

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	
The Call For Help!	3
MISCELLANY	
Mum's the Word	5
MISCELLANY	
Looking for Greener Grass	9
PERSONALITY PROFILE	
In Search of O.J. Noer	15
WGCSA	
2000 WGCSA Spring Educational and Business Meeting	20
WISCONSIN PATHOLOGY REPORT	
What is DNA?	25
TDL	
TDDL No Longer, Now It's the TDL	29
NOTES FROM THE NOER FACILITY	
Hot Dates	30
TALES FROM THE BACK NINE	
Golf in the Holy Land	33
GCSAA	
PDI and You	39
GAZING IN THE GRASS	
Alternative Weed Controls For the 21st Century	44
THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK	
The Big Push Has Started	51
FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY	
These Guys Have Fun Watching Grass Grow	57
GOLF IN THE FLATLANDS	
A Springtime Venting	58
JOTTINGS FROM THE GOLF COURSE JOURNAL	
The End of the Scotts Era	60
POA TRIVIA	
.	64

ABOUT THE COVER

Buckingham U. Badger, more commonly known around the world as Bucky, has had a very busy year 2000 so far. Let's see, the UW-Madison football team won the Rose Bowl (the third Rose Bowl victory in less than a decade) and the Badger women's basketball team won the WNIT. The men's hockey team had a hugely successful season, missing the Frozen Four by only one game. And there was the UW-Madison men's basketball team, defying all odds by ending up in the Final Four Championship.

Bucky was under a lot of pressure this spring and found early morning rounds of golf on Madison area golf courses a great way to relieve that tension.

UW-Madison alumnus J.L. Samerdyke caught Bucky hitting balls from Badger Creeping Red Fescue plots at the O.J. Noer Facility and captured him for our cover.

As Governor Tommy Thompson says: "Isn't Wisconsin GREAT!"

*Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lamb's bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play
Ye that through your hearts today
Feel the gladness of the May!
— William Wordsworth (1770-1850)
English poet*

THE GRASS ROOTS

THE GRASS ROOTS is a bimonthly publication of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association, printed in Madison, Wisconsin by Kramer Printing. No part of THE GRASS ROOTS may be reprinted without expressed written permission by the editor.

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
Monroe S. Miller
Blackhawk Country Club
P.O. Box 5129
Madison, WI 53705
groots@globaldialog.com

EDITORIAL STAFF AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS
Dave Brandenburg
P.O. Box 314
Theresa, WI 53091



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Front row: (L-R) Dan Williams, Kris Pinkerton, David Brandenburg, Mike Kacro. Back row (L-R) Scott Schaller, Gordon Waddington, Marc Davison, Mike Lyons, Mike Berwick

1999-2000 WGCSA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT Kris Pinkerton Oshkosh Country Club 11 West Ripple Oshkosh, WI 54901	DIRECTORS Dan Williams Riverview Country Club N1385 Ellen Lane Greenville, WI 54942
VICE PRESIDENT Dave Brandenburg P.O. Box 314 Theresa, WI 53091	Mike Berwick N5973 Canal Street Princeton, WI 54968
TREASURER Marc Davison Green Bay Country Club 1864 Charles Street DePere, WI 54115	Mike Kacro 704 W. Washington Hartford, WI 53027
SECRETARY Michael Lyons Old Hickory Country Club 316 York Street Beaver Dam, WI 53416	Gordon Waddington N80 W5241 Bywater Grafton, WI 53012
	PAST PRESIDENT Scott Schaller North Shore Golf Club W6788 Windward Drive Greenville, WI 54942



The Call For Help!

By **Kris Pinkerton**, Golf Course Superintendent, Oshkosh Country Club

I agree with Jerry Kershasky: "Procrastination stinks!" We as professional turf managers who depend on turfgrass for our livelihood, stink at raising funds to improve it. Now this may seem a bit harsh and I don't mean to offend anyone. But, the truth of the matter remains, we really have not done our very best at raising adequate funds for turfgrass research.

Jerry Kershasky, Wisconsin Turfgrass Association director and superintendent of Westmoor Country Club, has put forth a challenge to you to make a difference! Golf courses around the state should have received a mailing last month. This mailing outlines two very important methods for getting golfers, the end users, to donate toward turfgrass research. If we could convince our players to donate \$5.00 each, we would have \$250,000 per year for turfgrass research.

Setting a good example are superintendents like Dan Williams, Jeff Bottensek, Mark Kienert and Jerry Kershasky who, year after year, have raised thousands of dollars for research. This shows their outstanding commitment to our turfgrass profession. I have been



inspired by these gentlemen to follow suit and hope you will too!

This past February, your Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association Board of Directors approved a \$5.00 check off donation to be added to each monthly meeting notice. All donations will go to support the Turfgrass Diagnostics Lab. When signing up for our monthly meetings, you and/or others from your clubs will now have an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the support of the TDL and related research.

We have a "State Of The Art" research facility and highly skilled faculty and staff. The call for help to provide sufficient funds to develop timely solutions for our most serious

challenges has never been more important than now.

Congratulations go out to our 25-year members Jim Hall, Mark Kienert, Jim Shaw, Jerry Kershasky and Bill Roberts. It is with great pride that we honor these fine superintendents for their long time commitment to our association and profession. Great job! 🌿



YOUR COMPLETE POWER SOLUTION



The Source for Power...
Worldwide™

HONDA
ENGINES

Кубота

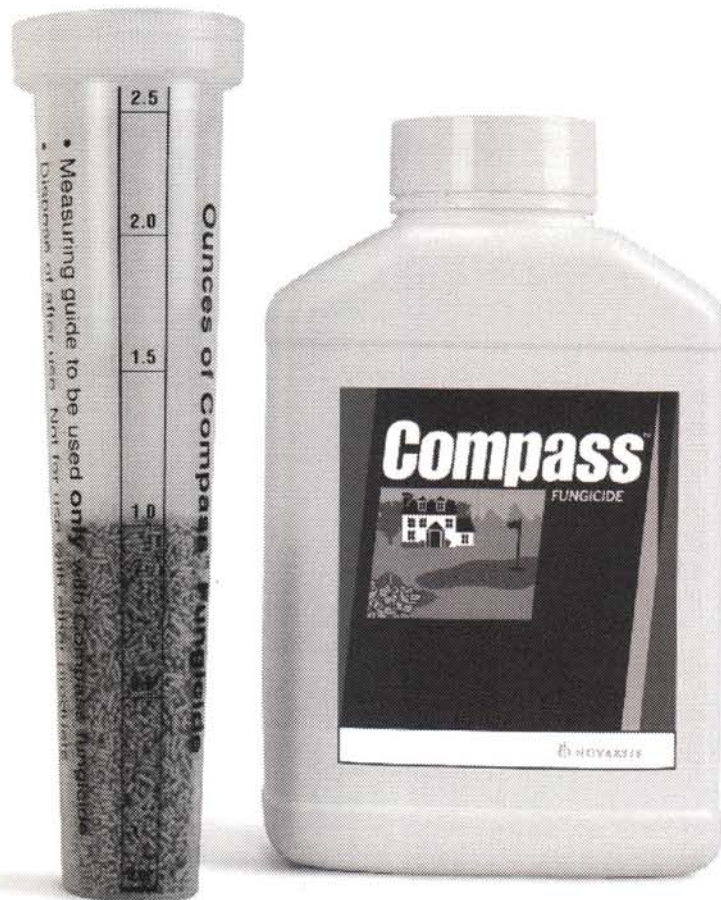
LOMBARDINI

Contact our parts group for all your engine parts needs. We carry a full parts inventory.

1830 Executive Drive • Oconomowoc, WI 53066 • Phone (800)242-2289 • Fax (800)585-7514
Visit Engine Power on the web at: www.enginepower.com

New Compass™

Locked-in disease control for both lawns and landscape ornamentals at the lowest rates ever.



- New Compass controls Brown Patch, Leaf Spot, Gray Leaf Spot, Red Thread, Rust, and more.
- Compass gives you preventive and curative options.
- Lowest rates ever mean 95% reduction vs. contacts.
- New technology, yet competitively priced.
- Just in time, a reduced-risk fungicide that is environmentally sound.
- Mesostemic power ensures locked-in, rainfast disease control up to 28 days.

BRIAN ANDERSON
(616) 682-0108

 **NOVARTIS**

www.cp.us.novartis.com

Important: Always read and follow label instructions before buying or using this product. ©1999 Novartis Crop Protection, Inc., Turf & Ornamental Products, Greensboro, NC 27419. Compass™, the Mesostemic device logo, and the Novartis logo are trademarks of Novartis.

Mum's The Word

By **Jeff Gregos**, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

On April 7th, I had the opportunity to spend a day at the Masters at Augusta National Golf Club. It was both a rewarding and educational experience that I feel everyone should take advantage of, if given the chance. As you know, the Masters is the most prestigious golf tournament on the tour. What you do not see from watching CBS is the extent to which Augusta National is manicured. It is easily the most intensively managed golf course I have ever seen. Most of the articles written by previous attendees discuss the competitors and some of the obvious conditions of the course. I would like to take a new angle and fill you in on what goes on behind the scenes.

The Masters is the second of the majors that I have had an opportunity to attend. (Now to find a way to get to the British Open and the PGA Championship!) Since I have worked a major tournament (1994 US Open at Oakmont), I have always been interested in

what goes on behind the scenes. Knowing Dr. Joe Duich from my days at Penn State, and recently seeing him at a meeting, I arranged a tour of the maintenance facility.

Upon finding Dr. Duich at the well-disguised maintenance facility, one of the first questions I asked him was what the greens were rolling. His answer set the stage for the rest of the day. His response was that "I should know what they were by just looking at them." If you watched any of the tournament, you saw that there was not much of a backswing for any of the players—even for the 30- and 40-footers. After meeting with him I paid more attention to the greens and saw that they were on the hungry side and didn't need all the speed considering the many undulations.

Dr. Duich did provide some interesting information about the tournament. For example, during the tournament the course has a crew of around 120 members. Of the 120 people, 46 are full-time crew members and the rest are volunteers. He also informed me of some of the liability issues with a tournament, especially with weather related issues. This was the first year that Augusta hired a bonded weather service. This relieves the Club of that liability in the case of an accident involving weather-related issues. Some of the weather forecasting equipment included the usual weather station and some experimental equipment that can determine if conditions are conducive for lightning. There were three satellite dishes on top of the main office building as well as several standards with lightning detection and forecasting instruments.

After meeting with Dr. Duich, I took some time to browse around the maintenance facility. I have seen many maintenance buildings in my travels, but none are as impressive as Augusta National's. The size of the facility was not all that impressive, but what was in it was. Much of the equipment is on loan for the tournament, but even so there was a lot. I counted about 15 fairway units, 15 rough mowers, around 50 utility vehicles, and about 10 response vehicles. The response vehicles were modified Toro Workmans that had just about everything needed in case of a turf emergency. These vehicles were placed at strategic locations on the grounds and could respond to an emergency at a moment's notice.

Another interesting fact about the maintenance facility is the practice green. I found several of the crew members practicing their putting following their



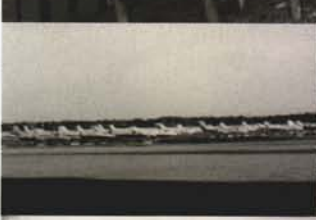
Quality Products • Convenience • Value
That's what LESCO is all about.

- Turfgrass Seed
- Elite® Fertilizers
- GC Accessories
- Replacement Parts
- Fungicides
- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Irrigation Parts

(800) 321-5325

LESCO®

LESCO is registered and Grow With Us is a trademark of LESCO, Inc.



morning jobs. I was informed what the variety was on this green. It happened to be A1—a hint of things to come at Augusta, maybe. From an unconfirmed source, I was told that a majority of the greens are still Penn Links, and about three of them are L-93. Try as I might I could not get anyone to talk about mowing height or mowing practices. That information could be a threat to National Security.

Following the last group of the day, I ran across Dr. Duich again. This time he was out stimping the greens in the afternoon. From the looks of how far the tape measure was out, I would venture to say that the greens were rolling around 13+, but that is just a guess. Tom Harrison informed me on the way back that, “the people who stimp greens at Augusta must swear on three Bibles that they will not reveal any readings.”

As you will see, many of my pictures were taken in the shop area, as cameras are not allowed on the golf course during the tournament. But I did manage a few interesting pictures of the gallery and the Par 3 Course. Little known, the Par 3 Course actually hosts the first tournament of the week. The competitors

play the Par 3 Course on Wednesday afternoon and they have a plaque to commemorate all of the previous winners. Also, no Par 3 winner has ever won the Masters.

After following Steve Stricker to the 16th hole, it was back to the airport for the return trip. The airport was interesting in the fact that it only had two gates and didn't even have a stairway for us when we landed. Yet, there were probably enough corporate jets to pay off the National debt.

I would also like to initiate a drive to help some of the golf community to better understand the research aspects of turf. One thing that I found interesting was that everyone that I talked with thought that the O. J. Noer Foundation and the O. J. Noer Facility were one in the same. This is far from the truth. So I open an invitation to anyone in the golf community to stop by the Noer Facility and learn a little about what we do here. I have already personally invited both Gene Haas and Thomas Schmidt of the WSGA.

As an endnote, I would like to thank Monroe Miller and the WSGA for the opportunity to attend the Granddaddy of Them All. ♣



Proudly Serving the Turf Industry in Wisconsin

Terra's full line of turf industry products includes:

- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Fertilizer
- Grass Seed
- PGRs
- Fungicides
(Including Thalonil™ 90DF and 4L)
- Colorants
(Including Terramark™ SPI and Terramark Lake Colorant)

**For the products, services and advice you need,
Talk to Terra**



Terra International, Inc. • 3525 Terra Court • Sun Prairie, WI 53590
Conrad Stynchula CGCS • (800) 456-0948 (office) • (608) 235-4999 (mobile)

NOT JUST PAR FOR THE COURSE

For over 20 years Waupaca Sand and Solutions has been working to provide you with premium products that outperform all others. Today, as the largest supplier of golf course sand and materials in the Midwest, we can provide you with custom-engineered products that are not just par for the course.

TOPDRESSING MATERIALS

Fines Free Topdressing Sand[®]
Standard Topdressing Sand
Premium 80/20 Topdressing

BUNKER SANDS

South Rim Bunker Sand[®]
North Face Bunker Sand[®]



PRECISION BLENDED CONSTRUCTION MIXES

GREENSMIX[®] Construction Mix
7-2-1 Construction Mix
Tee Mix
8-1-1 Construction Mix

SPECIALTY PRODUCTS

Petal Power Bedding Mix
Green Dyed Divot Sand
Cartpath Materials @ Landscape Products
Bridge and Trench Gravel

As you grow, so does our commitment
to making your job easier.



A DIVISION OF FAULKES BROS. CONSTRUCTION, INC.

715-258-8566

sandguys@execpc.com

Waupaca, WI • Rockford, IL • Antioch, IL • Muscatine, IA

LOOKING FOR GREENER GRASS

By **Tony Rzdski**, Golf Course Superintendent, Woodside Golf Club



This story begins back in November of 1997 when I began my quest, my search for greener grass. To be sure, what I thought would become a pleasant respite from my daily, distasteful ordeal at the golf course, became a very unpleasant pursuit. That is why a year and a half ago, I began making mental notes about my experience. I thought that I might share some of my experience with you. I felt that this might be important, for in order for me to begin my journey, I had to end my career as a greenkeeper.

If any of you know me, (I'm sure that most of you don't) you would at first wonder, "Why would he do something like that? He's got almost 20 years in this business!" Then you would probably say to yourselves... "the pressure got to him, upper management must have finally cracked his back, or it's the constant battle with the weather." Then you could quickly dismiss the matter and understand how any of these reasons, and more, can contribute to a fellow greenkeeper's demise.

To be sure, these things were wearing my shoulders down. And to be honest with you, it was not just one problem that caused me to look at greener fields, but a number of difficulties had emerged that began to overwhelm me to the point that I began to question my abilities and my talent. I had lost confidence in myself and self doubt was slowly creeping into my psyche and I felt that I wasn't in control anymore. Relentless projects...during the playing season...and constant changes to a brand new golf course were slowly eroding my character. Any small

mistake that an employee might make, I took as a catastrophic failure on my part. I didn't have the foresight to prevent "things" from happening. I had a strong feeling of inadequacy that was gradually leading me into depression.

As you can see I was pretty mixed up emotionally. I don't know if all of this insecurity culminated into a mid-life crisis and if that is actually what I went through, but I will tell you this before I go any further. If you get this messed up inside, don't do as I did, don't bottle it all up inside.....talk to someone or two people that you have confidence in...*please talk to them!*

I decided to walk away from it. I decided that a change of scenery was in order. It was time to look at the other side of the business and try something new, so I went to work for a local equipment dealer. The thought of a regular work schedule sounded great! "Hey, I won't have to get wet anymore. And Mother Nature can take a hike! No

more diseases to worry about, temperamental irrigation systems, and bad golfers complaining about 'poor' pin placements. Yeah, I'll have it made in the shade!"

Let me tell you something, as often as your sales representatives stop by pulling their trailer with the latest equipment, and you may think, "boy they've got it made!" Believe me, it's not as easy as it looks. They do an awful lot behind the scenes to best represent their products and business. And they often put in a lot longer hours than a golf course superintendent! My hat is off to them and I will always respect them and their work. I worked hard at it, but after several months I realized that I was not cut out to be an equipment salesman. Every time that I stepped on a golf course or visited a fellow superintendent I just wanted to jump into their shoes! It didn't matter what type of course it was or what problems they were having, they were growing grass....and I had to pull

NATURAL ATHLETIC TURF INC.

**GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION
RENOVATION & REMODELING
GREENS - TEES - BUNKERS**

11040 N. Buntrock Ave., Mequon, WI 53092
(262) 242-5740 • FAX (262) 242-5740

ROY G. ZEHREN

my trailer. I was honest and up front with my boss. In August of 1998, I told him that I was considering going back to the golf course. He was very supportive and wished me well in my search and continued my employment. To that I am very grateful.

But what did I really learn from this experience? Well, I learned that some of the greatest discouragements in our lives come after some very successful accomplishments. I had to learn patience. I had to learn what it truly meant to be humble. You see the new search for greener grass (employment back at new golf course) took over a year to accomplish. I had been very successful in the past at former golf courses that I had been employed at. Now I was learning patience, I was humbled by my shortcomings. Leaving a superintendent's position for another occupation can thwart your credibility. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

To say the least, discouragement was almost a daily event. When the mail came from a potential new employer and the letter read..... "thanks for applying for the superintendent's position, but we have chosen another candidate"...believe me, it wasn't an easy time. I had a lot of people pulling for me and an inner strength and resolve to accomplish my new search. I also had discovered something that I had known all of my life, but had never accepted. Just about the time I was leaving my golf course career in 1997, I had accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I have been a Christian all of my life, but I had not had that 'born again' experience. With my world crashing around me that fall of 1997, I sat on my backhoe and tearfully prayed to God to take this burden from me. It wasn't long after that prayer, as a matter of fact less than an hour, that answers began to fly at me. I will never forget that day, the day I decided to let God

drive the golf cart and lead me down the fairway.

Now you may say, "how could God lead you somewhere that you would be totally unhappy?" I believe that He had to let me *experience* the other side of the business. I had been in quite an emotional quagmire. I believe that I had to rediscover who I was. Why am I here? And where am I going?

Patience, humility, and discouragement must have been a weakness in my character, and God decided to test those attributes. He also taught me to truly count my blessings and I developed a new focus and perspective for my life. I learned that spiritual forces, God living in your daily life, has a much greater impact over physical needs. The spiritual realm of God empow-

EVEN WHEN IT'S EMPTY, IT'S LOADED.



Carryall Turf II

Our new Turf II is loaded with a great package of standard features. All of which makes a great vehicle an even greater value. Turf II is part of Carryall's complete line of versatile, dependable vehicles.



CLUB CAR
INGERSOLL-RAND



Club Car, Inc.
Wisconsin Branch

4485 South Racine Avenue
New Berlin, Wisconsin 53146
Phone: 414-896-9570
Fax: 414-896-9578