois' pleasant voice you'll hear when you call the office in Madison.

"I keep the whole office running," Lois says of her full-time job with USGA. "I'm here at least 40 hours a week and usually more than that."

She runs the office, schedules Jim's visits and keeps the financial records. When Jim is on the road, he sends back taped reports of his visits to golf courses in the nine states that comprise the Great Lakes Region; Lois transcribes those tapes, prints reports and sends them back to the golf courses.

What she doesn't do is answer the technical questions about turf management that she sometimes gets on the phone. "I tell them I'm not an agronomist. I just run the office," she says. "Then I refer them to the USGA manual."

Lois recalls one question she's been asked frequently. "Some people ask me how I can work with my husband. It's easy. He's never here." Jim is gone 100 percent of the time during the growing season. Even during the off season he's gone 50 percent of the time to meetings and other industry events.

Sometimes Lois accompanies her husband to meetings, especially the GCSAA national meeting and the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium. "I don't think I've missed one of the symposia," Lois says, "I don't sit in on all of the sessions, but I'm there."

For the first few years of the symposium's 25-year history, when Jim was working for the Milorganite Division of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, Lois volunteered her services. "They didn't have the staff to do the work, so some wives helped with on-site registration for the first few years," she recalls.



Lois Latham

Now she and Jim are both working for USGA, and they're both still involved with the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium. "Because Jim is on the committee, he has certain duties that overlap into my duties in the office," Lois points out.

Lois enjoys her association with golf course superintendents. "They're certainly hard working and dedicated," she says. "And friendly. They're always willing to help each other. They're great to do business with and great to know over the years."

Of course, she listens to a lot of "shop talk" while at the symposium and other meetings. But she doesn't mind. "I've become accustomed to that. If they didn't talk shop, I'd be surprised."

Because Lois and Jim have both worked for the USGA in various states, Lois enjoys renewing old acquaintances from around the country at the GCSAA national meeting each year. "It's like a homecoming," she says. "I always look forward to the annual meeting."

Natives of Texas, Lois and Jim met while students—she at North Texas State and he at Texas A&M. Lois left school to marry Jim in June of 1951. At

the time Jim had one semester to finish. He stayed at Texas A&M for graduate work and Lois worked for the Former Students Association there.

The Lathams left their home state of Texas when Jim took a job in turf research at the Coastal Plain Experiment Station in southern Georgia. Lois worked for the Soil Conservation Service at the same station.

After two years they moved to New Jersey where Jim attended graduate school at Rutgers University and worked part time for the USGA. Lois was secretary to the plant manager at Carter Products.

In the spring of 1957 they moved to Maryland when Jim went full time with the USGA as agronomist for the Southeast region. Lois worked part time for the USGA.

The USGA Southeast office was moved from Maryland to Athens, Georgia in 1958, and Lois continued working as Jim's office manager. The Latham's first child, Kathy, was born in Georgia.

In 1960 the Lathams moved to Wisconsin where Jim joined the Milorganite Division of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) where he worked for 25 years. Their second child, Lynne, was born in Milwaukee in 1962.

While raising the children, Lois worked part time at various jobs. And she was active with her children—serving as a room mother, working with the Brownie troop, teaching Sunday School, chaperoning the drum corps. It wasn't until her children were grown that she went back to work full time.

That was in December of 1984 when Jim retired after 25 years at the MMSD to become director of the Great Lakes Region, USGA Green Section. Lois became his office manager at that time. "It was like we both rejoined USGA," she recalls.

Having lived in the Milwaukee area for 25 years, they were not anxious to move. "We were located here, established here," Lois says of their home in Fox Point. "When the opportunity to rejoin the Green Section came up, the Great Lakes Region office was in Crystal Lake, Illinois. We said we'd rather stay here. They said, 'No problem.'"

In April of 1990 the Great Lakes Region staff expanded with the addition of agronomist Bob Vavrek to assist

(Continued on page 21.)

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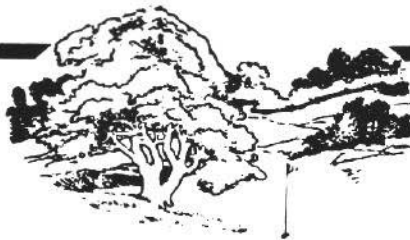
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