



The Surrounds

By Wayne G. Horman



This past winter was extremely hard on a number of courses this winter. The Fox Valley and Madison area seemed by far the hardest hit. Most of the damage was caused by ice selecting not only *Poa annua*, but also some bentgrass. The cool weather of mid May didn't help matters either. A lot of damage was slow to fill back in, and many superintendents who pregerminated bentgrass, still were waiting for it to grow in.

After visiting many damaged courses, it is hard not to become sympathetic to each superintendent's personal situation. It's not that there isn't concern or remorse about their situation, but going into these areas and seeing most of the courses with some lost turf, it becomes almost too routine. One blessing is that misery loves company, and knowing that in most cases your neighbor wasn't excluded from nature's wrath helps somewhat in easing the trauma of dead turf.

Recently, I stopped at Butte des Morts in Appleton, to review the horrible damage that Steve Schmidt said he had on his course. Talk about a superintendent who is blowing smoke; his damage was minute compared to other courses down in Oshkosh. Of course, even a 1% loss of turf on greens can be considered unacceptable, but in a year that some consider the worst ice damage in 35 years, only a small loss may be a blessing. Think of it as nature's own "Growth Regulator".

Not everyone lost turf; other areas of the state came out in great shape! The Milwaukee and Stevens Point/Wausau area missed most of the ice damage. For those of you who looked great coming out of winter, mark it down as your turn for good luck.

While a number of superintendents worried about how much damage they would have, Roy Zehren of Natural Athletic Turf was down in Ft. Walton Beach, Florida playing golf. On March 14th, Roy shot his first hole-in-one at the Ft. Walton Municipal Golf Course. He used an 8 iron on a 138 yard Par 3 hole, and the ball bounced twice and dropped in.

The personnel changes continue throughout Wisconsin this spring. Steve Dobish resigned as superintendent at Oshkosh CC to pursue his own interests, and Kris Pinkerton has resigned at Waupaca CC to take the Oshkosh CC position.

Thornbury Creek GC in Green Bay, filled their assistant position with Mike Wirth. Mike is a recent UW turf grad, and formerly previously worked at University Ridge GC in Madison. Thornbury Creek is a new nine hole golf course near Green Bay.

Carl Dowse has left Reinders Irrigation, and signed on with The Bruce Company. Carl will handle the irrigation work on all the new golf course construction projects that the Bruce Company builds.

One of the projects the Bruce Company is working on is a Bob Lohman design in Madison. Bishops Bay Country Club is under construction on Lake Mendota. This proposed private club has selected Mike Semler, formerly of Cherokee CC in Madison, as the new superintendent.

George Magnum, former assistant to Mike at Cherokee CC, has moved on to a new 18 hole course west of Madison. James Watts, who owns a landscaping company, is building the course in his backyard. Quite a backyard, with a tree nursery and sod farm just out the backdoor.

The "New" La Crosse Country Club has hired Jack Tripp as the new superintendent. Jack, an Ohio State grad comes from Wichita, Kansas, where he was the superintendent at Terradyne Resort Hotel and Country Club.

Pat Meeker, Owner and Superintendent at Oak Ridge CC in Milton, purchased another golf course. This one was back in his old stomping grounds of Richland Center. Richland CC is a nine hole course about an 1 hour west of Madison.

I was reading through the newspaper the other day, and read how a golf course found some old fossils in some soil. No, not some old greens chairman, but rather a Mastodon tooth. Eric Peterson, owner and superintendent at Foxboro GC in Oregon, was mixing

some peat brought in from a nearby farm, and hit something hard. This hard piece turned out to be a 6" tooth from a Mastodon.

Over the winter Oneida Golf and Riding Club took down their stables. So they aren't actually a riding club any longer. However, due to the expense of changing the name, they will keep the "riding" portion of the name. Someone remembered that they still ride golf carts, so the "riding" portion still fulfills a name.

Only one notification on new births this month. Dan Schuld (Portage CC) and his wife, Mary, became parents for the second time on April 26th. The baby girl, Danielle Marie, was 7 lbs 12oz, and is doing well.

Tom Wiese from Quit-qui-Oc GC in Elkhart Lake and Bruce Worzella from West Bend CC are proud papa's these days. Rachel Wiese and Beth Worzella both played on the UW Women's Golf Team. Rachel also was awarded the "Most Dedicated Player".

I had the opportunity to play golf at University Ridge GC with the Worzella family, in the UW Women's Golf Fund Raiser. I came away with the big raffle prize, a Free Condo in Hawaii to use for a week. Not bad, but one little catch, you have to get there! This may be a raffle prize at the WTA Summer Field Day, so don't forget the date, August 17th!

Has anyone seen Dr. Frank Rossi lately? Can you believe the new hairdo! He actually looks like a Prof now with that short cut! Must have something to do with lower heights on greens with summer now here.

Finally, the position of Manager of the Noer Center was recently filled. Scott Macintosh, a Masters grad from University of Massachusetts was selected, and is already on board. Scott has a terrific background in turf. He worked for his father, a superintendent at Oak Ridge CC, in Agawam, Massachusetts. Scott's going to be a busy man this summer—his wife is expecting twins soon! If you get a chance, give him a call or stop by and welcome him to Wisconsin.

Talk with you soon! 