thought about many areas of study and their potential value both to you, our extension constituents, and the scientific community.

Aiding the turfgrass professionals and homeowners in our region is our highest ideal; subsequently we selected several key turfgrass species and some of their prevalent pathogens as targets for our efforts. Currently we are working heavily with bentgrass species (*Agrostis* ssp.) to find genes of disease resistance to both snow molds, (*Typhula* species, *Microdochium nivale*) as well as dollar spot (*Rutstroemia flocco-su*) and to utilize them for a breeding program. We are also working with Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) cultivars to help resolve the difficult question of blend design, and to help illuminate the sketchy practice of phenotypic grouping based solely on observation. Additionally as laid out in last month's *Grass Roots*, by Dr. Geunhwa Jung, we have just completed a mega-collection of snow molds. These were sampled from over 100 courses across the state representing all temperature and snow cover duration regions. Currently three people are spending eight hours a day preparing these samples for analysis. Soon we hope to critically examine the variety of snow molds that occur in this state with more alacrity than ever before. We hope to use this information to aid the industry in adding a new degree of efficiency and precision to snow mold control.

We are preparing for the future problems of the Wisconsin turf industry by starting an ambitious ryegrass: gray leaf spot (*Magnaporthe grisea*) resistance project now before the problem is lurking on our collective doorsteps. Also a list of Kentucky bluegrass cultivars will be screened for resistance to fungal pathogens *Bipolaris sorokiniana* (called Helminthosporium leaf spot), *Leptosphaeria korrae* (called necrotic ring spot), and *Drechslera poae* (called melting out) in our program. In short, after a tad over a year of interaction with you, we have designated many of your problems as our challenges. We are rapidly moving in a direction of becoming experts in the above subject areas. Our aim is simply to dissect and elucidate them to your benefit.

We certainly have been blessed with a dedicated team, most scoffing at the idea of a 40-hour workweek. Geunhwa Jung, Jeff Gregos, a great group of three new graduate students (see last issue) each of whom bring new outlooks and critical skills to the program. We also continue in our vein of recruiting hard working undergraduate students for both Jeff's team and our staff here in the Russell Labs. These folks are really dedicated, and my constant hope is to entice them to somehow remain in the field.

As for me, it has been a year of discovery. There is a great deal to learn about the turf industry and its supporting faculties. I have thoroughly enjoyed the chances to meet with you, learn about your programs, facilities, and concerns. I think the tighter linked science and industry are, the better both will be served. It's ludicrous to research in a vacuum, as it is to do business in an uninformed state. To that end I see forging ahead and strengthening the relationships we already have, and building new ones will be fortuitous for all of us. As you have the time, the door to the lab is always open, and we look forward to seeing you all at field days.

If There is Pink Snowmold in June, This MUST Be Wisconsin!

By Monroe S. Miller, *Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club*

Good grief – we've had a wet and cool spring in Wisconsin. The forecast all too often was "partly cloudy with a chance of rain." Generally, there hasn't been flooding amounts of precipitation – we are only a little above normal for the year – but it seemed to rain almost all the time. Jeff Gregos took a photo of a slide sample of pink snowmold from our 9th fairway and the field of vision was full of spores.

"I'm not worried," was my response. "As soon as the sun comes out the disease will disappear." As it turns out, that wasn't until June!

The hot summer that arrived in the second week of the sixth month spawned some fairly strong storms around the state, and the result was significant damage on golf courses. The sound of chain saws was pretty common for the southwest corner of the state up through the Fox River Valley to Green Bay. A few golf courses won't be the same because of the loss of mature trees.

Mostly, I am struck by the parallels of what I do now and what went on during my youth on our family farm. Lately, the contrasts have been on my mind.

On a Wisconsin dairy farm, there is a frenzy in the spring getting fields plowed and crops planted. Weather pays a huge role in that. Fall is equally busy with harvest, particularly of row crops like corn and beans. Granted, there is hay to make in the summer but only a few farmers are raising oats or barley anymore. So for them, the pressure eases in July and August.

Not so for golf course superintendents. The pace and the pressure intensifies and we are at our busiest in July and August. It won't be unusual for many of us to work every single day of those two months, whether we like it or not.

But remind yourself of this: we are well past the summer solstice and I can sense it. The sun is edging, ever so slowly, south. Dusk comes a few minutes earlier each day and sunrise comes a few minutes later. You can tell it in the way the shadows fall. There are fewer birdsongs in the morning and more insect sounds in the afternoon and evening. The tomatoes ripen, the corn tassels, and Queen Anne's lace begins to bloom. There is more talk of the Badgers and the Packers. Young employees start talk of the fall semester.

Soon – all too soon when you are my age – it will end. Another golf season with all of its glories and warts will slide into the slower months of autumn. One of the most difficult things for me to learn during my career was to enjoy (or at least appreciate) these days of intense pressure and stress. Things appear worse at the moment than they will in hindsight. Summer is still summer, and it can be a wonderful time in Wisconsin.

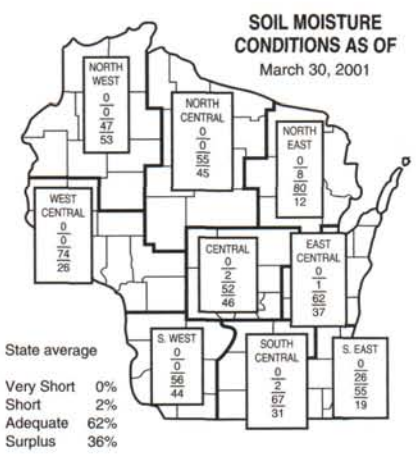
As for the two months past, a summary is here from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service.

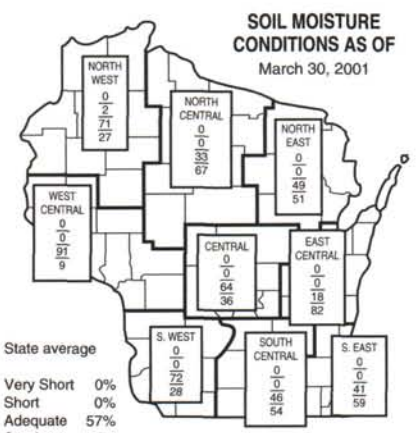
•

I enjoy visits from Terry Ward more than nearly anyone else. He embodies so many traits I envy and has had so many experiences I respect that I am enriched every time he stops. When he swung through in May, I was thrilled with the news he brought of the 2001 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium. Three things were exciting:

(1) The Symposium will convene at Wisconsin's only five star hotel – The American Club in Kohler. There is no place like it and the room rate will startle you in a favorable way!

(2) Format changes initiated last year will be used this year. Bravo!





(3) The subject chosen – emerging problems and pests – has drawn an outstanding roster of speakers. I won't spoil the surprises, other than to ask, "how would you like to see and hear Stan Zontek again?"

The dates are November 13 and 14 in Kohler. If we don't set an attendance record this year, we NEVER will.

Congrats to the committee of Ward, Johnson, Otto, Nees, Waddington, Worzella, Biro and Vavrek.

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Sympathy to the staff at Midwest Irrigation and the family of Gordon Cunningham. He passed away June 3 in Dubuque at the age of 75.

Gordy and his partner Peter Beaves designed and installed many irrigation systems in Wisconsin. Superintendents like me who did business with them found each man to have the ultimate in ethics, honesty and congeniality. They had the same kind of people working for them. Their work reflected their professionalism. And with our job, we didn't even have a small disagreement.

Gordon designed golf courses as well as irrigation systems. His parents immigrated to here from Scotland, so Gordon came by his love of golf and golf courses naturally. What name could be more Scottish than Gordon Cunningham?

He will be missed by more people than he would ever have realized.

•

Tuesday, July 10th will be one of the most memorable days in the history of golf in Wisconsin. That night the Wisconsin State Golf Association will celebrate its centennial.

The evening will be emceed by former Tour player Steve Melnyk. The Wisconsin players who have been elected to the WSGA Hall of Fame will be recognized. Many of the current PGA Tour players who had outstanding WSGA amateur careers will be honored. Also featured will be the founding clubs, USGA dignitaries and players of the past.

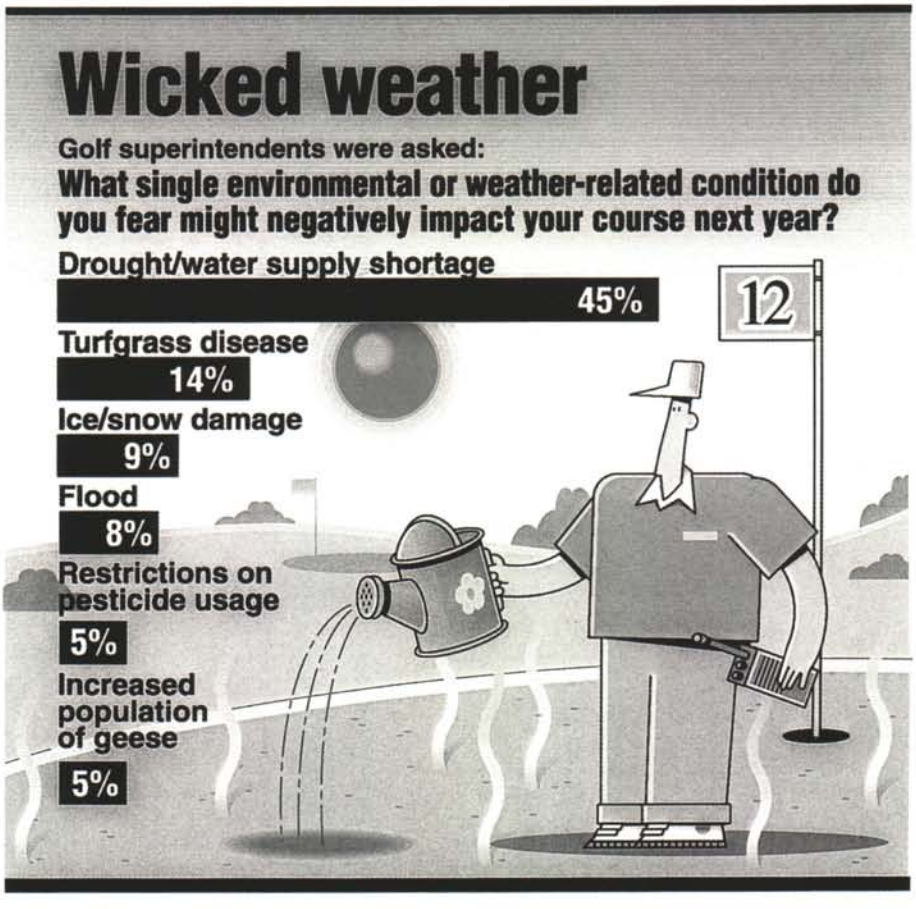
I can hardly wait!

•

If golf course superintendents are anything, they are plantsmen. Grasses are most important, but annuals and perennials and woody ornamentals are all key to the golf course setting.

Given that, most of you would have waited in line like I did at the UW – Madison Botany Department greenhouses to get an up close look at the rare Titan Arum during its flowering. Only a handful of these plants (11) in the US have ever produced the single flower.

The flower is of titanic proportions. It grows from a huge tuber – 175 pounds. The flowering stalk can reach ten feet and when it opens the flower has a 3' to 4'



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diameter. No wonder it is called the world's largest flower.

The down side when the flower opens is the smell; it is a horrible stench that smells like rotting fish. The odor attracts pollinators like flesh flies and carrion beetles. The flower stays open for a few days and collapses when pollination is complete. It is a native of the equatorial rain forests in central Sumatra in Indonesia and is called the "corpse flower."

The corpse flower bloomed in the US first at the New York Botanical Garden in 1937 and most recently (before the Wisconsin blooming) at the Huntington Botanical Garden on August 1, 1999 in California.

Tens of thousands tromped up Bascom Hill to see the corpse flower. A photo I took is here for you to see in case you missed it.

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Wishes to John Gallus for a rapid recovery from emergency surgery he underwent on June 15th in Madison. Good health is everything and we hope John will be 100% before you know it.

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A lesson I learned a long time ago from my parents is the value of hard work. A golf course in the summer is very hard work. Fortunately, most often that hard work is rewarded and recognized, and those two things make it worthwhile.

Dig in. Grind at it. Give it your all. And keep in mind that there will be snow sooner than we can imagine.

The Titum Arum three days before the flower opened. The height here is about 9 feet; the flower opened to a diameter of 3-4 feet!