

The next stop was at a new, snazzy golf course called Shadow Glen. It was in a remote area between the interstate and Lake Michigan. It was a private course with only 100 members, mainly from the Fox Valley and Milwaukee, but a few from Madison and a few more from Chicago. He couldn't figure out how, in this day and age and in this state a "Men Only" club could exist. But it was there.

He thought he had followed Frank Van Gilder's directions to the shop, but somehow he had lost his way. He couldn't even see any evidence of a golf course. He wasted little time before stopping to ask a farmer how to get there.

"It's not easy to find," the farmer said from the seat of his AC 200. "They've got it hidden real well, which suits us from around here just fine. They're a bunch of uppity out-of-towners." Ten minutes later he was in Frank's parking lot. Frank drove up as he got out of the car. It was a generational thing, but he got a little nervous when a man gives him a hug, even a little one. Frankie squeezed the pudding out of him! "I'm glad to see you, too," he said to Frank while extending his right hand.

In Wisconsin, Thursday is "Men's Day", at least after the lunch hour. But at Shadow Glen, everyday was "Men's Day". And this day there were very few players. It was a surprise.

"We get 7,000 or 8,000 rounds a year." Frank said with a smile on his face. "But when they tee it up, it better be good. Really good."

"You don't deserve this, Frank," he teased.

"I know I don't." Frank replied with a sheepish look. "It's like a fantasy — a golf course but no golfers."

The architect had done a masterful job of tucking the course away to provide maximum privacy to the players. In terms of condition, it was close to perfect. Frank loved the occasional easterly cool breeze from Lake Michigan, giving the property a moderate climate.

He left Frank, had some supper at a fast food restaurant and went to bed early. The trip was starting to wear on him and he needed plenty of sleep to finish up with the same enthusiasm he had started with.

It was before daybreak when he left to motel and started out. The birds were singing, the stars were still out and the air was calm. Even away from the golf course, the thought "great

night for irrigation" went through his mind.

At sunrise he was rounding the southern tip of Lake Winnebago, going west toward a stop in Waupaca county at the Tip Top CC. He was going to visit Gene Hudson.

Tip Top CC was a well established older club, one that would be fun for anyone to get established on. That had been Gene's plan. But he has stayed for longer than he or anyone else had thought. He liked it too much to leave. Moments after arriving, it was easy to see why.

The course was nicer than he had expected and conditions were really great. Gene and his wife and kids lived in a large old Victorian house in town that they had fixed themselves. Its expansive lawn was fenced with a white picket fence. Gene had hosted a monthly meeting a while back, but he'd missed it for some reason. He was really glad to have finally visited.

After Gene's stop he drove south and west, gradually working his way closer and closer to home. Next on the schedule was the heart of the triangle from Prairie du Chien to LaCrosse to Madison. Two courses, fairly close together, would round out Friday.

It was embarrassing to him that he hadn't driven to here before. It was a little more than an hour from home to either golf course. Butter Valley CC and The Barn Golf Club weren't more than ten miles apart. Curiously, Steve Kowalski and Phil Brock had worked together two summers at his place. They were both fun-loving guys, crazy enough to have driven their old boss wild more than a few times in a day.

He stopped at The Barn CC first and they were both there. The course was named for the set of farm buildings, minus the house, that had been nicely preserved as a backdrop to the fifth hole. The corn crib, silo, hoghouse and chicken coop were pretty much

decorative, Phil told him. But the barn was secured and used for cold storage of equipment and fertilizer. The buildings had been freshly painted a deep red and trimmed out in white. The dark green shingles on the roofs were the perfect accent.

Butter Valley had the same kind of rural site The Barn GC had. And both courses were supported by modest sized towns, dictating a modest budget for each course. That didn't bother those two. They made the most of what they had, making up for some resources by simple hard work and creativeness. The great attitude that each had would ensure a long and happy life. He doubted they gave a hoot or a holler about moving to "a bigger course"; that kind of presumed status was of no consequence — none — to either of them. They were, to their old boss, the very models of success.

The evening was mild, and couples' golf had filled the BVCC course. These happy, middle class, so typically mid-western men and women demonstrated yet another reason why so many, like the thirteen kids he had driven hither and yonder to see, loved managing a golf course.

It had been a grand week and the good feelings that he had made him forget, for the moment anyway, his weariness. If there is anything in life better than what he'd experienced this past week, he was anxious to learn about it. The sunshine, the scenic Wisconsin landscape and friendly towns, and the thirteen members of his extended family made a dream come true. He was happy just to be alive.

The drive home went quickly. He thought about the notes he was going to write each of his hosts, thank you notes about how they had made his life so rich. And the thought occurred to him that he was going to do this again, soon. Real soon. 🍷

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GCSAA CONFERENCE TOPS EXPECTATIONS!

By Monroe S. Miller

I sometimes think maybe our conference imitates life. How often has a bad golf season been followed by a good one? Quite often, I've noticed. Sometimes good news follows bad and good weather comes after poor weather. So I am not surprised that the GCSAA conference in San Francisco turned out to be one of the best — a "top five" — I have attended since the first in 1973. After the "dud in Dallas", my hopes were high that this year's meeting would be a whole lot better. And it surely was.

The flight out was the first hint of a good week. Clear skies, on-time flight from Madison to Minneapolis to San Francisco. Old "Northwest" Airlines surprised me—luggage arrived in San Francisco when I did!

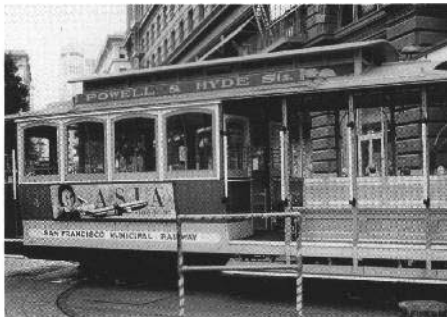
And the weather was fantastic! Expecting earthquakes and mudslides, I was an easy one to please. But the warmth was so welcome and felt so good. Bay area residents were as happy as convention goers were. Sunny California really was sunny with 90s in San Diego and L.A., 70s and 80s in and around Monterey and San Francisco. There was a little early morning fog a couple of mornings, but not a drop of rain while I was there. Two weeks after we left, total disaster swept through Monterey, isolating the towns on the Peninsula. Salinas was evacuated. San Jose was ripped by roaring water. Wine country towns like Napa and St. Helena were clobbered again. One day the severe weather even forced the closing of the San Francisco International Airport. It seems we found the perfect envelope of time for conference.

After the hotel fiasco last year, which I still feel lucky to have lived through, I made certain I was in headquarters this year. It was well worth it — the Marriott is literally across the street from the Moscone Center. It was the pinnacle of convenience, albeit it costly. When you pay your hotel bill, you sort of expect you have bought a couch or a chair, too.

By the time I was settled into the hotel, it was mid-afternoon. So I wandered over in the direction of Union



San Francisco this year...



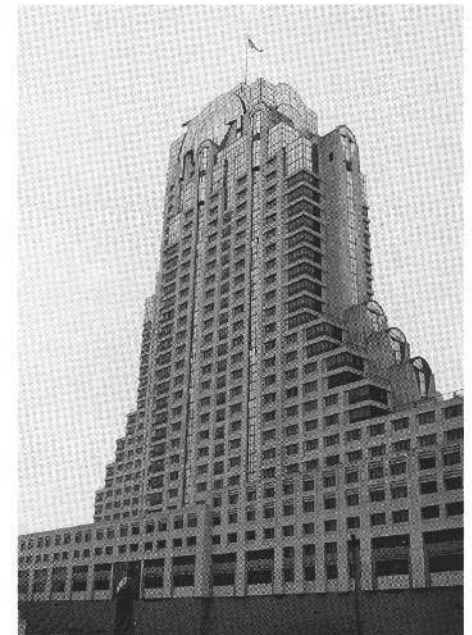
A trademark of San Francisco — the cable car.



San Francisco's Chinatown.



The park just north of San Francisco named in honor of native Wisconsinite John Muir.



The SF Marriott, headquarters hotel.



QB Steve Young, DB Hanks and DL Stubblefield at Macy's, a few blocks from headquarters hotel.

Square. About three blocks from the hotel was a Macy's, a good place to buy good coffee. I stumbled into a stage area where, in an hour (4 p.m.), San Francisco 49er QB Young, DB Hanks, DL Stubblefield, Coach Seifert and owner DeBartelo were to receive the Waterford Crystal Superbowl Trophy. Since I am both a Packer fan and a rubber neck from way back, I parked myself in the front row and waited for their arrival. As expected, based on experience, they were late. But it was still worth it to see them. Steve Young is bigger than I would have guessed, Merton Hanks has a girlfriend who is at least 6'2" tall, and George Seifert acted like he was in pain from having to attend the event.

The great weather only inspired individuals who love golf courses to see as many as they could in an area where there are lots of great ones. A drive to Monterey Peninsula area presented the opportunity to see Poppy Hills, The Links at Spanish Bay, Pebble Beach, Cypress Point, Spyglass, and Monterey Bay C.C. I was reminded of Yogi Berra's quote "when you come to a fork in the road, take it" at one place in the Carmel Valley. A sign at a fork in the road pointed left with the sign PLAY and indicating a golf course, and an arrow pointing right to PRAY and indicating a church. Golfers do both!

What a great coincidence to be in Monterey on the 50th anniversary of the 1945 publication of John Steinbeck's immortal tale, *Cannery Row*. You can still walk up to the door of "Doc's Lab" at 800 Cannery Row.

The trip to San Francisco can take you through the neat town of Carmel, known for its famous one-time mayor, Clint Eastwood, and his restaurant, The Hog's Breath. It is also a chance to leave the main drag by a mile or so and see Salinas, Steinbeck's birthplace. The whole area of Monterey, Pacific Grove and Salinas was the setting of many books he wrote and that were read by millions like me — *Cannery Row*, *The Long Valley*, *Sweet Thursday*, *East of Eden*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Tortilla Flat*, *the Wayward Bus* and *Grapes of Wrath*.

Some Badgers made it across the Golden State Bridge to Muir Woods, named for a Wisconsin farm boy and a UW-Madison alum, John Muir. The size of the trees in that park defy description. They truly are nature's skyscrapers. Napa Valley and Sonoma Valley aren't far from San Francisco and were popular side trips for many.

The City

San Francisco is an interesting and historic city. Most I visited with were thrilled to be there — "why can't we have conference here every year?" one asked somewhat rhetorically. Good question. Unlike some of the other cities we seem to have to visit, this one felt somewhat safe. The people weren't mean like they were in downtown Dallas, for a recent example. Granted they had more bums with their hands out than anyone would like to see, but they weren't aggressive. And you wonder where the cops were when one of these slugs dropped his trousers in front of Tony Roma's restaurant to take care of his daily chore. I was walking down Powell Street and when a panhandler asked for money, I pointed out a sign in a window *NOW HIRING*. I doubt he took my advice, likely preferring begging to working.

Great timing for conference in another way, too. It coincided with the opening of a new Border's Bookstore on Union Square. Brand new by a couple of days, it was four floors full of books and music. Open early and closed late. Polite employees were the standard, just like the Border's in Madison. Mike Lee came out as I going in one day and he was loaded down with reading treasures. You cannot beat a good bookstore.

I suppose you would have to be from Wisconsin to notice, again this

year, the strong Wisconsin connection to conference. Let me count the ways:

1. Keynote Rocky Bleier was raised in Appleton, son of a tavern owner.
2. Dr. Milt Engelke, recipient of the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award, grew up in Grant county, received a B.S. degree from Platteville, a M.S. and Ph.D. from the UW - Madison.
3. Dr. Frank Rossi from the UW-Madison Department of Horticulture delivered a thoughtful and persuasive lecture Friday afternoon.
4. Dr. Wayne Kussow was the speaker at the Noer Foundation meeting on Sunday. Wayne has received the largest grant ever made by the Noer group.
5. THE GRASS ROOTS finished first in the chapter publication contest.
6. The show floor was dominated by companies manufacturing in our state — Jacobsen, John Deere, Toro, Foley, Milorganite, and on and on.

GRADES

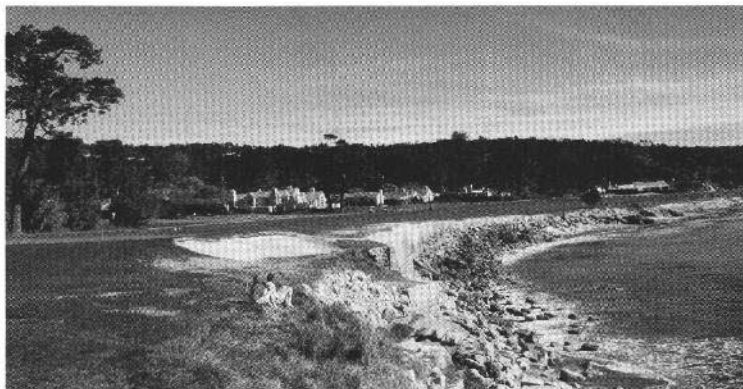
Opening Session. Excellent. Reasonable in length, a good job by Joe Baidy in keeping it moving. Bleier was great and we were proud of Engelke. The entertainment was a nice touch but too loud and too busy. Bleier signed autographs at the end until everybody was satisfied. One guy, on the ball, had the Rock sign five different Sports Illustrated covers
(Continued on page 35)



John Steinbeck's home in Salinas, only a few miles from Monterey.



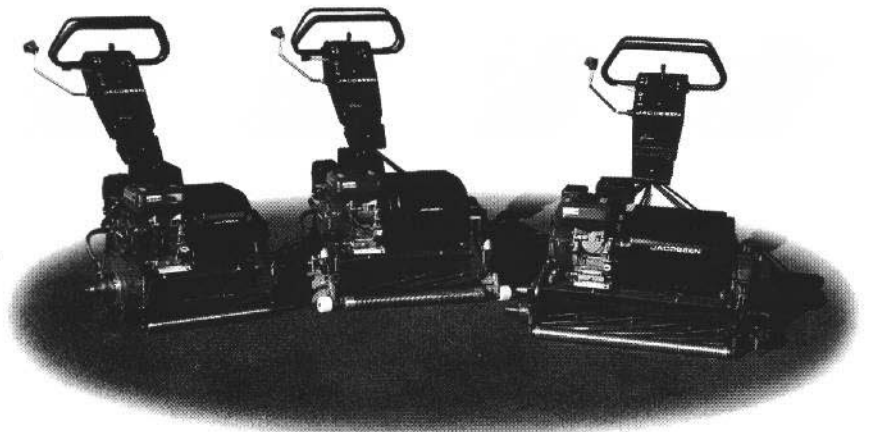
Appleton's Rocky Bleier was the Opening Session keynote speaker.



The 18th at Pebble Beach.

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(Continued from page 33)

that he had appeared on, either singly or in a play with other Steelers. Joe Baidy must have lived in a pretty good neighborhood to have Rocky as a neighbor!

The whole affair earns my highest mark of **A+**.

Concurrent Sessions

All lectures I attended were good. Some were really good. There is almost too much available — I wasn't the only one who wanted to be two or three places at once. I guess that's why they offer audio cassettes and the Proceedings. The rooms were excellent with good acoustics, chairs for everyone with room between rows, and good audio/visual equipment. The room locations were close to everything, adding to the overall conference convenience I appreciate. Really, the Moscone facilities were superb despite exhibitor grouching about the two separate halls.

This feature on Friday earned a solid grade of **A**.

The Show

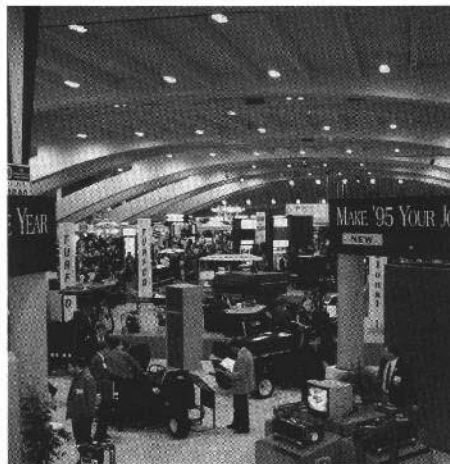
It could be my favorite part of conference week. The show is bigger every year. And better. I cannot find any fault, not even the split show floor areas. Exhibitors put on a great effort at making information about their products available. The isles were wide, the two halls were roomy, and the convention center food was better than anywhere we have ever been before. This year seemed to have been a down year for oddball exhibitors — that's good. Also, the trend toward fewer freebies continued and that is okay as long as the traditional ones remain!

Give the 1995 Golf Course Show a sparkling **A+**.

Banquet

I thought it was a great evening, due in no small part to the great company at our table; Randy and JoAnn Smith, Wayne and JoAnn Otto, Rod and Janelle Johnson, a couple from Canada and another banquet bachelor like me. He was from Colorado, but his father had gotten a Ph.D. from the UW-Madison in — you won't believe it — Soil Science. This proved once again how small the world really is. The meal was good, head table antics not excessive and excellent entertainment.

Give this event an **A**.



A bird's eye view of one of the show halls.

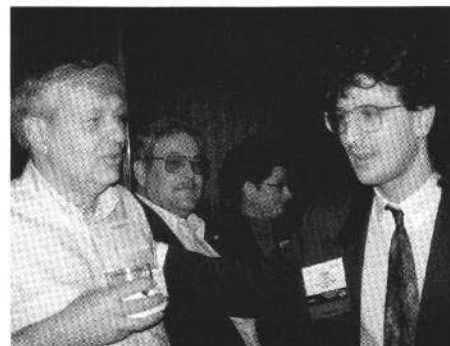
Environmental General Session

I had high hopes for this meeting and really was excited for it to happen. I had secured my front row seat so as not to miss a thing and in hopes of getting some hot GRASS ROOTS pictures. Sorry to say, I was disappointed. Everyone did a good job, but it was sort of a mutual admiration group. No arguments, no stimulating speeches, no new ideas. We pretty much knew what John Stossel was going to say. It was a good sized audience with expectations like mine.

Many felt, at the end, the same way I did. Give this morning a solid **C**.



Dr. Rossi gave one of the best lectures at conference.



Wayne Kussow, Roger and Suzie Bell and Frank Rossi at the UW alumni gathering.



The most creative display?

USGA Green Section Educational Conference

I never miss this one. Good thing, too. This year moved my assessment higher than it has been in the past couple of years. Turf tips are the real reason to go, assuring a grade that never ever will be below a C. The other speakers can move the grade up, and did so this year. Mike Fumento gave a great lecture centered around his book *Science Under Siege*. The outrages he shared with us were enough to drive normal people crazy and inspire you to invite him to Wisconsin to speak. And I thought Ray Keyser, a former Vermont governor who loves golf and translates that love into an active role on behalf of the game, had a great story to tell.

Three cheers and a well deserved grade of **A**.



Mike Semler, Mike Lee and Kendall Markquardt at the alumni meeting.



Native Wisconsinite and UW-Madison grad Milt Engelke was honored as a distinguished service award recipient.

Overall

No complaints from me, other than the city bums and the excessive cost. Count me among the satisfied customers (members). Thanks to GCSAA staff. Someday I intend to find out just who the shakers and movers are for this annual event.

Some may disagree, although I bet not many, but this meeting earned an **A**.

It was good to see . . .

- Lee Bruce attending his first GCSAA conference.
- Clay Loyd on special assignment, a brief respite from retirement.
- Ilona and Bob Gray, 3,000 miles from home
- Willie Roberts sans necktie (a rare sight!).
- A great turnout for the UW-Madison alumni meeting.
- A robust crowd at the Wisconsin/Milorganite Hospitality Room. Terry Ward was a superb greeter.
- Tuck and Becky Tate, looking in the pink of good health.
- Chapter editor friends.
- Stan Zontek, Jim Snow, Jim Moore and the other USGA Green Section guys.

Final thoughts . . .

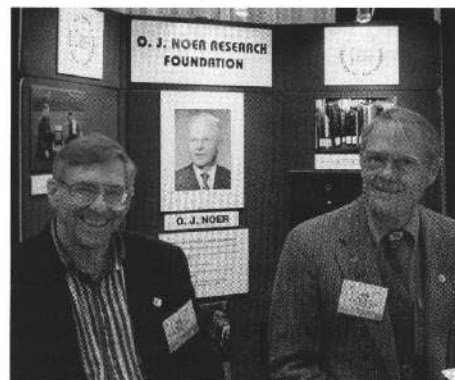
The GCSAA conference was an excellent final tune-up for the 1995 season, and opening day in Wisconsin followed conference by a little more than a month on a lot of golf courses. Lots of memories were made, friendships renewed and business connections established. What will you remember about the '95 San Francisco meeting? Here are a few things that will come to my mind.

San Francisco is one of America's great cities, great fun and great coffee. Great food, too. It is the Cafe Mozart and Zuni Cafe. Fog City Diner. Fog. It's the San Francisco Golf Club and the Olympic Golf Club. Cable cars and Lombard Street. Fisherman's Wharf and Pier 37. Alcatraz. Union Square and the Westin St. Francis. It's Chinatown, the Transamerica Building and Wells Fargo Bank. Powell Street and Market Street. Border's new bookstore and McDonald's used bookstore. The Moscone Center. Book signing at GCSAA Central. Showtime. The Examiner and The Chronicle. Great memories. Good weather and bad roads. Traffic, air pollution and very visible earthquake damage. Candlestick Park. It is the "City by the Bay."

I hope we go back real soon. 🍷



Dr. Jim Watson and Dr. Wayne Kussow at the Noer Foundation meeting.



Don Stein is entirely dedicated to the NOER Foundation.



Wayne and JoAnn Otto enjoying dinner at the annual banquet.



Lee Bruce visits with Randy and JoAnn Smith.



Randy Witt and Dr. Houston B. Couch discuss "Diseases of Turfgrass".



And Orlando next year!



Jim Hofmeister and David Legg in the Ransomes booth. Jim now lives in Lincoln, Nebraska.

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Super/Pro to Benefit O.J. Noer Foundation and The Golf Foundation of Wisconsin

On Wednesday, May 31, golf course superintendents and golf professionals will join forces for the special purpose of promoting turfgrass research and junior golf in the state of Wisconsin. The event promises to be well worth attending and will be held in Madison at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility and at the University Ridge Golf Course.

The day's schedule will begin with a "Morning at the Noer Facility". Dr. Frank Rossi and Facility Manager Tom Schwab are arranging a tour of the facilities and will highlight the morning with a walk through of the turfgrass research plots and demonstrations areas.

Following lunch at the Noer Facility, golf course superintendents and golf professionals will form two person teams representing their clubs in a spirited golf event at the adjoining University Ridge Golf Course. A Chapman Event (alternate shot) will determine which team will lay claim to the title of Super/Pro. There will also be a separate grouping for those who do not fall within the ranks of superintendent or golf professional but who are also supportive of our efforts.

Plan on attending! It promises to be a great day and a great opportunity to "show off" the Noer Facility. Entry forms were to have been mailed in late April with a deadline for entries of May 17.

WGCSA

Past President Bob Boltz Succumbs to Cancer

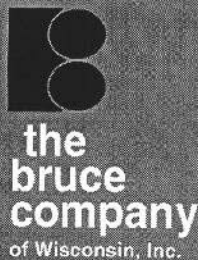
Bob Boltz, president of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association in 1983, passed away on March 16, 1995 in San Diego, California. While in Wisconsin, he was the golf course superintendent at Brynwood Country Club.

Many of Bob's friends in Wisconsin only recently learned of his struggle with cancer. He wrote a letter to friends, asking to hear from them all. He dubbed his support group "Team Nutz and Boltz."

Bob and his wife Pam studied to learn as much about his illness as quickly as they could. They learned of treatment options, sought out the best doctors, and near the end, went to Mexico for alternative therapy. Although he fought hard and valiently, his illness overcame him.

For those who wish to donate in memory of Bob, send a contribution to:

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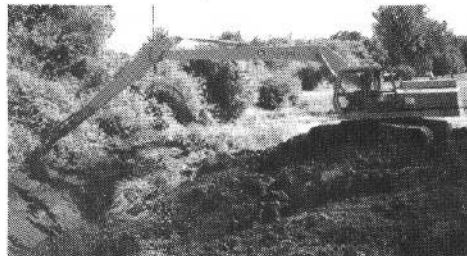
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Ball Roll Comparison: Soft Spike Versus Traditional Metal Spikes

By John Morrow and Karl Dannenberger
Department of Horticulture and Crop Science, The Ohio State University

EDITOR'S NOTE: A lot of discussion about the soft spike issue has taken place among golf course superintendents and among players at Wisconsin golf courses. A few have even gone ahead and prohibited metal spikes for the 1995 season. At this point, discussions and decisions seem based on assumptions and empirical evidence rather than any research. The article below puts some numbers on the topic. I happened to see Karl Dannenberger at the Marriott Hotel in San Francisco and visited with him briefly about this article. It appeared in the January/February 1995, Vol. 45, No. 1 issue of DIVOTS, the official publication of the Miami (Ohio) Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association. Richard Boehm is the editor and allows reprints from the chapter publication. Thanks to him and the MVGCSA members.

Incidentally, Karl mentioned to me that he was going to try to honor an invitation from Dr. Frank Rossi to speak at our EXPO 96 next January.

According to a USGA study, the average golfer takes 28 paces per green and the average golf shoe has 12 spikes; 28 paces times 24 spikes yields 672 impressions per player per green; 672 impressions times 18 greens equals 12,096 impressions per round per player. Assuming a course receives its daily average of 200 rounds, the greens receive 2,419,200 impressions every day, which comes to more than 72.5 million spike marks each month.

In theory, a golf ball rolling across a green pocked with spike marks would not roll as far as a ball on an unmarked green. This is due to the fact that each time the ball strikes a spike mark, it briefly loses contact with the putting surface. Over a distance of several feet, these subtle bounces may cause a significant reduction in ball roll.

Soft spikes have recently been gaining acceptance with golf course superintendents and golfers as a viable alternative to traditional metal spikes. This experiment was conducted to determine if use of soft spikes in lieu of traditional metal spikes would have a significant effect on ball roll.

Methods

During the autumn of 1994, a study was initiated at the Ohio State University Turfgrass Research Center in Columbus to compare the effects of soft versus metal spikes on ball roll. The study was conducted on a creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis palustris* Huds. cv. Penncross) turf maintained at 3/16th of an inch. The treatments included soft spikes (Softspikes, Alexandria, VA), metal spikes (Footjoy) and an untreated control. Each treatment consisted of walking with the soft or metal spikes for 10 minutes within a plot measuring 2 X 12 feet. The control did not receive a walking treatment. A single person, 5 feet 11

inches in height and weighing 160 pounds, was used as the walker throughout the study. The shoes used in the study were size 10 Footjoys. Upon completion of the walking, a stimpmeter was used to measure the distance a golf ball rolled. The treatments were conducted four times between 20 October and 7 November between the hours of 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Each treatment was replicated three times in a completely randomized design.

Results and Discussion

Three out of the four reading dates showed a significant ($P = 0.05$) increase in ball roll with the soft spikes compared to both the metal spikes and the control (Figure 1). The initial readings taken on 20 October showed no difference in ball roll between the soft and metal spikes; however both were significantly ($P = 0.05$) greater than the control.

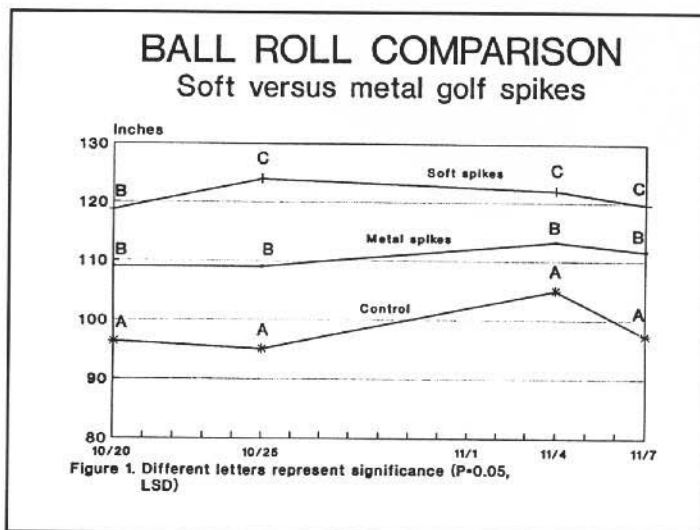


Figure 1. Different letters represent significance ($P=0.05$, LSD)

The control was consistently the shortest ball roll treatment. This may seem counterintuitive; however, the control plots were not walked upon, while the soft and metal spike treatments received intensive traffic from walking. In essence, the walking served as a light "rolling". As a result, the metal spiked treatment, even with the spike marks, rolled further than the control which did not receive the "rolling".

Although the comparison between soft and metal spikes on a putting green setting was somewhat "amplified" by confining the research to a small plot area, the significance of the data cannot be dismissed. Soft spikes

are more likely to result in increased ball roll in situations where greens become excessively "spiked-up" by use of traditional metal spikes. Greens that receive excessive play or are smaller in size are more likely to see the effects of slower ball roll caused by spike marks and are therefore the most likely candidates to experience an increase in green speed with the use of soft spikes.

Two potential benefits of using soft spikes were observed while conducting the experiment. First was the striking visual difference between the soft and metal spike treatments. The metal spiked plots looked literally "chewed up" after the ten minutes of walking; in contrast, the soft spiked plots looked healthy and could barely be distinguished from the control plots. Second, we observed a noticeable difference in the "trueness" of ball roll between the soft and metal spiked treatments, especially as ball speed declined. In the soft spike plots, the ball rolled true, even as the ball slowed; while in the metal spiked plots the ball was more apt to vary in its course, especially as ball speed decreased.

This study was conducted during the latter part of October and the beginning of November. If the study had been conducted in the spring or in the middle of the summer when growth patterns are different, the data may vary. Although further studies need to be conducted, we would expect similar data trends to occur.

Trade name and company name of equipment used in this study are included for the benefit of the reader and does not imply any endorsement or preferential treatment of the product by The Ohio State University. ♣

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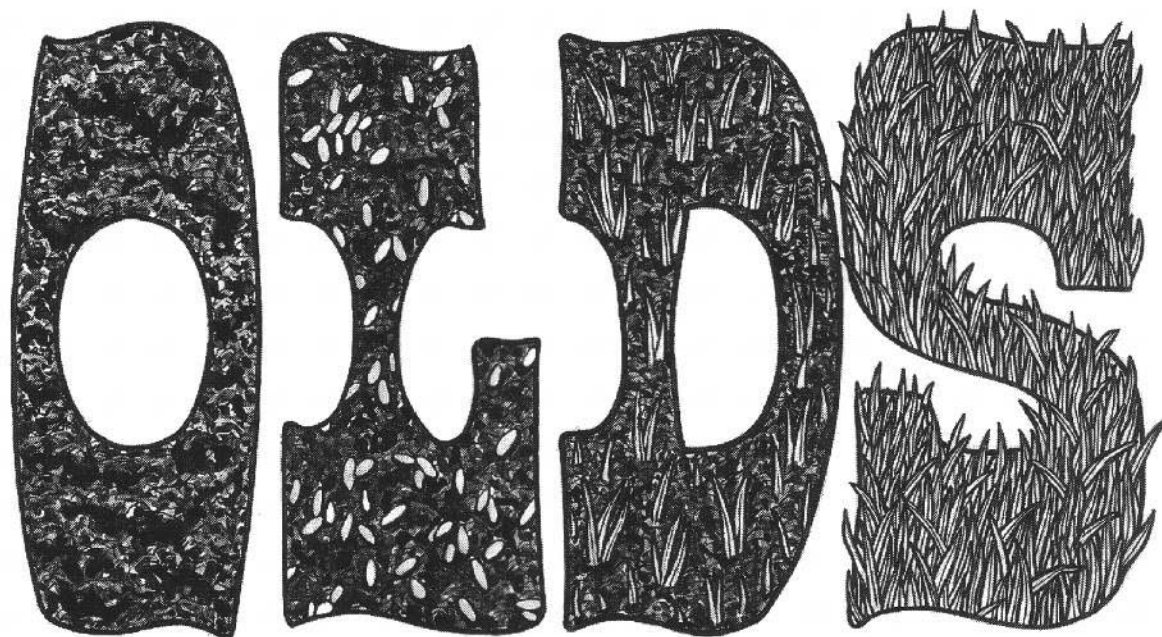
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