



PUTTING THE USGA TO TEST

By Monroe S. Miller

Dr. David Cookson convened a meeting of all Wisconsin USGA committee members in mid-May at Maple Bluff Country Club.

Although I was extremely busy at the time, I made sure I was present at this meeting. It may not have been the first ever meeting of this group, but it was the first I had the opportunity to attend.

I am very proud to be a USGA Green Section committeeman, so much so that I didn't think the other USGA committees could possibly amount to much or have a charge as important at the Green Section committee. Facts are facts, after all.

After this meeting, however, I've tempered my attitude a bit. The other com-

mittees are significant and have important work, too.

Particularly impressive at this meeting was the quality of the committee people—golf leaders all, they were.

There was a lot to learn that day, and I left more knowledgeable.

As a result, this issue's quiz will try to determine how much you know about the USGA, its history and activities.

Here goes.

1. How many USGA committee people are there in Wisconsin?
2. How many USGA Green Section people are there in Wisconsin? Name them, please.
3. When was the USGA Green Section started?

4. Why is the year 1953 significant to the Green Section?
5. Who was the first female staff person at the Green Section?
6. How many golf facilities in Wisconsin belong to the USGA?
7. When was the USGA formed?
8. When was the USGA's first championship?
9. Has a Wisconsin resident ever won the coveted USGA Green Section Award? If yes, who?
10. When did the USGA first begin to spend major money on turfgrass research?

Answers on page 21.

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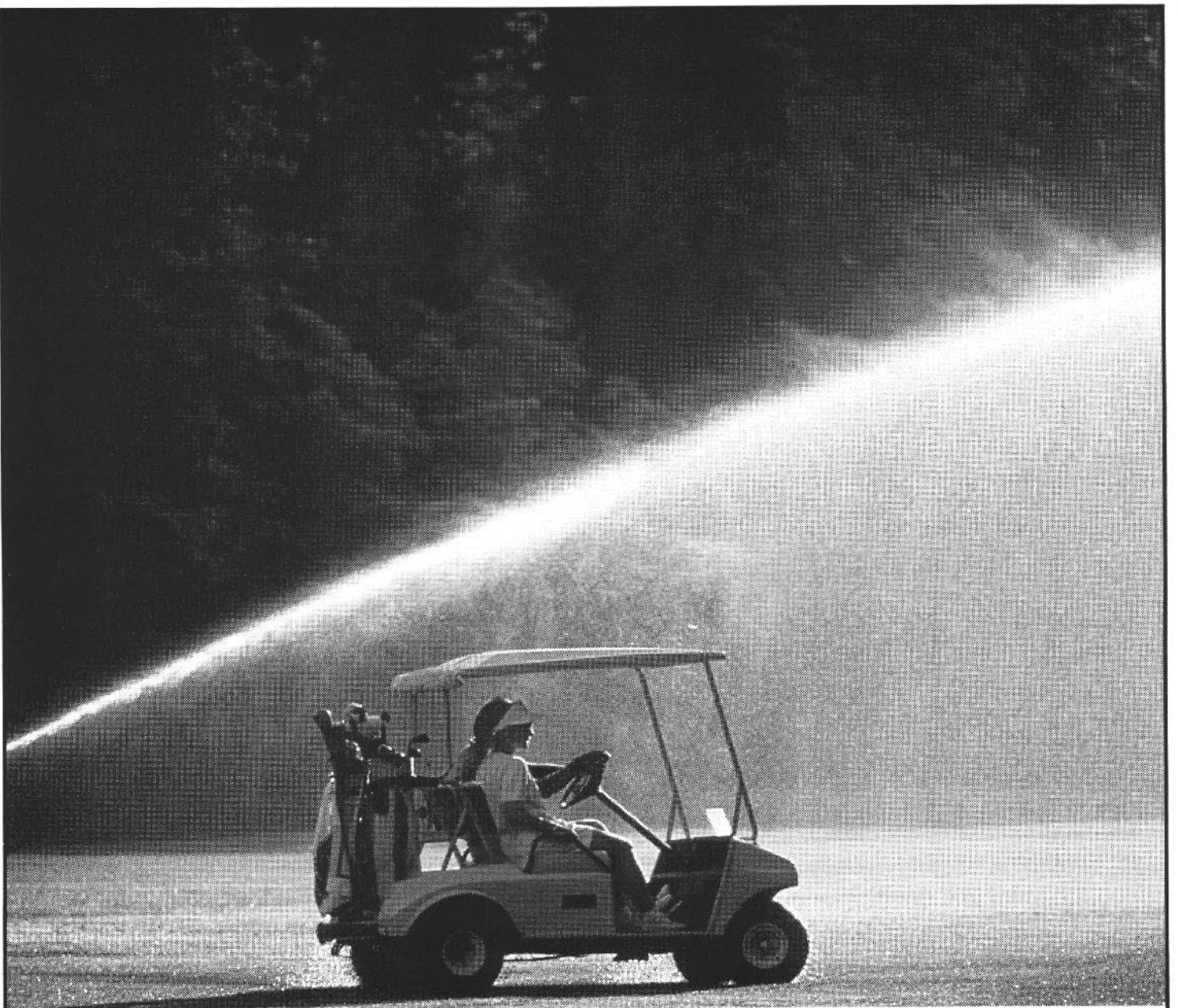
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Spearfishing, Tourism & Golf

By Dean Musbach

Northern Wisconsin has a long tradition as a vacation paradise. Seeing the white birch and pines mirrored in a crystal clear lake is indeed reason enough to come to the northwoods. Good hunting and fishing are just icing on the cake.

In the wake of Chippewa spearing of spawning fish, both the environment and economy of northern Wisconsin are in jeopardy. Since I am not an avid fisherman, I think I have been able to view this issue with some objectivity.

The Chippewa Indians began spearing in lakes seven years ago after a federal court ruled that it was their right. Since then, daily bag limits have decreased and size limits have increased. Some lakes have even been closed to fishing completely, and this has severely injured the entire tourist economy, especially the resort business.

The ACLU, liberal media and the big city liberals have labeled the local communities as uninformed redneck bigots. I find this type of rhetoric completely appalling because I am neither uninformed nor a redneck bigot. These "rebels looking for a cause" have their own agendas that they will try to attain at anyone's expense.

This is America and all people are to have the same rights. The DNR banned all spearfishing on lakes many years ago to protect the resource. So in my opinion, allowing Chippewa spearfishing is un-American and environmentally unsound.

Many facets of Native American culture are interesting. I have long ad-

mired the Native American awareness and respect of the land, but what I have witnessed disgusts me. This spearfishing ritual has nothing to do with culture or heritage and I think if their ancestors were alive they would be ashamed and disgusted too.

Nonetheless, resorts and other businesses have been hurt because tourism here is tied to the environment. The fishing is not what it used to be, so people are looking for other forms of recreation. Golf seems to be the popular alternative.

Over the past five years, three golf courses have been built or expanded within a thirty mile radius of Minocqua alone, and two more are in construction now. The other existing golf courses in the area have made great strides in improving the quality of playing conditions.

Historically, fishing dominated the tourism in this area, but now it is obvious people are spending less time fishing and more time golfing, and this is good news for the local economies.

The town of St. Germaine is so sure of this trend that it recently began construction of its new golf course. Realizing the dilemma the town was facing, a development committee comprised of local business people researched the feasibility of a golf course and decided that the town needed to take a bold step to insure economic prosperity. There was controversy over the project, but ultimately the residents realized they needed to develop other tourist attractions.

Most golf courses in the Northwoods are daily fee, both privately and municipally owned. In 1991, these courses averaged 15,000 - 20,000 rounds with the majority of rounds being played in July and August. The golf courses would have a difficult time surviving without the tourist business. This is why it is difficult to find an exclusive private club north of Wausau.

My employer, Timber Ridge C.C., has a private owner and a private membership. The membership is made up of seasonal residents, weekend warriors and local residents. Although technically the club is private, it would not pay the bills without outside play. At Timber Ridge, if you know a member you can play the course. With the club actively selling group events, and allowing reciprocal guests, it is at a point now that if the members want to limit outside play, they will need to pay more than they realize to limit the lucrative tourist dollars.

To sum things up, spearfishing has left a sour taste in the mouths of many people in the north. Their egos, morals and values have taken a beating, and worse yet, so has the environment and the economy. One bright spot shines through this ugly experience. Golf has prospered and it has helped boost the tourist economy at a time when it was needed. Golf will never replace traditional tourist activities, but it is another good reason to come to the Northwoods.

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I'll Take An Automatic System

By Monroe S. Miller

The May edition of *WISCONSIN GOLF* was a pretty good issue for Wisconsin golf players to read.

It was an issue that featured a cover picture of irrigation sprinklers in action on the River Course at Blackwolf Run. The title on the front cover, "WATER—the No. 1 Resource" invited a look inside.

John Hughes reprinted Mark Kienert's excellent article on the Bull's Eye C.C. loss of Wisconsin River water for irrigation in 1988 that Mark authored for *GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT*.

The lead story on water was written by Jeff Mayers, a *Wisconsin State Journal*/political reporter and occasional political commentator on WHA, our local PBS station.

Jeff interviewed lots of people, including many Wisconsin golf course superintendents and golf course owners. It was a well balanced story with good information.

There was only one comment I disagreed with and feel compelled to comment on.

Red Roskopf uses a manual irrigation system at Camelot, and it works well for him. My disagreement comes with Red's opinion that "with a manual system you will conserve more water."

I put up with a manual system for 16 years and have used an automatic irrigation system for the past four years.

My experience is contrary to Red's experience. No matter how hard a night waterman works at his job, watering times are never more than approximate. Those times are seldom short, either.

Since sprinklers have to be moved by hand, short times (sets) are almost impossible. I never once asked for a five minute time on a green sprinkler because I knew it couldn't be done.

Five minutes of water on greens with our automatic system is very common.

With a manual system, all fairway valves, for example, essentially received the same amount of water. It was merely a practical matter. A night waterman cannot begin to keep track of different times for different quick couplers. If he could, a Cushman truckster cannot travel fast enough from valve to valve to move the sprinklers, anyway.

Now, on an "average" summer night, the times on fairway sprinklers might range from three minutes to 17 minutes. Those times are based on what is best for the turf covered, the soils in residence there, and the desire to conserve water and use the least amount. You cannot do that with a manual system. Period.

Or, with our automatic system, we might split the times in half and run two cycles. This makes extremely efficient use of water and gives great opportunity for water conservation. You cannot do this with a manual system.

Our Toro Network 8000 automatic irrigation system controls the running times of sprinklers right down to the minute. Exactly. You can set a watch by the running time. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about a manual system. Watermen and trucksters can't offer that precise timing.

We were freed from other trouble when we replaced our manual system. No more vandalism of 808 sprinklers. One year we lost a dozen of them.

A night waterman cannot keep any semblance of a schedule when he's got a flat tire on his Cushman. That 20 minute set you ordered up was run out to over an hour.

And if flats weren't a problem, then some other mechanical ailment was. Weekly.

Over the years we had one pickup truck and two Cushman trucksters totaled as a result of accidents. Thank goodness no injuries resulted. That does not happen with an automatic system.

With our automatic irrigation system I no longer have to worry about an employee and a sudden lightning storm.

And just as we did with our manual system, before we leave work at days end, we decide what our water needs for the next 24 hours will be. We don't water "automatically" now any more than we did when our system was a manual one.

Not only do automatic systems conserve water, they conserve energy, too. It takes fifteen cents of electricity to turn sprinklers on and off during the night. With our manual system, it was not uncommon to burn ten gallons of gasoline moving sprinklers.

An automatic system with a carefully written program or with a concatenation feature maximizes the efficiency of a pump station, something that is nearly impossible, in my experience at least, with a manual system. More efficiency equals conservation in the pump house, too.

Frankly, my experience with a manual irrigation system and an automatic irrigation system has clearly shown the automatic system uses less water because it offers precise control and running times and allows enormous flexibility which can be used to conserve water.

But the amount of water used on any given golf course really comes down to the group served, its demands and the decisions made by the golf course superintendent responding to those demands, regardless of how the water is distributed.

But I'll still take an automatic.



Managing for Moisture Stress in Turf

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

Many golf courses do not have the luxury of "wall-to-wall" irrigation. Roughs in particular are dependent on rainfall, a growth factor whose predictability remains as elusive as the Loch Ness monster. Managing these areas so as to minimize the effects of drought on the turf is the subject of this article.

Getting the most out of rainfall in terms of maintenance of turf quality involves some fairly simple principles. These principles become obvious when we examine the plant water budget shown below:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Transpiration} &= \text{Rainfall} - \text{Runoff} \\ &- \text{Evaporation} - \text{Percolation} \\ &+ \text{Soil storage} \end{aligned}$$

In this budget, rainfall is our input, and our objective is to maximize the portion of the rainfall that is available for turfgrass use in the form of transpiration. To do this, we need to attempt to minimize rainfall losses. These include any means whereby the water does not become available for turfgrass use. The rainfall loss pathways include runoff, evaporation from soil and plant surfaces, and percolation of the water beyond the rootzone of the turfgrass. Of these three avenues of rainfall loss, one that is manageable is runoff.

Runoff of rainwater occurs whenever the rate of rainfall exceeds the infiltration rate of the soil. At the onset of rain, water initially moves very quickly into soil because the dry soil exerts a wicking action on the water. This lasts only until the soil surface is wet. Thereafter, the rate at which water infiltrates is determined primarily by the numbers and sizes of soil pores that are open to the soil surface. Rapid infiltration of rainwater requires the presence of large pores. To emphasize this fact, let's contrast the rate at which water can enter soil via an earthworm channel vs. a relatively large soil pore with a diameter of 0.5 mm. A typical earthworm channel will conduct water at approximately 100,000 times the rate of this large soil pore.

Relative to agricultural land, turf typically has high water infiltration rates.

However, soil compaction can easily render turf areas less permeable than cultivated soils. The reason for this is that soil compaction is basically a process in which larger pores are compressed into many smaller pores. This increases the moisture holding capacity of the soil but at the expense of reduced infiltration and increased runoff loss of rainfall. The net result is less total water being available for the turfgrass. Therefore, the first management practice that needs to be implemented to manage moisture stress in nonirrigated turf is to alleviate soil compaction. Heavily trafficked areas should be core aerified at least once a year—preferably more than once. In fact, any area where runoff commonly occurs is a candidate for periodic aerification.

The second management practice that needs attention is N fertilization.

Contrary to popular opinion, fertilization with moderate rates of N delays the onset of drought-induced dormancy in turfgrass. Applying 2 to 3 lb N/M/ season to Kentucky bluegrass ensures good stand density, favors deeper rooting and provides for faster recovery from drought. Improved turf density increases water infiltration by slowing down the velocity of runoff water, thereby allowing more time for infiltration to take place. Deeper rooting reduces the amount of rainfall lost via percolation beyond the rootzone as well as increasing the total amount of water available to the grass. At moderate N rates, all of these favorable results can be achieved without significant increases in turfgrass evapotranspiration rates.

So far our attention has focused on increasing the amount of rainwater avail-

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able to the turfgrass. Now we need to ask if anything can be done to reduce turfgrass water use rates. The answer is yes. Research has shown that consistently mowing a grass such as Kentucky bluegrass at a moderate height of 2 to 2 1/2 inches every 3 to 5 days reduces water use rates by as much as 25%, as compared to mowing at greater heights at intervals of 10 days or so. The reason for this is that more frequent mowing at moderate heights reduces air turbulence within the grass canopy. Rather, air flows smoothly across the level surface of recently-mown grass. A higher relative humidity is maintained within the grass canopy and this reduces evapotranspiration rates. The argument that higher cutting heights have the favorable effect of keeping down soil temperatures and increasing turfgrass survival rates during drought is not valid once the height of cut exceeds 2 inches.

In the event of drought so prolonged the turfgrass dormancy occurs regardless of the management practices followed, concern must then turn to grass survival per se. When this happens, you have to be prepared to take emergency measures. Thermal death of Ken-

tucky bluegrass growing points begins when surface soil temperatures approach 105°F. Complete kill occurs at 117°F to 120°F. Once soil has dried out and water is no longer present to serve as a heat sink, surface soil temperatures of 110°F or more can arise on clear days even at air temperatures as low as 90°F. The only practical way to save the turfgrass under these conditions is to moisten the top inch or two of soil by applying about 0.2 inch of water every 5 to 7 days.

Careful monitoring of surface soil temperature will tell you when more water needs to be applied. The place and time to check soil temperatures is 2 to 3 pm on south-facing slopes. These sites are where thermal death of the turfgrass will first occur and are, therefore, the most critical areas.

What this small amount of water does is serve as a sink for radiant energy so that soil temperatures are moderated and large amounts of heat are dissipated as it evaporates. Such small amounts of water will not induce the turfgrass to break dormancy. This is crucial because more than a single dormancy/recovery cycle per season can result in significant thinning of turf.

When, despite your best efforts, turf is lost to drought and renovation becomes necessary, choice of replacement grass species and/or variety merits careful thought. Water use rates among cool-season grasses vary to the extent that there are significant differences in drought tolerance.

Drought tolerance ratings generally follow the sequence tall fescue > hard fescue > red fescue > Kentucky bluegrass > perennial ryegrass. In going from perennial ryegrass to tall fescue, the reduction in water use is typically in the range of 20 to 30%. The exact amount depends on the varieties that are compared.

Varietal drought tolerance studies have been most extensive for Kentucky bluegrass. Among the older varieties, Adelphi, Touchdown, Newport, and Baron reportedly have lower evapotranspiration rates than do Merion, Sydsport, Birka, Majestic, and Nugget. Recently reported Illinois ratings for drought tolerance indicate that Unique, Opal, and SR 2000 have high drought tolerance, while Miracle, Kenblue, Nubue, and Liberty have low tolerance.



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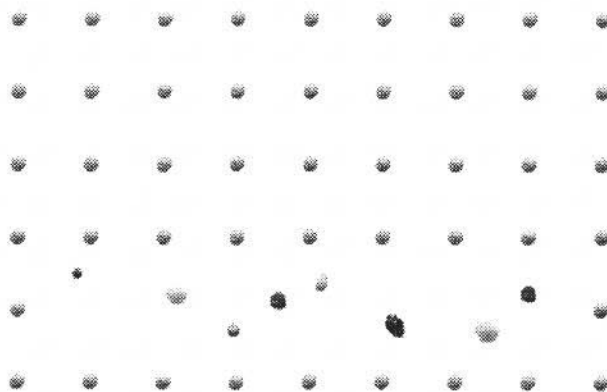
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The Quiet Golf Course

By Pat Norton

The golf course is quiet. Almost every day now the golf course is quiet. After two years of madly rushing about, trying to keep ahead of the public golfers, Cedar Creek is eerily quiet. At times out here on the course, the quiet is great. At other times, when there just doesn't seem to be any golfers out here, the quiet can be deafening. We are all having a difficult time adjusting to the quiet, slow pace of golf here at the "new Cedar Creek".

One characteristic that I'm sure that almost all public golf course superintendents possess is the ability to adjust to the maddening pace. Imagine years of service at your golf facility under these fast paced, always rushed, ultra-early morning working conditions. The golf course is always crowded with golfers. Time for course maintenance is limited throughout the week. Compromises in the daily routine, and ultimately the condition of the course, are all too common. The golfer must always be given top priority.

Suddenly one spring, everything changes. The same golf course, the exact same piece of property, sees a drop in weekly rounds of more than fifty percent. There are simply a lot less golfers. More than a few times we have all sat on the southern boundary of Cedar Creek waiting for the golfers to appear. We feel like Patton's Third Army must have felt waiting for the enemy to appear on the horizon. In this case, though, the enemy never appears.

The golfers that do eventually appear are well behaved, courteous, golf educated and appreciative of our efforts. We can't believe that this is really happening!

Needless to say, course conditioning is bound to improve. Any idiot can manage bentgrass adequately when there is almost no wear and tear put on it.

Our smaller tees, which used to receive a brutal pounding, now actually look filled in with an acceptable amount of grass covering the surface. Cultural practices, such as topdressing and

verticutting, can now be accomplished with relative ease.

I guess that the main point here is that course conditioning had better improve as play decreases. Otherwise, a guy should probably consider a career change.

Those public superintendents who work with limited time, and limited budgets, are the people that I most admire in this business. They are providing remarkably good playing conditions while contending with all of these other restraints. More importantly, these people are learning good golf **business** practices. They are more directly exposed to revenue generation, and truly realize that there is not a bottomless pit filled with cash somewhere in the clubhouse. "Doing without" is usually standard practice, which forces a few more compromises in the management scheme.

These superintendents are often the most interesting ones to converse with at seminars or monthly meetings. Spare me with the "shop talk" discussion of the latest grass variety, fertilizer, growth regulator, or piece of mowing equipment!

Instead, let's talk about the business of golf. Does course maintenance impact directly on revenue or membership levels? What are the daily policies and procedures that ensure continued success for any golf facility? What are the keys to successful long-term operation of a golf course? Those are some of the questions that should probably be asked more often at WGCSA monthly meetings.

At Cedar Creek, the critical key to success is now to attract as many members as possible in order to survive as a private club. Is good golf course management a big factor in our drive towards success?

Undoubtedly. Is it the dominant factor, the most critical factor? Not necessarily.

Many management factors must combine to create an atmosphere that will help to attract potential new mem-

bers. A good golf and social program, good restaurant and banquet hall service, and friendly staff personnel are a must. Sometimes I would suppose that I'm guilty of narrow-minded thinking—the golf course may not always be the most important management area.

The other factor in the drive towards a full membership is time. It takes time for our golfers to realize that we are seriously committed to a private club format. It also simply will take some time for three or four hundred members to come out of the woodwork and decide to plunk down the cash for private club membership.

In the meantime, we are known as "the quiet club". Area golfers are certainly not quiet in their opinions about our new club format. "That deserted golf course" or "that beautiful, empty golf course" are almost daily comments heard from disgruntled area linksters.

Our quiet situation has prompted a few changes in our course management scheme. We are keeping very tight control of maintenance expenses, including labor. Man-hours must be kept to between 300-350 hours weekly over the summer months. Fortunately, this doesn't include myself, or Gary, our assistant superintendent.

The big challenge for us, now that we are private, and oh, so quiet, is to enhance daily playing conditions enough so that potential members will be impressed enough to join here in '93. Capital improvements have been forgotten about for the foreseeable future, which simplifies our mission.

It doesn't do much good to worry about our quiet situation. My opinion and basis for security is that a high quality golf course was built here initially, and will always require a relatively high level of course conditioning. Our operating philosophy has always been, and continues to be, to strive for a certain degree of quality. If we let the golf course go into the tank in order to save a few bucks then we certainly won't succeed as a private club.

I must admit that for my own selfish reasons, I am sometimes happy to see the golf course so quiet. Best be careful, though! Pretty soon now this golf course will wake up, will be teaming with 300 plus members and their guests, and will require a lot more effort to keep it looking and playing good.

Considering that, I guess I'll enjoy the peace and quiet while it's here.



SOME NEW POLICIES AND A FEW SUGGESTIONS

By Monroe S. Miller

This feature has tried to keep WGCSA members informed about the Town of Casey lawsuits and how each could potentially affect Wisconsin golf course operations.

It bothered a number of us that the GCSAA seemed to "ignore" the impact the Supreme Court decision could have nationwide, before the opinion was given last year.

A year ago, just about this time (early summer), I quizzed a GCSAA staff person on the matter and again it seemed to be dismissed as either unimportant or unlikely that the Supreme Court would rule in favor of local preemption.

Questions directed to Charlie Passios during the question/answer phase of his presentation at the 1991 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium shed little light on GCSAA concerns, positions or even basic understanding and awareness of the issue.

Well, two GCSAA news releases—the first on March 11 and the second on May 4—clarify the matter, both directly and indirectly. For those who haven't seen these position statements, here they are:

GCSAA Supports Coalition Barring Local Ordinances On Pesticide Restrictions

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has joined the Coalition for Sensible Pesticide Policy (CSPP). GCSAA's board of directors recently voted to join the coalition, which supports proposed federal and state legislation that would prevent local governments from creating and enforcing pesticide ordinances.

The coalition's stated objective is to "secure sensible, uniform federal/state regulation of pesticides by passing preemptive legislation, while allowing local input into the federal/state regulatory process." CSPP membership includes representatives from manufacturers and users of turf and ornamental chemical specialty products.

GCSAA president Bill Roberts said it is important that federal and state legislators recognize the importance of lim-

iting the authority of pesticide regulations to state and federal agencies. "The complexities of pesticide regulations and the education process needed for compliance make it imperative that these regulations be consistent—at least on a state-level basis," Roberts said.

GCSAA Takes Stand Against Local Pesticide Ordinances

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has issued a position paper stating that only federal and state governments should be allowed to administer pesticide laws.

GCSAA does not favor local government regulation of pesticide use due to the multitude of different and complex rules that could proliferate small geographic areas. The association believes that consistent regulation, provided by federal and state agencies, is needed to ensure successful education and safety training for pesticide applicators.

A Supreme Court ruling last June found that federal legislation had not specifically excluded local governments from regulated pesticide use, thereby enabling local governments to proceed with restrictive ordinances.

"Golf course superintendents do not object to reasonable pesticide regulations—as long as they are consistent," said Charlie Passios, GCSAA director and board government relations liaison. "Inconsistent and random regula-

tions across a state could actually result in more violations because area-specific compliance information may not be well communicated to the end user." "Consistent state and federal regulations allow effective educational training that concentrates on the science and safety of pesticide use," Passios said. "Myriad local regulations would dilute this educational process."

Russ Weisensel's EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of the F/RoW/T Coalition notes that preemption is moving forward in Washington, D.C. Russ reports that "the DORFA subcommittee of the House Agricultural Committee was scheduled to mark-up the FIFRA reauthorization bill (HR 3742) on May 19th and May 20th. As originally proposed, the preemption language in this bill was very weak compared with HR 3850. But, since the strict preemption bill now has some 90 co-authors, we are hoping to get favorable action in the subcommittee. Moving the bill out of the full committee probably will not happen until we have a strong certainty that the full House of Representatives would support the bill. With the congressional scandals, the election year, the many newly drawn districts, and the more than 50 federal legislators deciding not to seek reelection, there is a strong theory that members of congress would prefer not to take up a controversial bill this session."



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Those in attendance at the Evergreen C.C. meeting in April will recall that Pat Norton took the floor to share his experience of a recent OSHA inspection of the Cedar Creek golf course shop. It wasn't a real pretty story that Pat told.

The following suggestions, entitled "When OSHA Comes Calling", were received from WISCONSIN SAFETY AND HEALTH NEWS, published by the Wisconsin Council of Safety.

"The Safety Council of Palm Beach County, Inc., recommends that all organizations establish policy and define procedures for dealing with regulatory inspection visits. At a minimum, the Council says in its newsletter *The Safety Pen*, when an inspector arrives you should do the following:

1. Identify the inspector.
 - a. Ask to see credentials.
 - b. Write down the relevant information including the inspector's name, agency affiliation, address, telephone number and statutory authority under which the inspection is being conducted.
2. Make an appropriate company official responsible for interacting with the inspector.
3. Determine the scope of the inspection: ask the inspector what areas of the company activity are of interest. Discover what has triggered the inspection.
4. Advise legal counsel of the presence of the inspector.
5. Take notes on: what is seen. What is said. Who is spoken to. Any samples or copies taken.
6. When in doubt on any question, do not answer. Ask the inspector to put the question in writing, addressed to the company counsel.
7. Prepare a memorandum of the visit as soon as the inspector leaves.

This feature is information only and is not legal advice. If you need legal advice, see your organization's attorney.

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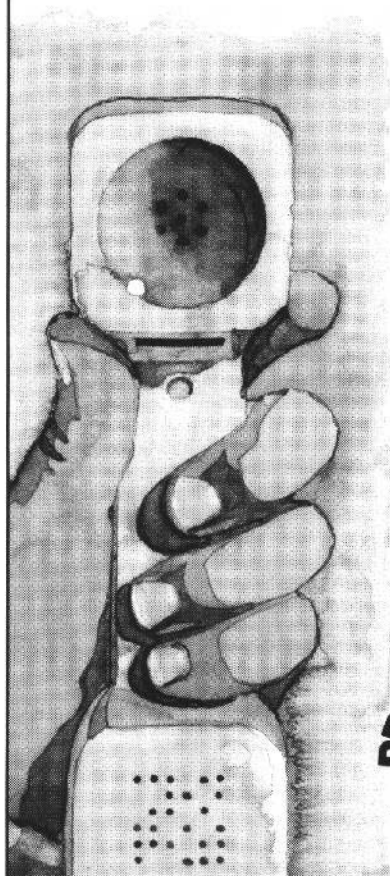
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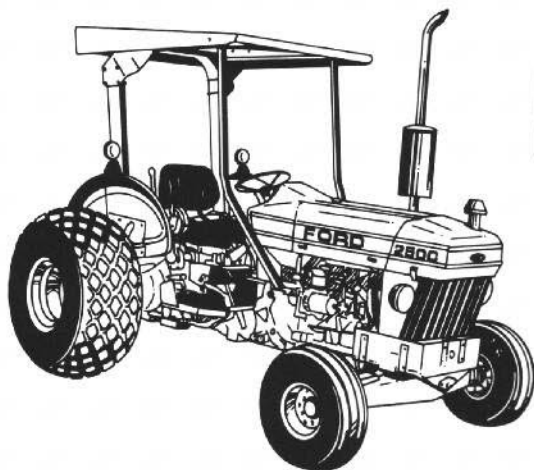
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- Industrial box-beam front axle.
- Optional front-wheel-drive assist shifts on the go.
- Choice 8x2 constant mesh transmission, 6x4 manual-reversing transmission, or 8x8 power-reversing transmission with torque converter. All equipped with independent PTO.
- Vertical or horizontal exhaust.
- Optional 2800-lb. loader.
- Three-point hydraulics powered by 10.5-gpm gear pump.

You wanted a versatile and durable utility tractor! Stop by and see them today.

RANSOMES GREENS 3000 BRINGS GREENS CARE INTO THE 21st CENTURY

Versatile reel options

are all interchangeable. Choose from 9 blade front mounted Verti-Groom, 9 blade Greens, 7 blade Fairway and Tees, or Verti-cut reels.

Armchair comfort

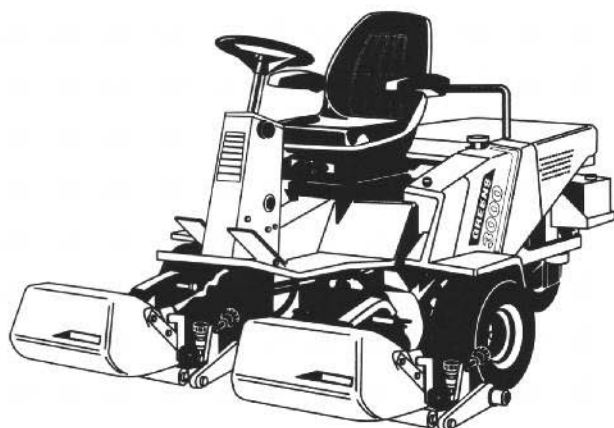
reduces operator fatigue. Adjustable tilt steering wheel and power steering. All controls and gauges are in easy reach and sight. Padded seat with adjustable back rest.

High cutting frequency

of 138 cuts per yard at 4 mph with 9 blade reels.

Cutting height adjusts

quickly and easily without the use of tools to as low as 1/8".



RANSOMES

GREENS 3000

WHERE GREAT IDEAS START

For a **FREE** demonstration contact: