



# Wisconsin's Longest Golf Hole

By Monroe S. Miller

The idea was born on an autumn afternoon at the Sand Trap Tap, a local watering hole some of the guys would visit once in awhile. That afternoon, by chance, most of us were there for the year's first taste of Oktober Brau. As I recall, it was delicious.

The beer may have been memorable, but what I remember most was the hatching of an idea.

"I'm bored," said Bogey Calhoun as he drew a long swig from the brown Oktober Brau bottle.

"Don't misunderstand. Work isn't boring; we are too busy for that. In fact, there usually is more going on than I would really like. I could take some 'boring' at the golf course occasionally. More routine, less extra projects. And who could be bored with his family life? Not me.

"What I am bored with are our professional organizations. We are losing the excitement; our edge is getting dull. And I don't know why."

"I know what you mean," chimed in Steady Eddie Middleton. "I've got the same feeling. But I thought it was me or work or the time of year. Life is kind of slow these days."

Scott Fennimore echoed the same emotion. But Tom Morris zeroed in on the reasons. Tom was singularly wise in these kinds of golf course matters.

"Men, we need a project to work on," Tom declared. "We need a reason to live, so to speak."

The guys laughed at him, but they sort of knew what he meant.

"We were a really tight group when we were out beating the bush for money. It didn't matter if you were in Argyle or Winneconne, you knew all the state's golf course superintendents had a research farm on their minds. From passing the hat on men's day at Surveyor's Point Golf Club to squeezing the turf manufacturers for big bucks, fundraising goals kept us tied together."

Tom went on. "Then, once the research station was built and running, we raised the million dollars for our endowment. Golf tournaments, pledge programs, assessments and all that kept us headed the same way, together. Like we should be.

"When we learned that the University faculty needed a new lab, we did it for them. No state money was involved, either. We built the annex to the research farm and went even farther and opened the northern Wisconsin station. And through it all, we gave a lot of college scholarships.

"These ideas all took money and, frankly, getting the money together was fun for all of us. No one cared how much anyone raised; the idea was getting a piece of the action and

taking part in the fun. It was the common goal among us. Now, I think, some of the thrill is gone from it. We have raised money every possible way you can imagine, and I think that is why we are all a little bored."

All the guys nodded in agreement and reached for a handful of popcorn that the Sand Trap Tap provided during happy hour.

"Anybody got an idea to get us going again, pulling together in the harness?" Tom quizzed.

Silence. Finally, Kickapoo Logan spoke up. "You guys will probably think I am nuts, but here is my idea. Let's play the longest hole in the history of Wisconsin golf."

*(Continued on page 32)*



(Continued from page 31)

Nobody said anything. Bogey's smile turned into a question. "What in the hell are you talking about, Kick?"

"Geez, Calhoun, let him finish. You don't have to be rude ALL the time, do you?" Tom Morris scolded.

"Sorry, Kick. Tom's right. I'll shut up until you're done. Then I'll laugh!"

Kick was a little on the quiet side and seldom said much. That is why the guys figured he really had something to offer up.

"Have any of you, by some nearly impossible chance, ever read P.G. Wodehouse's short story, *The Longest Hole*?"

Of course, none of the towering intellects present had. Their dumb-founded looks told Kick to continue.

"It's a great golf story, written a number of years ago by one of golf's greatest storytellers. Wodehouse's tale is about a pair of arrogant golf players. They had equal golf talent, and belonged to the same club in the same town. As you'd guess, Ralph Bingham and Arthur Jakes fell in love with the same woman — Amanda Trivett — and decided to settle her fate with a cross country golf match since they played equally at the club. The loser would leave the club and the town, and Amanda would be left for the winner to pursue without competition and eventually marry.

The one-hole match started on the first tee at the golf club in Leigh and finished in the doorway of the Majestic Hotel in Royal Square, a distance of about 16 miles!"

"Who won?" asked Bogey, who was taken in by Kick's conversation.

"Read the story and find out for yourself," was Kick's reply. "Actually, Amanda won!"

Kick went on. "When I read that story for the first time, it was almost as if I was there, so good is Wodehouse's writing.

"As I've read more and more about British and Scottish golf, similar stories crop up. As a matter of fact, cross country golf was once a craze, in the years before the countryside was as populated as it is over there these days.

"In Ireland, there was a 'Golden Ball' competition which involved teeing off the first tee at Cill Dara and putting out on the 18th at the Curragh, a distance of 8,800 yards — that's around five miles, Bogey.

There is a prize of a million pounds for a hole-in-one!"

The guys roared, and Kick Logan smiled at the interest everybody had in what he was telling.

"The first Golden Ball was won by a great Irish amateur, Joe Carr, in 52 strokes. My math tells me that averages out to 170 yards a shot. It seems even more incredible when I compare that shot average to what our club's would be — 6,500 yards divided by par 72 gives a shot length of about 90 yards. Joe must have been a great player!"

Kick had a captive audience. He took a long drink of Oktober Brau, wiped his mouth on his shirt sleeve, and went on without any encouragement from the guys. He was, as they say, on a roll.

"Two men — I think their names were Ray Thomas and Rupert Lewis — played a hole over 20 miles in length from the Radyr Golf Club near Cardiff (in Wales) to Southerndown golf club at Ewenny (near Bridgend). It was in 1920, and the strict conditions included adherence to the rules of golf. There were a lot of bets placed, most feeling that it would take over 1,000 strokes. They played

alternate strokes and completed the hole in 608 shots. It took them 16 hours."

"Hey!" Bogey Calhoun almost shouted. "We could do that and raise some money for the UW turfgrass management program!"

Bogey was proud of himself for thinking of the obvious. The guys weren't surprised.

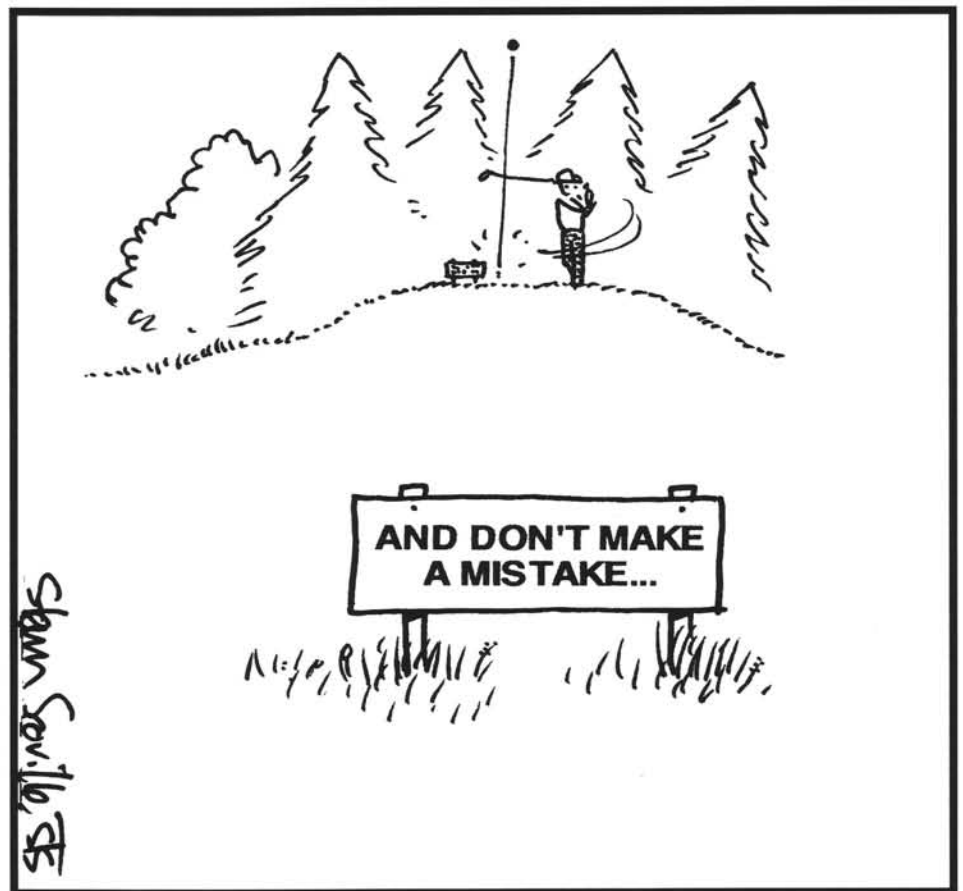
"Gosh, Calhoun," said Steady Eddie Middleton, "why do you think Kick brought this all up before us anyway? Do you think he might have thought about it as a fundraiser? And something that would be a lot of fun for everyone in our profession?"

Bogey was flushed with embarrassment, and his face turned beet red. "Sorry, Kick."

Tom Morris spoke. "So, what are you thinking, Kick?"

Kickapoo took another draw from his bottle of Oktober Brau.

"Well, I think we ought to design a long golf hole somewhere in Wisconsin. We could choose two of our WGCSA members to play the hole, and the alternate shot format seems best. I think this would be a great time of year. In late fall we are a little less busy and more of us



would be around to help. It could become golf's last gasp of the season."

Kick went on. "Much like marathon runs or a walk-a-thon, we could raise funds through pledges or from "bets" on how many strokes it would take to hole out on our longest hole. All we'd have to do is make sure whatever we finally decided on was legal."

As so often happens, great events come from pretty simple ideas hashed over in an informal setting. "The Longest Hole" became one of the highlights, not only of our WGCSA year, but of the entire world of Wisconsin golf. Over its history, tens of thousands of dollars have been brought to the University's turf-grass research program because of the event.

It took a lot of discussion to settle on a venue, but for all its history "The Longest Hole" has been played from a tee ground on one of Wayne Kussow's bentgrass plots at the Noer Research Facility to the 18th green at Billie Flagstick's golf course, Pumpkin Hollow Country Club. It has gotten so big that once the ball rolls around and into the cup on the 18th, hundreds gather in the Pumpkin Hollow clubhouse for the banquet and awards and dinner and golf talk.

It isn't just golf course superintendents who take part in the festivities. Due in a large part to Rob Schultz, the golf media around Wisconsin fell in love with the playing of The Longest Hole. At the very first playing, Schultz was there with a Capital Times photographer and his reporter's notepad. He wrote a story that was a classic and inspired much of the outside interest. These days, "The Longest Hole" is on the TV news from Appleton to Zenda.

Each year a new twist has been added. One of the first was the betting on how many golf balls would be lost. That first year was a near disaster. Even though golf course superintendents seem to never run out of golf balls, we nearly did that day. Only a quick trip to his course by Tom Morris saved the day. He returned to "The Longest Hole" with a hundred green striped range balls from Maple Leaf CC, just in time to keep the play rolling.

We learned early on we needed not only alternate shots, but we needed alternate players. The "starters" would often drop out for various reasons like sprained wrists

and ankles and old fashioned fatigue.

Marshalls were another requisite. These guys watched for traffic, checked with land owners along the hole, kept an eye open for livestock and generally kept participants and followers in line.

In Wisconsin, in fall, we also learned at the outset to dress in blaze orange. It served the needs of safety and also insured that we would not be mistaken for golf professionals. A few times the guys were mistaken for hunters, but as Bogey Calhoun said, "most of us ARE hunters!"

In its history, albeit brief, the highlights have been many. There was the first year when Kick Logan, who was a clear first choice as one of the players (since it had been his idea), hit the windshield of a farm truck. The farmer was understanding and, fortunately, we were insured. We invited him to the banquet (the farmer, that is) and he came!

The record score will stand for awhile — 1,113 shots— since it was an average of a little less than 100 yards for the six-mile golf hole.

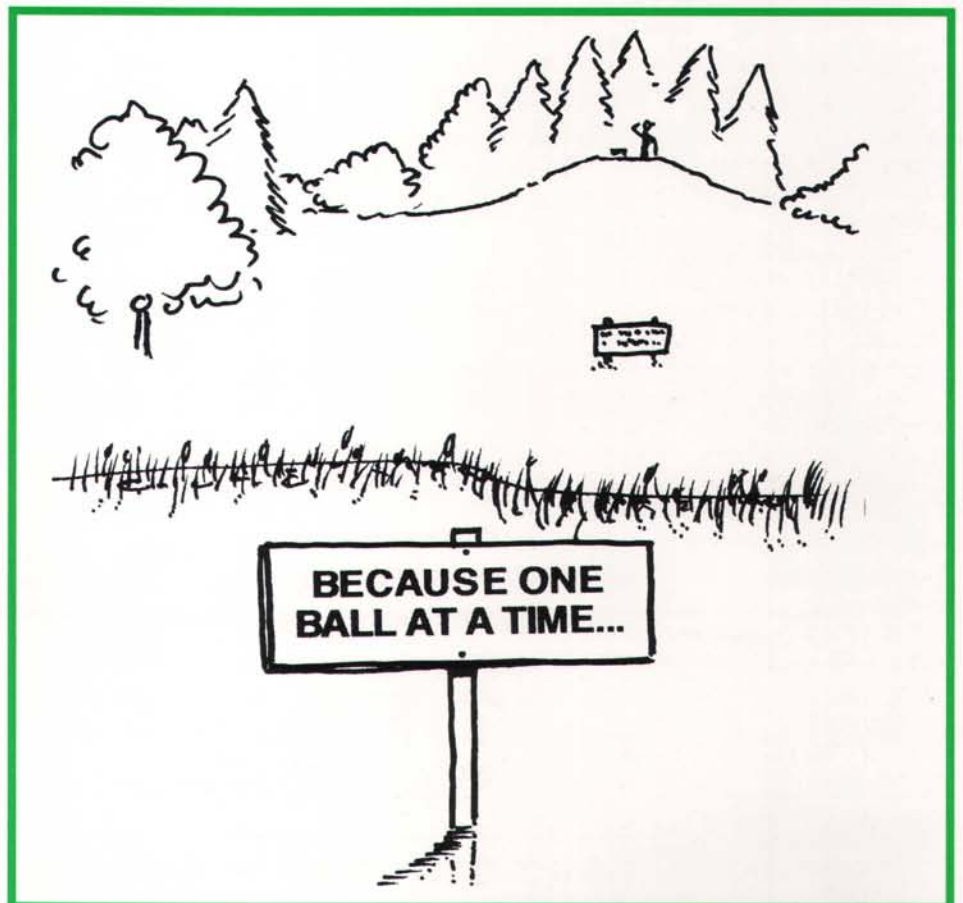
Some of the guys think the "highlight of the highlights" was watching

city slicker Bogey Calhoun hit a ball from the middle of a fairly fresh Brown Swiss cow pie. Calhoun's snazzy saddle shoes, which looked great with his blaze orange outfit, and his pants were splattered with generous amounts of cow manure. "Now I'll stink," Bogey cried. "You've always stunk," Tom Morris responded with a straight face.

We are still not certain how we ever talked Dr. Kussow and Dr. Koval to serve as caddies one year, but they finished with energy to spare. I always said it was because they are still, at heart, farm kids. In fact, at the end of the hole, they were in better shape than the two players, both 20 years younger and both former students of the two professors!

Over hill and dale, around marshes and through the woods, across railroad tracks and along the highway, "The Longest Hole" has been a journey that grows every year. Maybe more important than the money raised for research has been the camaraderie and good will and, yes, even the sense of brotherhood it has created.

It could only happen in golf. And it has, so far, only happened in Wisconsin. 🌱



# Turf Seed for Every Application



Sun. Shade. Parks. Athletic fields. You name it, L. L. Olds Seed Company has top-quality turf seed just right for you. We work with more than half a dozen seed producers in the Pacific Northwest so that we always have a broad portfolio of seed available when you need it.

Have turfgrass questions? Our certified seed technologist, horticulturists, and agronomists are at your disposal. This team of turf experts accurately analyze your growing concerns and recommend seed mixtures that will grow vigorous and strong.

When speed of delivery is important, you can count on Olds Priority Shipping. Your seed is on your loading dock 24 to 48 hours after you place your order. That's fast and convenient.

If you have questions about seed availability, pricing or usage, please call us toll free at 1-800-356-7333.



P.O. Box 7790  
2901 Packers Avenue  
Madison, WI 53707-7790  
FAX 608-249-0695

**1-800-356-7333 • 1-608-249-9291**



# FATHER OF THE BRIDE

By Monroe S. Miller

It doesn't seem possible — the little girl who was born 26 years ago while I was in Uncle Sam's Army 10,000 miles from home is now Mrs. Tony Kaster. She's the modern woman who, although married, will always be Amy Miller. I don't approve of that, but I sure approve of my new son-in-law.

There's some kind of old saying about daughters marrying men who share some things in common with their fathers. I am sure all women would deny it, but it has given me a few chuckles when I think about Tony and how he likes the outdoors, enjoys planting trees, studies plants and wildlife, and is studying soil science in some of his graduate school courses. Such subjects turned Amy's nose up when she was young — "how can you get a degree in 'soil'?" — and now she is doing her best to understand them.

Tony is a graduate student in hydrology, studying subjects like geology, soil genesis, soil morphology and the like. We'll have lots to talk about for another reason, too. He and his dad have a small, 40-acre farm with a one-room school situated in one corner. Just a few weeks before he married my daughter there was a collegiate soils judging contest on their land, per the request of one of his professors. Amy will never get away from the subject of soil science!

The role of the father of the bride doesn't last very long, a little more than a day. I'd peg its start at about rehearsal time, moving through the dinner and ending when the father walks his daughter down the church aisle to meet her betrothed. I suppose you could argue it doesn't end until the reception does. Either way, it comes down to something more than a day.

Although the lifespan of the father of the bride is short, it sure is special. All kinds of emotions are packed into those few hours, and it takes a certain durability to sustain yourself. I felt tons

of happiness, some emptiness, lots of peace, some small tension, pure joy for the beginning of a new family, and a little sadness knowing a chapter in Cheryl's and my family ended.

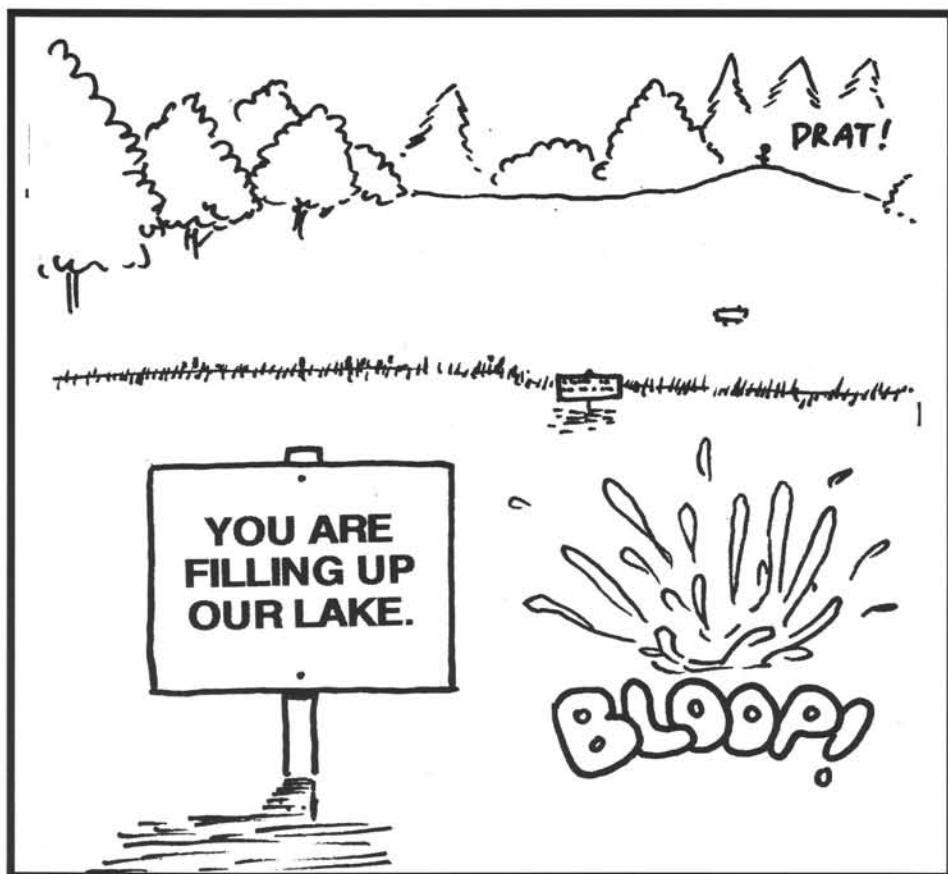
It takes a long time to raise a daughter, and such a short time to see her married. You have to be alert to it all so you have a full memory to cherish. Among those things this typical father of the bride will remember most are "the budget". It is quite a balancing act between being a total curmudgeon (satisfied with only the very basics) and the extravagance that could come so easily. Our family wanted simplicity and dignity and class. The bride and her mother exercised reasonable restraint and extremely good taste. This father of the bride then paid the bills!

I'll remember how fun it has been to get to know the father of the groom. I'd like him for a neighbor — he is a straight shooter and a little eccentric at the same time. He's a great guy and I suspect we will be pretty good friends for the rest of our time on earth.

I'll remember the chaos of the bride and the bridesmaids during the hours preceding the wedding - blue jeans, hair appointments, fingernail jobs and all the other girl stuff we guys will never understand.

On this day, the wedding day, I wore my first tuxedo and figured I looked more like a Lutheran bishop than the father of the bride. My brother brought reality up when he said I looked like a penguin! Who could forget it?

*(Continued on page 36)*



(Continued from page 35)

I won't soon forget how gorgeous all three of my daughters looked at the alter — Holly was maid of honor and Christie was a bridesmaid. It was funny seeing 16-year old Chris teetering on high heels for the first time. And I was thrilled to overhear someone comment that my wife "didn't look like she was old enough to be a mother of a bride." Nobody made a similar comment about me!

Weddings are an expanded family reunion of sorts. Family members we haven't seen for too long were there. We met the family of the groom and learned about them. And it is hard to think of a time when you are sur-

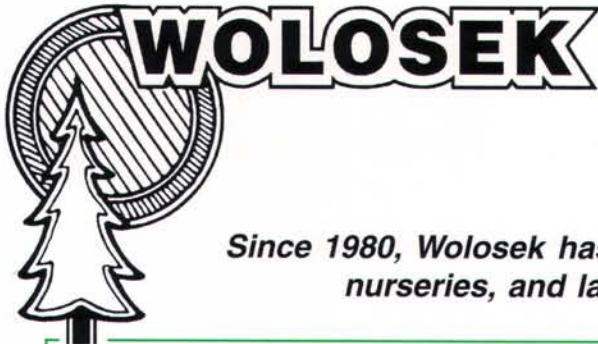
rounded by almost all of your close friends at once.

The music in our church was beautiful, the day was warm and sunny and, significant to all of us, the reception was held at Blackhawk Country Club. Like many other golf course superintendents, the club and course have been a central part of all our lives. Each of the three girls have memories of the place — from picking up tournament flags at dusk to driving a golf cart in the shop yard — and two of them have worked there in the summer and part-time in the rest of the year. So we felt privileged to be there this day. There also is the singular matter that the clubhouse staff does a wonderful job with

wedding receptions.

For the daughter married this past September, Cheryl and I will always remember riding our bikes with her in a child's seat on the back of mine from the UW-Madison graduate student housing at Eagle Heights to the 18th green at Blackhawk. More than a few times on these trips I expressed envy of those who worked at this beautiful place. We are proof that dreams do come true.

The tenure of the father of the bride is indeed short, but the memories will last a lifetime. And if you are a lucky man like me, with all girls in his family, I can look forward to that honor two more times. What a sweet thought. 🌱



## Golf Course Mix & Athletic Field Mixes

*Since 1980, Wolosek has been supplying golf courses, greenhouses, nurseries, and landscapers with top quality materials.*

### **Kiln-Dried, Sterilized Top Dressing Sand**

### **90/10 80/20 60/40 Top Dressing Mix**

WE ALSO OFFER: Construction Mixes • Cart Path Aggregate • Bunker Sand  
Bark, Boulders & Decorative Stone • Reed Sedge Peat • Custom On-Site Blending

*Product meets standards for putting green root zone mixes as specified by the USGA.*

*Wolosek's pride themselves on quality control for particle sizes and proper pH of sand and peat mixtures.*

**(715) 423-3909**

Fax (715) 423-4215

### **OUR GUARANTEE**

*Your product will be free of contamination and delivered to you at a scheduled time, at an affordable cost.*



## **MECHANICAL SOIL TECHNOLOGY**

Contract Aeration Service • *Servicing The Entire Midwest*

**VERTI-DRAIN®**

The Ultimate Solution For Compacted Soil

David Strang • 442 Pine Street • Galesburg, IL 61401 • Phone **(800) 743-2419**

# Tournament Meeting Held At The Ridges

Dave Murgatroyd provided the setting for the 1996 WGCSA tournament held on September 9. The pressure to host a meeting for your peers obviously doesn't bother Dave; this was his ninth WGCSA meeting. The course was in tournament condition, requiring deadly accurate golf shots. The Ridges is a true test of nerves and skill, a great place to prove claim to be The Champ. The results of the tournament are as follows:

**Low Gross**                      Scott Bushman

**Flight A**

First	Bruce Worzella
Second	Brett Grams
Third	Mike Burwick

**Flight B**

First	Carl Braem
Second	Mark Kienert
Third	Kelly Reilly

**Flight C**

First	Dave Smith
Second	Dale Marach
Third	Tom VanValin

**Peoria**

First	Scott Bushman
Second	Conrad Stynchula
Third	Mike Schennick

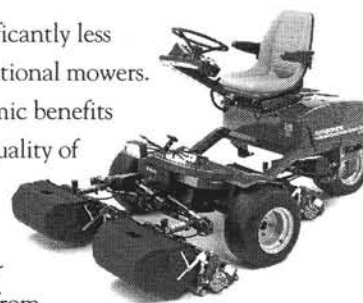
Following golf and dinner Bob Vavrek presented his short version of 1996 "Year In Review". He briefly discussed some of the comments he has heard about the "easy season" we have had. Bob then presented some slides showing the contrary, noting the many courses that had severe winter damage and hadn't recovered yet by August. Bob then addressed tree planting and its relationship to original design. Many examples were given showing the importance of placement which is sometimes overlooked. An expanded version of this topic will be presented at the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium on October 29 and 30. 🌳

## A Sound Investment

The Ransomes® All-Electric E-Plex™ Generates Income From Earlier Tee Times

Invest in the electric E-Plex™ greens mower and it will quietly make money for you. Because the E-Plex is virtually noise free, you can mow at the crack of dawn, allowing for earlier tee times. The extra income from additional rounds will pay for the E-Plex in no time. And, for ongoing savings, maintenance and operational costs for the electric

E-Plex are significantly less than for conventional mowers. Add the economic benefits to the highest quality of cut, superior performance and the elimination of damage from hydraulic leaks, and your E-Plex isn't just a greens mower, it's a sound investment.



**E-PLEX PAYBACK**

Earlier tee times mean more rounds and more revenue!  
 Example: 4 tee times x 4 players = 16 additional rounds each day.

= Additional Rounds Per Day	Greens Fees Per Player	Additional Revenue Per Day
16	\$40	\$640
	\$60	\$960
	\$80	\$1,280

Divide the unit cost of the E-Plex by the extra daily revenue to determine the payback period.

**Call today for your free demonstration.**



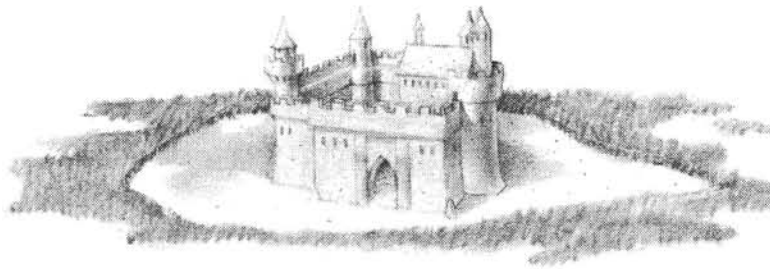
**RANSOMES**  
 Driven to be the best.

**HANLEY COMPANY, INC.**

641 W. Main St., Sun Prairie, WI 53590 (608) 837-5111, Ext. 355 Toll Free 1-800-279-1422

# There Are A Few Things The Sand Pro Can't Do

What the Sand Pro 5000 can do is increase bunker playability regardless



of design or sand type. With the most attachments on the market, and adjustable down-pressure, it lets you really fine-tune your bunkers. Double air filtration and enclosed hydraulic

drive keeps the grit out while separate fans for hydraulic and

engine cooling prevent overheating.

And the 16 H. P. twin cylinder engine offers 3WD and optional on-demand 2WD.

For operator comfort and control Toro included a sound treatment package. And the rear mounted engine makes the operator feel like he's sitting on the machine, not straddling it.

It all adds' up to better looking, better playing bunkers. No, the Sand Pro can't build castles, but it sure makes its home in the sand.

Sand Pro® 5000



*Helping you put quality into play.™*

**Reinders**  
ELM GROVE APPLETON MADISON

## TURF EQUIPMENT

13400 WATERTOWN PLANK ROAD, ELM GROVE WI 53122-0825

PHONES: LOCAL (414) 786-3301

800 782-3300

Branch Offices Appleton (414) 788-0200

Madison (608) 223-0200





## *Attention Bibliomaniacs:* **Books For Your Christmas List**

By Monroe S. Miller

If you love books AND golf courses, this could be a terrific Christmas for you. In the past year there have been quite a number of golf course books put into print. Some are better than others, but any book about our business is probably worth owning.

Notice: I make a distinction between golf books and golf course books. Golf books are a dime a dozen. Although some are interesting — I tend to like the biography/autobiography books of great players — the “how to” books and lesson books leave me cold. I have no stats to back this up, but I have a sense that books of golf fiction are showing up with a little more frequency. I like a lot of these. Mysteries centered around golf and golf courses can be good reading, too. *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, as an example of fiction, was a good book from last Christmas.

Obviously, just because a book is about golf courses doesn't automatically make it a great book. With the greater frequency of golf course books comes the inevitable fact that a few are bound to be dogs, written by marginal authors looking to cash in on the current interests. And text books that have value to golf course superintendents are in a class of their own.

There are two books I feel comfortable in recommending either for purchase or for a prominent place on your Christmas list. Both of these volumes were written by golf course architects. The similarity, however, ends there.

Mike Hurdzan's book, which was new earlier in the year, is an awesome work. *GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE: Design, Construction & Restoration* runs to nearly 400 pages. That is made more impressive when you consider that Dr. Hurdzan distilled the book down from nearly twice that many.

Books are wonderful personal possessions to me, so I tend to look at appearance as well as content. This

books is a beauty. Printed on heavy and quality paper stock, it has a good “feel” to it. It is loaded with color photographs (as well as black and white) and color illustrations like those no one does as well as a landscape or golf course architect.

*GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE* has been in the works for ten years. Since Hurdzan had the idea in mind for so long, he did an excellent job of recording details of projects — from accounting to agronomy — and taking great photographs.

His writing style is comfortable and although I don't see this as a textbook, it has an arrangement of the information in a way that reminds me of classroom books. Each chapter builds on the previous ones so that at the end you have the details of either a new or renovated golf course. His very readable style makes this book of interest to the general golfing public, not just those with professional involvement.

Hurdzan is a golf historian. If you didn't know that before reading *GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE*, you will when you complete it. It is the basis for some of his discussions.

Golf course superintendents and their critical role in golf course construction and management receive a lot of support from the author, something we do not always receive. He deserves credit for that.

Not everything in this formidable work will receive full agreement with all superintendents. Methods and materials are subjects that oftentimes are dependent on individual experience and success, and therefore will always be an area of opinion. Hurdzan simply gives his opinion and experience, albeit with a lot of confidence.

I purchased my copy of *GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE* at the GCSAA conference in Orlando last February and waited in a long line to have it autographed. Far ahead of me in that line was Dr. Geoffrey Cornish, a major golf course architect and author himself. I thought it humble of him to take his turn — he is that kind of man — and mentioned that to Dr. Hurdzan when I finally reached the signing table. He agreed and was very flattered by Geoff's interest. In a later exchange of correspondence with him, Geoff Cornish commented to me that he had read the Hurdzan book TWICE! There could be no stronger recommendation that.

Another book that has given me a lot of pleasure this past golf season, one that was also written by a golf course architect, is *GOLF HAS NEVER FAILED ME*. Donald Ross' book is the result of the fairly recent discovery of a manuscript he composed before World War I with the

*(Continued on page 41)*

**AMETEK**

**TURF  
BOXES**

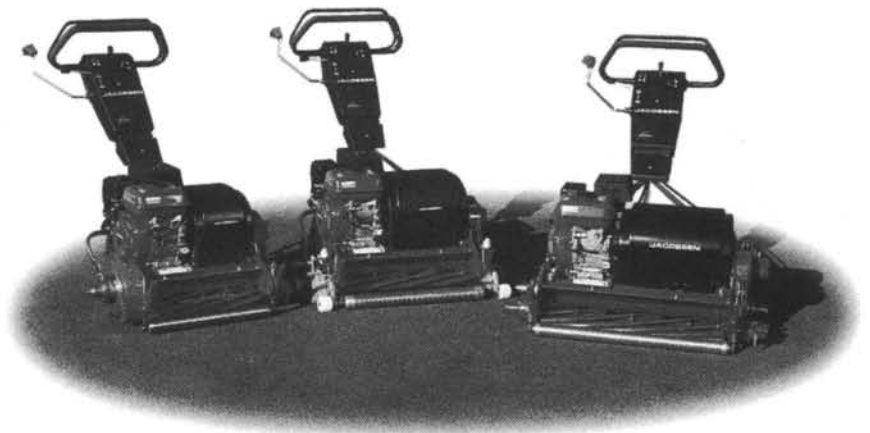
Manufactured in  
**Sheboygan, Wisconsin**  
Specify **AMETEK** —  
**A Wisconsin Product!**

**At  $5/64$ " ,  
you could  
be so close  
and yet so  
far away.**

At superfine cutting heights, every aspect of your mower's performance is accentuated. For better or worse. And the same goes for greens play.

That's why Jacobsen puts so much into every Greens King™ walk-behind. Exceptional side-to-side, front-to-rear balance. A compact roller base for immaculate cutting. And only Jacobsen has the patented Turf Groomer® greens conditioner, for faster, truer and healthier greens.

When it comes to performance—when it comes to results—no other greens mower family can make this cut. For more information, and a complete demonstration, contact us today.



*Our 500 series walk-behind greens mower family includes 18", 22" and 26" models to handle everything from severely undulating greens, to tee boxes and collars, flawlessly.*

THE PROFESSIONAL'S CHOICE ON TURF.

**HORST**  
DISTRIBUTING, INC.

444 N. Madison St. Chilton, WI 53014  
1-800-279-2341

**JACOBSEN**  
**TEXTRON**

Jacobsen Division of Textron Inc.