

dered why the take—all patch only affected turf in the poorly drained, low lying portions of a green or along the clean up pass, or why nematodes only picked on the small, heavily shaded green which was also diagnosed with bentgrass decline.

Physical stress might be part of the reason why frequent fungicide applications failed to provide the usual degree of protection this summer. Some superintendents learned for the first time what superintendents in the transition zone understand very well—that under ideal conditions for disease activity, fungicides cannot provide a consistent level of protection to the turf.

In the past I made a distinction between two types of superintendents—the spikers and the rollers. Some embrace spiking, aeration, hand watering, etc. and have conditioned the golfers at a particular course to accept the temporary inconvenience of these important practices. Others embrace (often not by choice) rolling, double cutting, and heights that

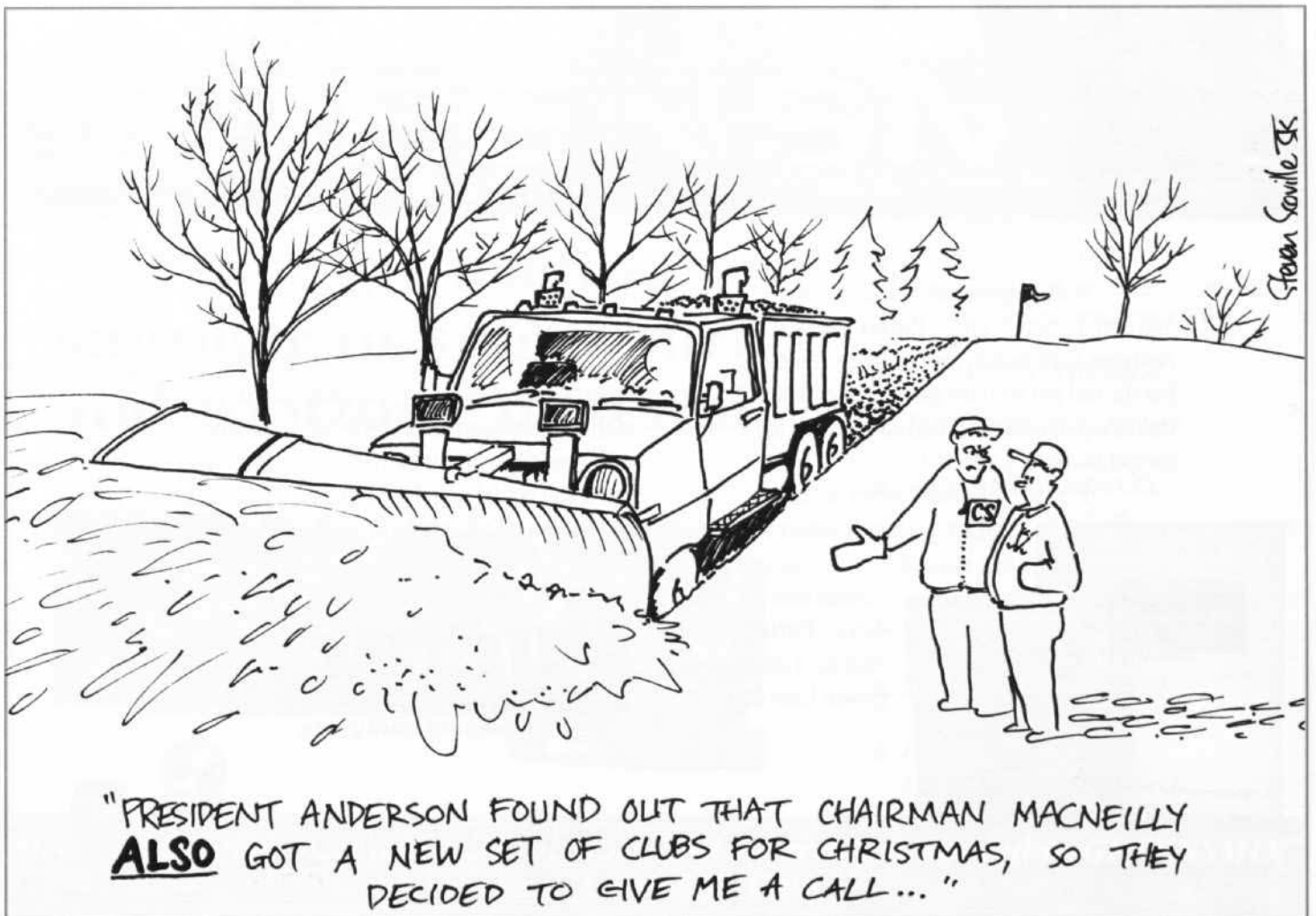
approach 1/10 of an inch. This summer, the spikers usually fared better than the rollers. Intensely managed *Poa annua* was often the first to die or the first to succumb to diseases. Losses of turf, however, generally occurred in spite of sound maintenance practices, but the spikers managed to hold it together a bit longer and ran into less “golfer” problems because golfers at these courses may have more reasonable expectations compared to courses where the only criteria of putting green quality is measured by a stimpmeter.

I also learned the importance of sound irrigation management and the need for a well designed, dependable automatic irrigation system. Unfortunately, the two do not always go hand in hand. Sometimes superintendents are unable to find the “off” switch to the irrigation controllers after lobbying for over a half million dollar irrigation renovation. There were a limited number of courses that did not skip a beat this summer. A common denominator for their success was

stingy automatic irrigation and meticulous hand watering, particularly during early July when the temperatures remained well into the 90s while evapotranspiration rates were practically zero due to the high humidity.

Some superintendents could not resist watering every night even though the soil was not losing any moisture throughout the day. I don't recall any overwatered courses than managed to keep all the *Poa* alive all summer.

Maybe another designation for superintendents is in order for future reference—perhaps the “Nomads”, those parched earth, desert wanderers versus the “Sailors”, those who live on and in the water. Well, nomads and sailors will do until I think of something better. In closing, the nomads like Kevin Dushane at Bloomfield Hills Country Club and Chris Hague at Crooked Stick Country Club and others who keep the course on the dry side will continue to fare better than the sailors, like...well, you know who you are. 🌿



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# SHAW, CHENEQUA CC TEAM COMPETE IN JOHN DEERE TOURNEY

By Monroe S. Miller

Jim Shaw, golf course superintendent at Chenequa CC, represented Wisconsin and the WGCSA at the John Deere Team Championship Golf Tournament that was held October 27–29 at the Wild Wing Plantation in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Also on the Chenequa team were Chad Beherens, Don Herrick, Wallie Schmidt and John Maguire. Beherens is the golf pro, Herrick is the clubhouse manager, Schmidt is the club president and Maguire is the John Deere representative from JW Turf.

The tournament was started in 1987 and has been dominated by Monroe CC for the past several years. It is a 36-hole, two day event played as a modified scramble. Shaw's group won the local tournament in late June that was held at the Geneva National Golf Course. They didn't place in the top ten at Myrtle Beach, but they did have a good time. Congratulations! 🏆



Members of the Chenequa Country Club team from left to right are: James Shaw, Golf Course Superintendent; Chad Behrens, PGA Professional; Don Herrick, Club Manager; Wallie Schmidt, Club President; John Maguire, Distributor Representative.

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# In The Bleak Midwinter

By Monroe S. Miller

The contrast between the seasons in Wisconsin couldn't be more dramatic than it is these days. It seems such a short time ago when we were in the throws of 95°/95% summer weather; now, in the deepest days of winter, it does not seem possible we could experience such a hot and humid extreme.

Although I gripe as much as anybody about the cold winters here, the contrast it affords is a good bit of the appeal of Wisconsin's four season climate. The reference points are cornerstones in the lives of golf course superintendents, despite their extremes in some years.

Any normal person, however, would hope we never have a year like 1995 and its wild extremes in weather. Here it is in a nutshell.

The earliest opening ever (at our course, anyway) was followed by a dreadful and terrible spring. It was cold and cloudy and rainy. We even had snow in our town in early April. May was decent, but June and July and August were very hot—the hottest ever.

And it was either very wet or very dry—there seemed no inbetween in Wisconsin. At one point in late June, 70% of the state's soils were dry. On the eastern one-third of the state, 95% were moisture short in mid-July.

Our autumn was acceptable until November arrived, and it turned out to be one of our worst for golf on record and in memory. Many of us had a difficult time getting snowmold fungicides applied. We were spoiled after a mild fall season last year. November 1995 was the seventh coldest on record with our average temperatures running almost seven degrees below normal.

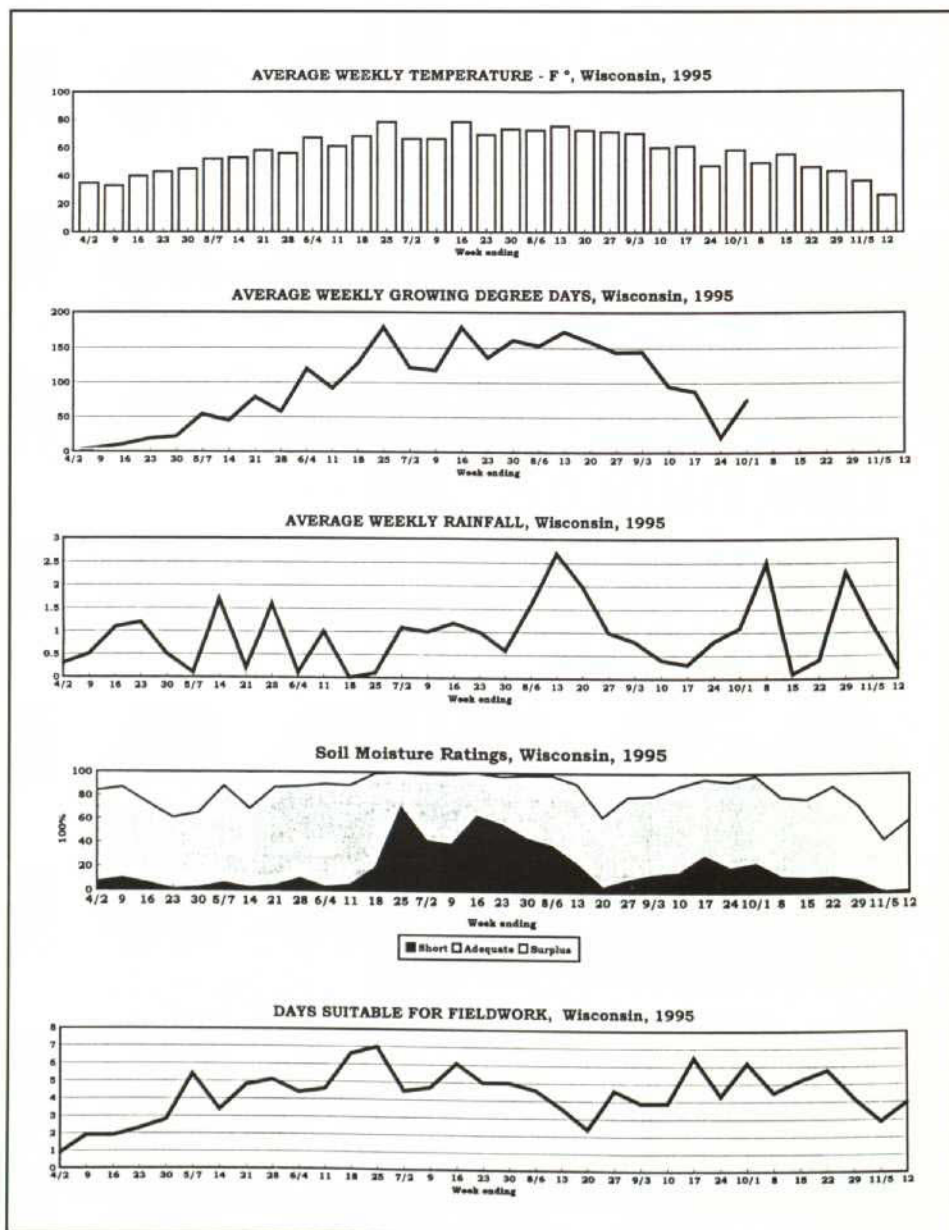
Actually, November was more winter-like than autumn-like. Normally, our town gets 41 inches of snow in the winter season; we had 20 inches of it in the eleventh month this year. There was no golf played in November. Two record snowfalls were set in November—November 10th and November 27th. The snow on the 27th

was preceded by freezing rain—more to worry about.

Although December was closer to normal, the rain (which quickly froze) on December 3 was unwelcome on our area golf courses. Fortunately, we had a white Christmas, and the outlook for the remainder of the winter is for average snow and normal temperatures. I hope the forecasters are right.

Following are some interesting statistics concerning the 1995 season for you to interpret and digest on these cold, bleak midwinter days.

Why was I not surprised, after the miserable weather of 1995, that the sores on my left ear and on my nose that weren't healing were just what I feared—skin cancer. The dermatolo-





**MONTHLY RAINFALL: 1995 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL**

District	April 1/		May 1/		June 1/		July 1/		August 1/		September 1/	
	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal
	Inches											
NW	3.40	2.43	3.10	3.65	3.10	4.39	5.00	4.20	8.50	4.58	4.10	3.54
NC	2.80	2.48	3.90	3.64	1.70	4.16	4.50	4.04	8.70	4.56	2.70	3.80
NE	3.10	2.82	3.60	3.50	1.50	3.77	3.30	3.62	9.50	3.91	1.80	3.67
WC	3.60	2.90	3.50	3.88	2.50	4.42	3.30	4.03	8.50	4.11	2.50	3.58
C	3.20	2.99	3.40	3.77	1.90	3.67	2.50	3.57	11.30	3.77	2.30	3.71
EC	2.50	2.88	3.30	3.13	1.50	3.33	1.80	3.38	6.80	3.33	1.70	3.23
SW	5.70	3.32	3.90	3.62	3.00	4.13	4.30	3.98	3.60	3.98	1.90	3.50
SC	5.10	3.24	4.90	3.21	2.40	3.93	3.40	3.93	7.60	3.84	2.10	3.44
SE	4.30	3.30	2.60	2.95	1.10	3.79	2.90	3.85	8.00	3.58	1.30	3.21
STATE	3.60	2.83	3.60	3.55	2.30	4.03	3.80	3.90	8.10	4.09	2.60	3.57

1/Preliminary estimates, 1995.

**MONTHLY TEMPERATURES: 1995 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL**

District	April 1/		May 1/		June 1/		July 1/		August 1/		September 1/	
	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal	1995	Normal
	Degrees Fahrenheit											
NW	36.8	42.3	52.5	54.3	65.6	63.3	68.8	68.5	68.8	66.3	54.8	57.2
NC	36.4	41.1	52.3	53.5	66.0	62.3	69.0	67.0	68.8	64.8	53.8	56.0
NE	36.2	42.1	52.3	54.2	64.8	63.3	68.5	68.0	68.0	65.8	52.8	57.2
WC	41.8	45.7	56.5	57.9	69.8	66.9	74.5	71.4	75.0	69.1	58.5	60.0
C	41.2	44.8	56.5	56.7	70.6	65.6	72.0	70.0	73.6	67.9	58.5	59.3
EC	40.8	43.7	56.5	54.7	70.4	64.2	74.3	69.7	74.6	68.4	58.5	60.4
SW	42.8	46.9	58.0	58.6	70.0	67.6	74.8	71.9	76.0	69.9	58.8	61.5
SC	42.4	47.0	57.3	58.5	70.4	67.6	75.0	71.9	76.0	69.9	58.3	61.9
SE	42.8	45.9	57.5	56.8	69.8	66.4	74.8	71.4	75.0	70.0	60.0	62.4
STATE	39.2	43.9	54.8	55.8	68.0	64.8	71.5	69.6	72.0	67.5	56.5	58.9

1/Preliminary estimates, 1995.

**COMPARATIVE TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION DATA**

District	Average Temperature						Total Precipitation					
	June - September						April - September					
	Normal	1991	1992	1993	1994 1/	1995 2/	Normal	1991	1992	1993	1994 1/	1995 2/
	Degrees Fahrenheit						Inches					
NW	63.9	64.9	60.5	61.4	64.1	64.5	22.8	29.8	19.3	24.0	23.1	27.2
NC	62.6	63.4	58.9	60.4	62.6	64.4	22.7	26.3	19.7	24.8	22.9	24.3
NE	63.7	63.6	59.5	61.4	63.4	63.5	21.3	23.8	19.9	26.4	22.5	22.8
WC	66.9	67.5	63.3	64.2	66.4	69.5	22.9	25.4	21.8	31.4	27.4	23.9
C	65.7	66.7	62.7	64.3	66.6	68.7	21.5	21.5	21.9	32.0	25.5	24.6
EC	65.7	66.9	62.2	64.1	65.8	69.5	19.3	18.6	17.0	25.9	19.5	17.6
SW	67.8	67.9	63.5	65.0	66.9	69.9	22.5	25.8	23.0	36.4	24.8	22.4
SC	67.9	68.2	64.0	65.8	67.4	69.9	21.6	21.3	20.1	33.6	23.0	25.5
SE	67.6	68.5	63.6	65.8	67.5	69.9	20.7	19.4	16.9	27.8	17.8	20.2
STATE	65.3	65.9	61.6	63.0	65.2	67.0	22.0	24.6	20.1	28.5	23.4	24.0

1/Revised. 2/Preliminary estimates, 1995.



It could pay big dividends in the years ahead.

Envy and jealousy are two of the absolutely worst emotions a human can experience, yet I felt them both when I received the accompanying photos from Steve Blendell. He went over to Scotland to watch the 1995 British Open! Since Old Tom was outside the Old Tom Morris Golf Shop, Steve had the photo taken, along with another outside the hotel at St. Andrews.

The third picture is a riot—the Garloch Golf Course/Beach/Cemetery car Park! As Steve said to me, “Golf clubs in Scotland are a little more informal than here!” Garloch is a small town in northwest Scotland, near the famous Inverene Botanical Gardens, 300 miles from St. Andrews!

It isn't difficult to figure what Steve will remember most about 1995.

*(Continued on page 17)*

gist removed them with liquid nitrogen and insisted I make regular appointments to get checked. I will follow that advice.

My family has a history of skin cancer. My father and his father both had problems with the disease. My dad still does and probably always will. They both, like me, spent a lot of time outdoors. Farming required it of them. Couple that with a predisposition for it—genetics, no doubt—and my problem was predictable.

Awareness of the dangers of skin cancer as it relates to a golf course career has been with me a long time. Hats, long sleeve shirts and skin block (in recent years) are evidence of that awareness. Regular checkups are now on the list.

My advice, hardly new, is that all of you pay more “attention to prevention”.





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(Continued from page 15)

Ed Devinger has had a burr under his saddle for a couple of years now, and it is about time I share it with you.

What has been aggravating the Turf Division Manager at Reinders is the State of Wisconsin Pesticide Registration Fee Schedule. For each product (pesticide) Ed sells, Reinders (and anyone else who sells the same products to us) must pay the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection from \$315 to \$3,050 in registration fees plus 1.3% for site remediation (ACCP—Ag Chemical Cleanup Program).

The idea or concept is okay; the charges are gross. It is the excessive cost that irritates Ed. For example,

twenty-two states charge from \$10 to \$95, twenty states charge from \$100 to \$175, two states charge from \$200 and two states charge \$300.

And, as usual with Wisconsin's rip-off attitude on fees and taxes, there we are, AT THE VERY TOP. THE HIGHEST. THE MOST.

We should be as mad as Ed; face it—we pay the bill, ultimately, in the price for the materials we purchase.

But it gets worse, lots worse. The ACCP was instituted for the purpose of making grants to clean up sites. For the first full year, \$1 million has been granted. By mid-1996 the fund will EXCEED \$10 MILLION! And you know how it goes with politicians and bureaucrats—if the money is there, they'll spend it, likely on something other than site cleanup.

It is an outrage. Faith is lost and trust is destroyed and credibility is out the window. Yet the fees go on, despite the surplus and despite the fact that no other state has fees as high as Wisconsin.

Minnesota's pesticide cleanup program contains a provision limiting their fund to \$5 million. When the cap is reached, there is a plan to cut surcharges in half. It only makes sense. We need to do the same in Wisconsin.

Illinois is another case. It would cost Reinders \$1,500 to register 30 popular crop protection products in that state. The cost to register the same 30 products in Wisconsin is \$1,200,000! Even though they don't have a cleanup program, the numbers seem even more out of whack by the difference in the

(Continued on page 18)



(Continued from page 17)

corn crop size in the two states — 3.7 million acres for us and 11.6 million acres for Illinois!

It is no wonder Eddie is angry.

For those of us lucky enough to get to go, the thought of attending the GCSAA conference is exciting. It is only a month away, and the warm Florida weather will feel good. I'll confess I am a lot less excited this year because of the chapter affiliation proposal and by-law changes.

You know full well that the politics are done, the phone calls are made on this one and it is a done deal. So it will be up to us in March at our chapter meeting to decide if we are the kind of people willing to cleave the haves and the have-nots in Wisconsin. The principle is clear; the choice is simple. I know how I'm voting. I sure wish everything didn't come down to money for the GCSAA these days.

No wonder I'm feeling some deep melancholy and despair in these cold bleak days of midwinter. That old hymn, *In The Bleak Mid-Winter*, (one of my favorites at Christmas time), says the greatest gift in the bleak mid-winter is a pure heart. I wish the GCSAA officers and directors could see that. The days would be brighter and happier if they were not so interested in pushing aside those less prosperous and less fortunate colleagues among us. I don't care what they require for the organization they preside over, but I deeply resent it when they try to tell state chapters who they can have as members. It is wrong.

This could be a national conference worth forgetting. And I sure wouldn't want the legacy Gary Grigg and Bruce Williams are creating for themselves.

Attention has to be turned from that proposal to what we will do about it here. We aren't alone; other chapter members from around the country I have visited with feel the same way and there will be some creative solutions cropping up to deal with 100% requirement.

So my thoughts, out of necessity, turn to the great season the Packers

had, the fun games we are having again in the Field House with Dick Bennett and Sam Okey and the rest of the basketball Badgers, and the thought that opening day isn't all that far away. They keep attention from the discouraging activity in Lawrence.

Keep smiling.

The November 1995 issue of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* reported on an extraordinary achievement for the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the UW Foundation. The UW-Madison raises more private money than any other public university in the country.

According to the magazine, Wisconsin's land grant university raised \$147.3 million in 1994 from private sources. That put it 27th on the list of the top 400 of charitable organizations.

The UW-Madison was the top public university, but seven private schools were higher on the list. Harvard was tops with \$289 million.

The WGCSA and a number of Wisconsin golf courses, like Westmoor CC and Stevens Point CC and Bulls Eye CC, contribute to the turfgrass industry and the WTA through the UW Foundation, so we are a part of this story.

The Big Ten did well on the public institution list. Wisconsin was first, Illinois was second, Michigan was fourth, Minnesota came in fifth, Indiana was seventh, Northwestern was ninth and Ohio State was tenth.

On Wisconsin!

Hats off to the USGA again! They have established an environmental program, "Wildlife Links," that represents golf's first comprehensive investigation of the game's relationship with wildlife and its habitat.

The Wildlife Links program will fund research, management and education projects needed to provide the game of golf with state-of-the-art information on wildlife management issues. The USGA plans to contribute \$100,000 annually for the next three years to fund the program. They have actively solicited additional funds from other golf organizations.

The GCSAA and the LPGA were the first in line to contribute to the program. Wildlife Links will be administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of natural resources. Among its goals are species habitat protection, environmental education, public policy development, natural resource management habitat and ecosystem rehab and restoration, and leadership training for conservation professionals.

An advisory panel of experts has been formed to oversee implementation of the USGA program, and Jim Snow and Ron Dodson are on that panel.

The goal of the program is to protect and enhance the wildlife, fish and plant resources found on golf courses. It will provide golf course architects and managers with research information needed to improve and create habitat for wildlife. Among the issues that will receive priority will be determining how golf courses can be maintained as biologically productive sites for wildlife, providing solid recommendations that can be incorporated into long-term management strategies, and educating golfers and the general public about these issues.

Examination of individual golf courses within the context of their surrounding landscape will be a major focus of Wildlife Links. Obviously an urban golf course will require different strategies than a rural one, while desert courses present a much different landscape for wildlife than a wetlands course. Regardless of their climatic orientation, the loss or fragmentation of wildlife habitat and its effect on wildlife, especially birds, will be a major factor in research projects.

Look for two new publications as the first evidence of the Wildlife Links program. The first will provide guidance to golf course superintendents about how to enhance the golf course habitat for bird species. The second publication will be dedicated to wetland issues.

It seems to me we owe it to ourselves, our players, the USGA and the NFWF to actively participate in this exciting new program. 🍷





# Where Did Catalyst For Affiliation Requirements Come From?

By Monroe S. Miller

Despite some effort by a few of the officers and directors of the GCSAA to convince members that stiffened affiliation requirements are something "we" asked for, I am not convinced that there has been a widespread call for the disruption it will cause and the unfairness that will result if such requirements are accepted. In fact, I know there has not been a hue and cry for such.

I haven't missed very many Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendent meetings in the past quarter century. In the last twenty years, NOT ONCE has the subject of dual membership requirement with the GCSAA been brought up at a member meeting. That doesn't sound like a ground swell of support, from Wisconsin at least.

Once, more than twenty years ago, at a WGCSA membership meeting at West Bend CC, the subject of forcing GCSAA membership on WGCSA members was suggested by a couple of individuals. I don't even remember who they were. What I do remember, however, is the overwhelming, overpowering outrage from the rest of the membership at the suggestion of forcing state chapter members to purchase a GCSAA membership even if individuals didn't want to or couldn't afford it. I recall speaking my piece,

offering the same arguments against the policy I offer now; things like fairness and a sense of what is right don't change. It was clear there was no sympathy, except from the two who brought it up, from Wisconsin golf course superintendents for forcing their colleagues to join another organization. Such decisions are a personal choice.

So, in the intervening twenty years, no one has suggested such a chapter policy. I have not heard even casual conversation about how great requiring national membership would be. Those who wanted to belong to GCSAA and felt it was important to them, people like me, joined. Those who felt differently did not. But all of us valued our WGCSA membership.

The Wisconsin GCSA has been extremely generous in its support of GCSAA. A goodly percentage of our members are national members. We have sent boat loads of chapter money to Lawrence, never missing a year. When we have been unusually prosperous, our gifts to Lawrence have been unusually generous. How many chapters, for example, were Platinum Tee Club members before us? Not many. We have sponsored seminars (despite GCSAA's decision to stop sharing profits). We involve them in our GRASS ROOTS, serve on

committees and actively support them on every front. GCSAA should look at Wisconsin as a shining example of what a state chapter can do and should be.

But no one in our chapter has suggested that we improve our "citizenship" by forcing dual membership.

That begs the question in the title - "where is the inspiration for affiliation requirements coming from?" It isn't a grass roots movement. Is it a staff person in Lawrence or a group of them who want to grow a money tree through dual membership? Is it an officer or two or a director or two? Is it a handful of members from one of the few chapters, usually made of big clubs or big cities, who do force dual membership?

I don't know. I have suspicions, but they are no more than that. What I do know is that this is not inspired by the rank and file members in state chapters.

If the subject hasn't been talked at a member meeting for two decades, I cannot imagine why our Wisconsin chapter will vote to exclude some of our colleagues.

It would be inconsistent and make no sense. And it would be wrong. We will have our chance to formally decide in March. ♣



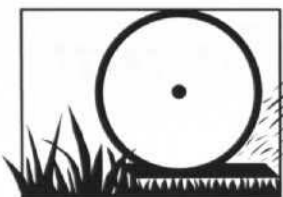
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# Softspike Yuks and Grins

By Rod Johnson

It hardly seems possible that two years have passed since I first met you. It was love at first sight. My life was to be changed forever. To be honest, I had heard of you and had even seen a picture of you in magazines. How could something so different from tradition, so plastic, catch my conservative eye begging for more.....Oh, "Softspikes".

The greatest thing to happen to the game of golf since surlyn. The elimination of the SPIKEMARK.

Spikemarks have been part of golf since at least 1914 when Walter Hagen wore a pair of "hob-nailed" shoes on his way to winning the 1914 U.S. Open. I guess the imitation of professional golfers by wannabes was as common then as it is now. Shoe cobblers were probably overrun with a rash of orders unequalled until Mike Jordan and "just do it" came along.

Golf and golf courses have changed a lot since 1914, but here we are 80-plus years later still walking around with nails in our shoes. Spiked shoes are part of the great tradition of golf. Aren't they as much a part of the uniform as neck ties, knickers, and plaid polyester slacks? Are they just another fad like metal woods and lob wedges?

I'll never forget my first pair of golf spikes—a pair of well-used hush-puppies purchased for a buck and a half from my buddy Jake. I had arrived as a "player"! No longer was I just another kid pedaling his bike, Kryodens in tow, to the local links to slap around U.S. Tigers. I had spikes and each grinding step across the asphalt parking lot provided proof. My score that day, in the mid-sixties, for nine holes was the same as B.S. (before spikes). I didn't really care. I had arrived on the golf scene and had the blisters to show for it.

Two years have flown by since the January 1994 issue of *Golf Course Management* and that first advertisement for *Softspikes*. A plastic replace-

ment spike claiming to be a superior alternative to metal golf spikes. The claims... "Finally a product that lowers scores and maintenance costs." I had my doubts. Remember, I'd already been burned once when metal spikes provided no relief from double figures. As for lower maintenance costs, we've all heard those wild claims before.

The new era A.S.S. (after softspikes) has already provided enough yuks and grins to write a book. But who needs another trendy golf book? Besides, how would you title the book? A Good Walked Spoiled By Spiked Shoes? Or how about, And Then Arnie said to Jack..."Please don't step in my line"?

The term spikemark is actually a euphemism for the tearing, ripping and shredding of an otherwise flawless green surface. Jim Latham, retired USGA Green Section Agronomist, described spikemarks as "snags" of the surface runners of the turf that have not yet rooted to the soil. By rule, the USGA continues to prohibit the repair of spike marks before putting. This is despite the well-known fact that spikemarks are the cause of 99% of missed putts. Metal spikes also leave their marks on tee and fairway areas but to date there have been no reports, of their actually causing any golfer to lose a match.

It would only seem natural that an alternative which would eliminate spike marks from the earth, or more importantly from golf greens, would enjoy immediate and unanimous use. Not so. Golf is a game of hard dying traditions.

An alternative to metal spikes and the inherent damage is not a new concept. The early eighties saw the introduction of golf shoes with "nubbies". It was a bad name for a bad product that did more damage to green surfaces than metal. Perhaps there lays the roots of caution and cynicism.

Softspikes were actually developed as a gentler alternative to metal spikes

for wacky winter golfers wishing to play on frozen greens in a state better know for potatoes than for golf. To date Idaho's biggest contribution to golf had been an island green that could be maneuvered into different positions by a series of underwater cables.

*Softspikes*, the company, has in a relatively short period of time seen ownership changes and product upgrades. The company is presently owned by Wisconsin's very own Rob O'Loughlin. The story goes that Mr. O'Loughlin, after playing golf at Murfield Village, Jack's place in Ohio, a course that has banned metal spikes, was so impressed by the quality of spikefree greens that he set out to buy a few sets of replacement spikes to give to golfing friends. A call to *Softspike* later and he owned the company.

I've had some amusing and some confusing phone conversations with the *Softspike* people but I must admit the subject of buying the company is

**1996**  
**Wisconsin Turfgrass Association**  
**SUMMER FIELD DAY**  
**August 20, 1996**  
**O.J. NOER RESEARCH FACILITY**