



# THE HEAT IS ON

By Pat Norton  
Nettle Creek CC

The fact of the matter is that it's now early October down here in north central Illinois, and the heat is on...quite literally, the heat is on...to the point of being 85°F for many days running this past week!

So now we're facing a warm spell that is nothing but pure enjoyment...pure enjoyment in being outdoors every day...all day...on a gorgeous golf course that's not under any stress whatsoever!

This is beautiful growing and working weather...dusky, crisp early mornings are actually moonlit for the first hour of the work day. Then the sun warms us all up for the remainder of the day...by five or six PM a hint of evening chill is in the air, followed by enjoyable evening weather and star filled skies each night.

An open golf course like ours does have its autumn advantages. Because of its open nature, lots of the golf course can be seen in a panoramic instant. Given the fact that our course has what might be called a flat, 'prairie' look...getting up on a high greenside mound counts here for a 'blufftop vantage point'.

Our course is also extremely spread out, which makes it possible to check things out way out there about 3/4 mile away..."Hey, that little red dot in the distance is one of our guys mowing greens on the back nine...I think"...Beautiful green bent fairways wind down through the property...contrasting vividly with the colors of the changing leaves and the surrounding farm fields. Green and tee complexes look so good...so interconnected to each other because of the vivid colors.

Top off these great fall days with the unseasonably warm weather as of late and a busy aerification work schedule and it's easy to see why the weeks are flying by so quickly.

Like most golf courses, there's way too much to do and too few people available this time of year. So, in addition to the weather being so nice and warm, the heat is on in another

respect...getting finished with all of the fall cultural tasks before the weather collapses and November takes over...

Don't all golf course superintendents figure that a break from the hectic routine is in order during October? After 'busting our cans' all season long...we deserve a few weekends off during some nice weather, don't we? Do we always have to wait until the golf course closes for the season and the snow begins to fly before we can slide out of town for the weekend? If so, what a warped and inbred life we all lead!

Overall though, the degree of this heat is way mild compared to the heat of battle this past summer. I don't know much about the Wisconsin summer of '97, but we out here on the hot flatlands experienced some really dry, but very golfable weather for essentially two months stretching from mid-June through mid-August. Our roughs became dry, hard-baked wastelands during that period, while the daily battle to keep the irrigated areas fully green and functional wore us all down by the end of August.

These two months were just full of irony for our public course. The course was seriously suffering from lack of rainfall...the agronomic troops were starting to lose their resolve...while the golfers just kept coming and coming, resulting in some very happy ownership faces as they reviewed

financial figures for the summer...and as usual, the battle to keep the golf course look good...the golf staff functioning smoothly...and the golfers happy...was somewhat taken for granted!

Being taken for granted comes with this business, I think, so it doesn't do any good to complain.

So, with age comes a little bit of experience on how to deal with things when the heat is really on...and I fully realize that while it's nice to get verbal compliments on the condition of the golf course...the ultimate compliment is to have a strong membership and player base that keeps on patronizing and enjoying our golf course! A full golf course makes the heat much easier to bear...whether it's during the really hot summer months or during a most idyllic autumn...

On any golf course I've ever been at...whether as a student, and assistant superintendent, or as 'the head cheese'...the heat that's generated is almost always internal. In other words, we all put heat on ourselves to always do a perfect job, and have a perfect golf course...with too few labor and equipment resources.

The idea list...the 'to do' list...on any golf course...never gets completed...as some items on the list continue to age for lack of priority and lack of time. What's interesting about our attitudes toward these lists is that we

*(Continued on page 32)*

## NATURAL ATHLETIC TURF INC.

### GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION & IMPROVEMENTS

*Specializing in Greens - Tees - Bunkers - Fairway  
Construction - Feature Shaping - Drainage Systems*

By Contract or "T & M" basis. Also Astroturf Top Dressing drag mats  
11040 N. Buntrock Ave., Mequon, WI 53092 • (414) 242-5740  
ROY G. ZEHREN • FAX (414) 242-5740 • JOHN "JACK" WALLISCH

(Continued from page 31)

view everything as very crucial, as a personal challenge to get everything completed...this week!

The real kick is that nobody else understands your priorities or your list for the golf course...nobody else on the property really knows what's going on with the golf course...if you really think about it.

Whether it's a daily, weekly, or season long thing...each and every superintendent holds the key to that great big secret out there called the golf course...and it's with some satisfaction that we're all constantly trying to explain and educate our golf professionals, owners, boards, or members as to the secrets of this great agronomic game called golf course management.

They pretend to understand or be interested...but the fact of the matter is that there is some mystery surrounding each and every beautiful golf course. People just can't understand how it is that it all stays so beautiful... even if they are really interested! Things that we all take for granted agronomically or horticultural-

ly are as foreign to them as nuclear physics is to me!

Others in my ownership group, however, cannot and do not share my zeal...nor can they be expected to...understand what all goes into making the golf course so nice and playable.

So, what often happens is that I have my daily and weekly priorities changed with just one short visit from one of the senior owners. I always tend to put the heat on myself as concerns the condition of the playing surfaces and the aesthetics of the course itself...I want that golf course out there to look as sweet as possible every day. We have a limited number of people available daily to accomplish that task, so when priorities get changed for me...on a seeming whim...the heat is really on to accomplish **everything** in a mutually satisfying and satisfactory manner!

This week, for example, we are moving out of our triple wide mobile home clubhouse and preparing for the initial phases of new...and very modest...clubhouse construction. This requires all of my people to scoot on

up there after AM chores to help with the moving out, prepping the construction site, and cleaning up the entire area...considerable man-hours spent off of the golf course... but helping out the overall situation.

Then, we look forward to Vertidrain our greens at mid-week with one of my few remaining Wisconsin connections...Wisconsin Turf Equipment...who accomplish that task at a very affordable price.

Right after that, Tyler Enterprises calls and "needs to know how soon it'll be before we're finished fertilizing our roughs with their two ton spreader"... "Heck, man, we haven't even started", I reply, "but we'll get right on that and be done by mid-morning tomorrow"...which we were!

I finish off the week by working until 2:30 p.m. Saturday...installing that 'can't wait' equipment washstand drain line with a contractor friend who certainly does not have children at home anymore...and is the type who would certainly understand it if I left for the day...but somehow I can't bring myself to leave...because he's also costing us \$65 per hour...and



TWO CROSS-COUNTRY SKIERS ARE TRAPPED IN THE FAIRWAY BUNKER ON THE 6<sup>th</sup> HOLE! **GO, PUTTER!**

we'll obviously finish the job sooner it I stay until the bitter end!

The heat is really on now...in October? Am I working my life away...consumed with my obligations at the course above all else...not caring what else happens in the world? If our employers take us a bit for granted...don't we take our spouses and families a lot for granted...for three seasons out of each and every year? Do we put too much heat on them to try and understand why they can't every go on a summer vacation...like all of their friends?

The fact is though...that there's a point beyond which any of us isn't willing to travel. When it all gets to the point of getting totally taken for granted...with no career advancement in sight...it's time to make a change. The entire employer/employee relationship has to be based on mutual respect with an understanding that most of us are capable of going on to better career opportunities. And there is definitely a point in time when each of us understands this...and decides to pursue something else in life.

I've always loved to work hard...to put in the effort to make my course look and for me to feel...successful.

I'd say that all of us have tremendous pride in what we do for a living...to the point of doing much more than is required each and every day.

This is part of the formula for success...whether in golf course management, turfgrass sales, or any other calling in life. Successful people thrive on the intense heat of living active, busy, rewarding lives...which often-times is not easy.

Easy is working forty hours per week maximum and depending on the union to keep your lazy, poor attitude butt employed...

Easy is blaming the world for your supposedly tough problems and your unhappiness...without stopping to consider how darned good you've got it all presently...not to mention the fact that numerous opportunities for a better life surround each of us every day!!

Easy is blaming the company for not giving out ever better wages and benefits without considering the fact that most people make themselves all too replaceable by virtue of their lousy work attitude and greedy behavior...

And by the way, people...good businessmen don't usually keep on

giving out raises and bonuses based solely on length of service, seniority, etc...job performance and value to the company that help lead to company profitability are the keys to a great career with any company, aren't they??

Actually for me...it's all worth it. When this golf course...this investment project is completed in about three years...Susan and I will be somewhat 'in the clover'...as my parents keep reminding us. And when I read over the GCSAA Employment Opportunities Bulletin every week...I notice that too many of them are mediocre in nature...and do not interest anymore.

So...bring on the heat...even if it is October. The end of the season is very near...and it's been a great one for almost any golf course in 1997. Too soon we'll be feverishly wishing for some of that heat...to keep our bodies warm and our minds challenged.

The cold alternative is too soon and too lastingly upon us. Then I know...I just know for certain...that I'll quickly be so sick of winter that heat...any heat...would be most welcome. 🍀

# Championship Turf



The Super Bowl Champion Green Bay Packers have improved Lambeau field by installing a new Sports Turf® system to provide the best surface possible. To insure strong, tough turf, the Packers chose fertilizers from **Spring Valley Turf Products**. **Spring Valley** is proud to be the choice of the Packers!



## **SPRING VALLEY®**

The Fertilizer Choice of the Packers

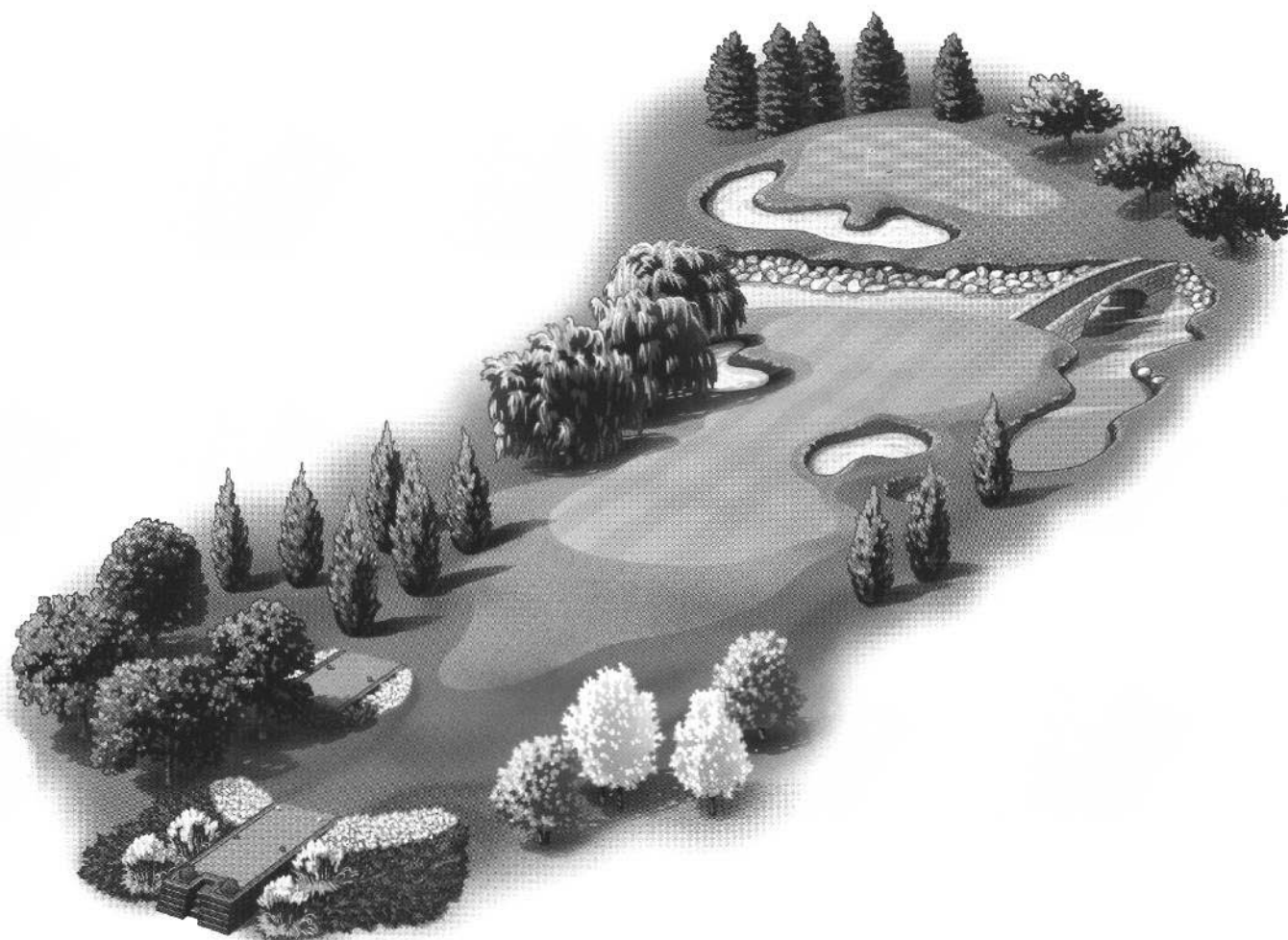
1-800-635-2123





# HERE. THERE. EVERYWHERE.

## HOW'S THAT FOR APPLICATION GUIDELINES?



On greens. On tees. On fairways, roughs, flower beds, transplants — even in your divot mix. Milorganite delivers outstanding results for a uniform playing surface. No other fertilizer is easier on plants or simpler to use. Milorganite's slow release, organic nutrients won't burn or cause a flush of growth. Plus, it's high in micronutrients such as iron to promote dense, vigorous turf. And Milorganite resists leaching, for a sound environmental profile. So call your distributor today, or call Milorganite's turf professionals direct at **1-800-304-6204**. It's easy.





# FINISH UP, WIND DOWN

By Monroe S. Miller

Somebody reversed the seasons on us. Again. Record lows at night and record low daytime highs were part of July and August. We seldom ran our air conditioner and on more than a few of those 50 degree F. nights in August, we pulled the covers up. It rained frequently (but not much at a time, at least in our town) and irrigation planning and problems were not part of our working lives.

When September and October arrived, so did the warmer and summer-like weather. The rain stopped. All-time high temperatures were recorded. And golfers were out in droves, enjoying the extended season and using these bonus days to make up for rounds lost during the cold spring.

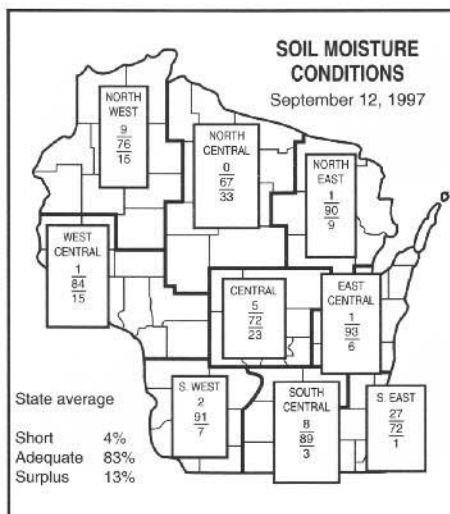
You lucked out if you happened to plan any course constructions projects this autumn. It was unusual luck—remember it because it won't likely happen again for a long time. At our course, the only significant rainfall—.40"—came on the very afternoon Jeff Porter and his GA-60, along with our GA-60, pulled cores for six hours. It was a heartbreaker—and a holy mess.

It was great fall weather to finish up on the odds and ends that never seem to get done during the rest of the season.

With November comes the chance to wind down the 1997 golf season and great ready for the holidays of November and December. Stats for September and October are here from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service.

Bill Sell passed away on August 28th. He had been ill for quite some time, and his son Greg wrote to me that his dad was just tired and went to sleep. His heart was working at only 25% capacity, making even the simplest tasks difficult for him.

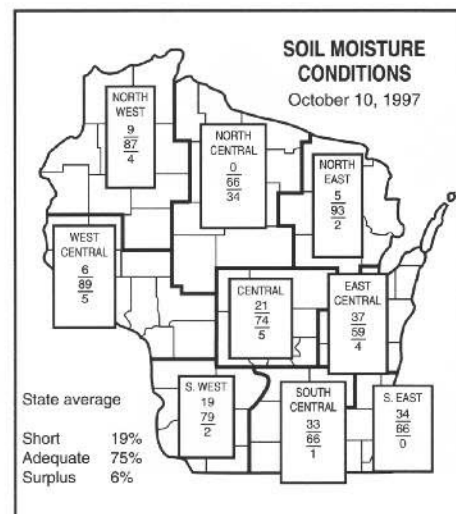
Bill spent 38 years in the golf course business, served as president



of the WGCSA and was a recipient of the WGCSA Distinguished Service Award. And like so many of his generation, he was a proud veteran of military service in WWII in Europe.

For as long as he was able after he retired, he attended several WGCSA meetings a year. It gave him a chance to see those colleagues he knew and enjoy a round of golf with them. It also gave him the chance to keep in touch with the chapter. As his health worsened, so did his attendance.

I had the good luck to hear from him a little more often, usually by letter, but sometimes by phone, too. The inspiration was usually some issue he'd read about in THE GRASS



ROOTS. He was never without an opinion.

Bill performed a great service after his time on the board and as president. He kept a close watch on the chapter and its affairs and never, ever hesitated to speak up when he thought we were headed off in the wrong direction. He was, in a lot of ways, our conscience. He was our watchdog, and he offered what could be best termed "tough love." He told us why previous decisions had been made and generally made certain that common sense prevailed. He did so with plain, straight talk; Bill was always blunt and was never bashful.

There won't be another like Bill Sell. I am going to miss him.

(Continued on page 36)

# AMETEK

## TURF BOXES

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

“Fall of the leaf,” as autumn was known as far back as the middle of the 16th century, is a time for enjoying leaf colors. I did my enjoying as a leafpecker in the northeast again this year, overdosing on apple cider, pumpkin pie and maple syrup, and visiting some folks with Wisconsin connections.

I stopped in to see Frank and Barb Rossi in rural New York. They are well settled in at their farm and Frank has his program at Cornell underway and moving forward. He does a lot of traveling since he is a member of the USGA research committee and because he has a 100% extension appointment. Few people realize how big New York state is, and has responsibilities that take him from Buffalo to the tip of Long Island. Hopefully we will get Frank back to the Badger State as a speaker at one of our educational programs.

A search for John Burroughs’ significant historical sites took me to the Hudson River Valley. I spent a night in Catskill, New York, called Steve Blendell and met him for breakfast. He looks great and is enjoying his life “back home.” He was raised in the



L-R: Jerry O'Donnell, Bill Eckert, Tom Harrison, Pete Miller, Monroe Miller, Dr. Jim Love and Randy Smith.

Albany area, 40 miles north of Catskill. Steve and his wife Carol are building a new house on eight acres of land they bought shortly after settling in Catskill. He sends greetings to all.

In his last president's message, Mark Kienert asks, “where have the old-timers gone?” I strongly object to his term “old timers”; it is a poor

choice. I would suggest to Mark that “veteran” would be more accurate. Or “experienced.” That issue aside, I am one of those veteran golf course superintendents in Wisconsin and in a position to answer that question, in part at least. The photo above helps.

Late in the summer we had a reunion of sorts with Professor Jim Love, Peter Miller, Jerry O'Donnell, Bill Eckert, Randy Smith, Tom

## **COLUMBIA ParCar**

**of WISCONSIN**

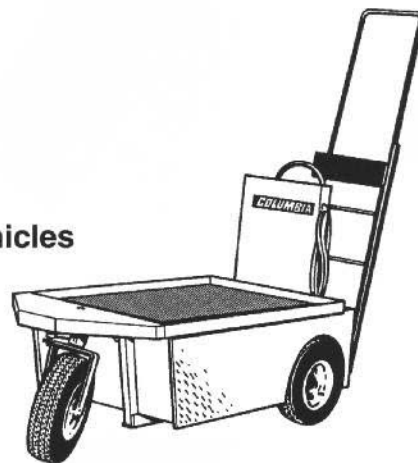


**Gas & Electric Golf Cars & Utility Vehicles**

- New, Used and Reconditioned
- Full Sales and Service
- Additional Cars for Special Events
- Lease Financing Available

**Eagle Sponsor  
of the Golf  
Course Owners  
of Wisconsin.**

**SALES & SERVICE**  
3696 Burke Road • Madison, WI  
(608) 249-6600



**Proudly Manufactured By  
Wisconsin Craftsmen**

Harrison and myself. Pete is the former golf course superintendent at Lawsonia, Nakoma Golf Club and Firestone CC. After managing golf courses, he owned a distributorship of turf equipment in Ohio. Today he helps operate a family business.

Jerry was a golf course superintendent before and after a successful career at Scotts. He retired a vice-president.

Bill was the course superintendent at Maple Bluff for a number of years. He left Madison to become manager of a substantial farming operation near Portage. He has been doing that for twenty years.

Randy, as you know, left our profession last year when he left Nakoma. He now owns his own business, which includes some golf course clients.

That leaves Tom Harrison and me remaining as course managers.

I'd guess, as a group, we are fairly typical. The majority in a group of your course superintendents end up doing something else in later years. Who knows? That could be typical of lots of professions.

Many times in my youth, especially on crisp autumn nights, our family would watch the northern lights—the aurora borealis. It seems in my adult life I've seen them less; the reason, I am convinced, is that they were simply more visible in the country where the darkness isn't polluted by artificial lights (street lamps, car lights, lighted homes, etc.).

On September 30th, the aurora borealis was particularly visible, even for townies like most of us. When they are really spectacular, the light flares with long shafts of whitish-purplish-reddish colors from the northern horizon to the very top of the sky. There is movement to them, too, and they can be overwhelmingly awesome. The September 30th show wasn't that impressive, but reminded some of us of one of the few perks for night watering on a golf course!

When I was young I always heard the northern lights were the result of sunlight being reflected from the ice on the north pole. The scientific reality is a little less exciting than that, resulting from the interaction of charged particles in the atmosphere. Sunspots and solar storms send streams of magnetic particles toward

the earth. These "solar winds" amplify the auroras (there are "southern lights"—aurora australis—too) and allows them to be seen farther from the pole.

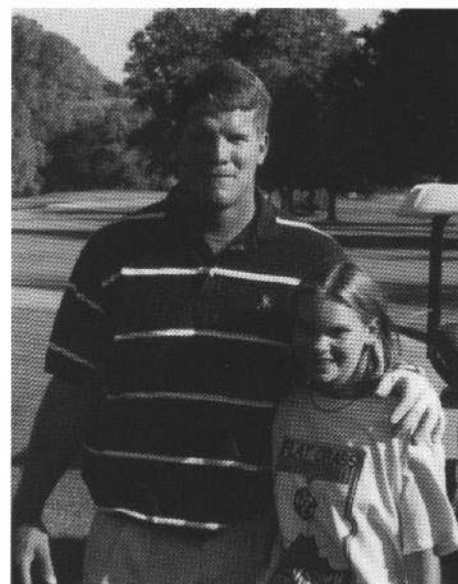
Draw a line through Salem, Oregon, Boise, Des Moines and New York City and it describes the best sighting; we are included in that area.

Northern lights sightings are reported more often in September and March. The reason is simple: the cool, clear nights magnify their visibility.

Did you catch them this fall?

I hope Holly Handrich (don't you love that name?) attends the GCSAA conference with her parents next winter—I want to get her autograph. She got her picture taken with Green Bay Packer quarterback Brett Favre!

Favre, Don Beebe, Mark Chmura and Frank Winters sneaked into Racine for a private, quiet round of golf at Racine Country Club in early October. Of course, somehow word got out that they were at the private facility and a number kids waited quietly and respectfully until they ended their game to ask for autographs and pictures. They were reluctant, but when Favre found out that Holly's dad, Mike, was the course superintendent, he posed with her for the photo you see here. Brett visited with Holly about the course, and he must



Brett Favre with one of his biggest fans—Holly Handrich.

have felt pretty good since he shot a "77 or a 78."

Not only did he have a fun round of golf at one of Wisconsin's premier courses, he gave a youngster a memory she will never forget.

It doesn't seem possible, but another Symposium is here. The program looks excellent and I expect many of us will be there. Until then, be well, do good work and keep in touch. 🙏



## ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS FOR THE GOLF SUPERINTENDENT

- Disposal of pesticides, fungicides, and hazardous wastes
- Free cost analysis for disposal of waste inventory
- Lab analysis for unknown substances
- Turnkey waste disposal includes waste profiles, labels, manifests, packaging, and transportation
- RCRA and DOT compliance
- 25+ years in the hazardous waste industry

**Liesch Environmental Services, Inc.**  
6000 Gisholt Drive, Suite 203 • Madison, WI 53713  
(608) 223-1532 • Fax (608) 223-1534



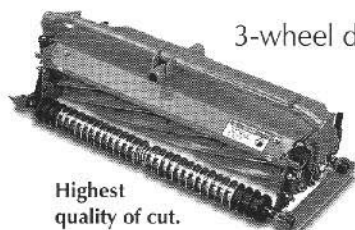


# Its good looks and major components have something in common. They're easy to see.



Tilt the top fender and grill out of the way, and lift off the air intake cover.

You'll see how easy Jacobsen's new Tri-King™ triplex trim mower is to maintain. It's also easy to operate with responsive power steering, automatic



Highest  
quality of cut.  
Trouble-free  
adjustments. Every time.

3-wheel drive, powerful 18 hp gas or  
19 hp diesel engines and  
a comfortable, new  
operator's area. You'll get  
the highest quality of cut, and

a choice of 72" or 84" cutting widths with 5-, 7- or  
10-blade reels. Ask your Jacobsen distributor for a  
demonstration.

**HORST**  
DISTRIBUTING, INC.

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

**JACOBSEN**

**TEXTRON**



---

# EXPO '98 - *Information Packed*

Audra Anderson  
WTA Executive Secretary

---

Expo '98 is going to be held at the Holiday Inn - West on January 13th & 14th, 1998. The Expo Planning Committee has been working on ways to make Expo the best it can be.

If you haven't received your Expo registration information already, you should be receiving it shortly. Some of the speakers that we have lined up for you are Bruce Clark of Rutgers, Andy McNitt of Penn State, Mike Hurdzan of Ohio State, Rich Riggs of UW-Stevens Point, John Ball of South Dakota University, Pete Bemis of UW-

La Crosse, Vince Patterazzi of Michigan State, Dave Huff of Penn State, Nick Christians of Iowa State and Bob Vavrek of USGA Green Section. Some of the topics to be presented are: integrated control of summer patch, cultural management for disease control, *Poa annua* cultivar development of greens type, problems and practices of Sport Grass, the top 12 misconceptions in green construction and topdressing along with many more interesting topics.

We have taken out the morning

research report session. There will still be reports given on the research going on but they will be dispersed throughout the program. We are applying to have CEU credits. So for all you CGCS, this will be a conference to receive those valuable credits. Of course the trade show, Wisconsinizing and wonderful food will be there as well.

If you have questions about Expo or if you haven't received your registration information by mid-December, please call Audra at 608-845-6536. 🌿

---

## **CANNON TURF SUPPLY, INC.**

---

5104 Thatcher Rd.  
Downers Grove, IL 60515

**Where Success Is Based on a  
Commitment to People...**

STOCKING A COMPLETE LINE OF PESTICIDES, FERTILIZERS,  
GRASS SEED AND ACCESSORIES FOR THE TURF PROFESSIONAL

**TOLL FREE 800-457-7322  
VOICE MAIL PAGER 800-901-5489  
CUBBY O'BRIEN**



## On the Forefront of Turf Research

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

Every year turf researchers gather at the Crop Science Society of America meetings to exchange information on current research. Abstracts of some of the research being reported this year serve as the basis for this article. These provide a good overview of what problems are being researched around the country and what the researchers are observing.

A note of caution is necessary. Many of these research projects are in their infancy. First-year observations in field research projects can be misleading.

Our old nemesis, *Poa annua*, continues to receive attention. Researchers at Ohio State University report that monthly foliar applications of Fe or Fe+Mg significantly reduced the poa population in a bentgrass fairway. How or why this occurred is unknown.

Research in California on poa invasion of creeping bentgrass substantiated that the extent of invasion depends on the quality of the bentgrass turf. The more open the turf, the more susceptible to invasion by poa. Poa invasion of different bentgrass plots was tracked for 5 years. At the end of this time, creeping bentgrasses with poa populations of 15% or less were Southshore, Cato, Crenshaw, and C-N-C. Bentgrass stands having more than 25% poa were Regent, Penncross, and Emerald.

Numerous studies have shown that early morning dew removal from turfgrass significantly reduces dollar spot incidence, sometimes by as much as 80%. Researchers in Kentucky have examined the effects of different methods of dew removal. These methods included mowing, vacuuming, and wet and dry sponge rolling. Over three seasons, mowing was the most effective dew removal method on bentgrass greens.

Seasonal reductions in dollar spot severity ranged from 45 to 63%. On fairways, vacuuming was most effective. It reduced dollar spot 85 to 95% over two years.

Another cultural practice being investigated for effects on disease is the use of plant growth regulators. University of Illinois field trials have shown that application of Cutless and Primo on bentgrass suppresses dollar spot. Primo also reduced the severity of brown patch but Cutless had no effect. As the researchers have pointed out, these observations suggest that Primo and Cutless can have fungicidal properties, but one has to keep in mind that they also reduce disease recovery rates through suppression of leaf extension rates.


A common belief is that morning shading of putting greens leads to more rapid declines in quality than does afternoon shade. This belief has no scientific basis, which is why the issue is being studied by researchers at Ohio State University. Their first-year observations failed to disclose any differences in the effects of time-of-day and shading intensity on bentgrass putting green quality. However, measures of root weights and leaf pigment concentrations suggest that morning shade may prove more detrimental in the long run. It seems to me that what needs to be factored into this study are duration of leaf wetness and water use rates. Disease pressure and the tendency to over- or under-irrigate could well be significant contributors to declines in putting green quality.

On the management side, creeping bentgrass establishment on a 100% sand-based green constructed by Iowa State researchers was enhanced when fertilization program included applications of humic acid and molasses. Research at North Carolina State University suggests

that the primary role of humic acids in 100% sand cultures is that of increased bentgrass uptake of P.

Concern that cultivation of sand topdressed native soil greens will mix the native soil with the sand and lead to surface pore sealing is being studied at Michigan State University. The effects of water injection (WI) and hollow time (HT) cultivation are being compared. No differences in sand-soil mixing were evident after one year of cultivation. By the end of the second year, WI-cultivated plots had more sand in the native soil and less sand in the topdressing layer than did the HT-cultivated plots. How these differences influence putting green quality remains to be seen.

Other researchers at Michigan State University are examining the long-term effects of pgr's and rolling on putting quality and speed on greens with different root zone compositions. Early results have shown that ball speed is greatest with the combination of pgr + rolling, but the



**REWARD. HERBICIDE**

**THE WINNING EDGE.**

- REWARD edges out grass and broadleaf weeds
- Works faster than Roundup and Finale
- Doesn't harm non-target vegetation, fish and wildlife
- Labeled for golf courses, residential and commercial turf, greenhouses, nurseries, right-of-ways and aquatic situations

For more information contact Shawn Hilliard at your local United Horticultural Supply.

**1.800.362.8049**

Always use and follow label directions. REWARD® is a registered trademark of a Green-Keep Company. A trademark of Green-Keep. © 1997, Green-Keep.