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ABOUT THE COVER

Architectural illustrator J.L. Samerdyke captures the classic beauty of Kohler's historic American Club, site of the 2002 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium. See inside for more about this famous hotel and Wisconsin treasure.

*"When the crisp air hints of frost to come,
And the maples turn to gold.
When the bearing season is over*

*And the harvest is in the hold,
With grateful hearts we seek once more
The familiar hearthside gleam...
Knowing our work has been well-done,
We contentedly rest and dream."*

HEARTH FIRES

By Nadine Brother Lybarger

THE GRASS ROOTS

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

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Thanks Staff!

By **David Brandenburg**, Golf Course Superintendent, Rolling Meadows Golf Course



people are stepping to the plate to help with his work.

Every one of our seasonal workers is important, as we all work together to get the job done. I have been very lucky as we have 7 retirees who work part time 24-32 hours per week. These guys do anything for us and do it the way we want it.

Then we have the students. This year we have 10 unique individuals with different backgrounds and goals. I have been very lucky in Fond du Lac finding student workers. I always turn some good kids away, never have had a kid quit midseason and I have not fired anyone in 6 years. I hear horror stories from other superintendents who cannot find or keep help, so I am very willing to give the kids credit for their performance.

As we enter the fall season, do not forget to thank your workers for what they have done for you and the course this year. They deserve all the credit and recognition they can get.

*

The golf season is going by fast. We have had some great hospitality at our monthly meetings. Many thanks to our hosts Chad Harrington at Autumn Ridge, Gordon Waddington at The Country Club of Wisconsin, Pat Zurawski at The Golf Club at Camelot and Tod Blankenship at Wisconsin River Golf Club. I could not attend the Super Pro at CCW but I enjoyed the other meetings and learned something new at each one that I could take back to make Rolling Meadows better.

Please try to get away for a day of education while playing as we visit Scott Bushman at Fox Valley

Golf Club and Rod Johnson at Pine Hills Country Club. We also have the Dinner Dance at Quit-Qui-Oc Golf Club and the WTA Fundraiser at Blackwolf Run to enjoy this fall.

Then to wrap up the year we, have the Symposium. This years topic "Doing More With Less": *Resource, Time and Money Management* could not be better as many of us are facing tight budgets and staff reductions.

*

The past two messages I discussed my goals of leaving work at a reasonable hour and getting home to spend time with my family before they are grown up. I am doing better, but it has been tough now that I am the acting mechanic. Don't forget to go home at the end of the day and spend time with the family and friends. We only have one life to enjoy. ♣

Do you give credit where it is due? What does that mean really? The credit I am talking about is the recognition and thanks our staffs deserve for the work they do.

Just about every visit I make to our clubhouse a customer tells me how much they like the job I am doing, or the condition of the course. The easiest and quickest answer is a simple thanks. I go a little further and say, "thanks, we have a good staff this year and I'll pass your comments along." As paperwork and management have taken over my time, I rarely touch a mower so the staff should get the credit.

Right now I am learning just how important each person of the staff is as our mechanic has been sick for nearly a month. I was concerned he was slowing down as he got older but now I know how much he accomplishes in a day as I try to do his work myself. I cannot believe how many things have broken down in the past month. We are starting to adjust to not having a mechanic and more

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Kiwi Golf Course Management and the NZSTI



By Dr. John Stier, Department of Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This summer I had the exciting opportunity to visit New Zealand and learn more about turf management south of the equator. Picture Australia's position on the globe, then move southeast towards the Antarctic and you'll have New Zealand accurately placed. The last major land mass to be colonized, New Zealand has climates that range from rainforest to near-desert and from sea-level to mountains over 10,000 ft. tall.

The country has a relatively small population of just under 4 million (about 80% of Wisconsin's population). The main city is Auckland on the North Island. Known throughout the world for the kiwi fruit (originally the Chinese gooseberry), the term Kiwi is commonly used as a reference for the inhabitants of this beautiful and often rugged

country. Though most of the country is relatively rural, New Zealand boasts about 250 golf courses, many of them quite beautiful with scenic backdrops of hills, forests, and mountains. The terrain and hazards vary, though: Arikapakapa Golf Course near Rotorua is in the midst of a geothermal area and is peppered with boiling mud pools and small steam vents scattered throughout the course.

Similar to much of the rest of the world there are no major turf programs at the universities nor does an extension service exist. Instead, education and extension-type activities such as troubleshooting pests and problematic putting greens is performed by the New Zealand Sports Turf Institute (NZSTI). The NZSTI was started in 1949 by the Ministry of

Agriculture and Fisheries in response to industry needs. The headquarters are in Palmerston North on the southern portion of the North Island. A second office is located in Auckland. A small bit of applied research is conducted to solve specific problems if funding can be found. Funding comes largely from those groups or companies which have an interest in the results as no government funding is available. Superintendents, their assistants, and their crews gain much of their knowledge through various fee-based seminars and courses sponsored by the NZSTI. The rest of their knowledge comes from on-the-job training. An aspiring superintendent generally spends at least 3.5 years as an "apprentice" coupled with several levels of correspondence courses before being ready to move into an assistant superintendent position.

Most of New Zealand's golf courses are owned by "incorporated societies" and governed by a Board of Members. A few are municipally-owned; private ownership is very rare. One of the two privately owned clubs I learned of was the Formosa & Golf Harbor Club which is owned by a corporation from southeast Asia. Most crews are relatively small: a superintendent, an assistant, an apprentice, and two to four laborers. Country courses may employ only two people. Salaries are similar to the U.S. with a range from \$30,000 to \$100,000 or so. Greens fees range from \$5 to \$60 with a cart.

Management practices are largely similar to those of Wisconsin. A temperate climate, moderated by oceanic influences,

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provides an ideal setting for cool-season grasses across most of the country. Greens are typically creeping bentgrass and *Poa annua*. The greatest difference is the heavy reliance on browntop (colonial bentgrass) for fairways and sometimes greens. Fine fescues are occasionally mixed in for good measure. The northern part of the North Island is a bit warmer and turf in the countryside, including golf courses, is almost wholly composed of kikuyugrass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*). Kikuyugrass is emblematic of a situation which has recently garnered massive attention in the U.S.: it is a non-native and invasive species. Kikuyugrass is easily recognized by its light green color and often puffy turf. It spreads by both rhizomes and thick stolons. Seedheads can form even on greens that are mowed daily.

Bermudagrass is occasionally used for fairways and tees in the extreme northern part of the country.

Regardless of the turf species, greens are typically mowed 3 to 4 mm height. Golf may be more popular during the summer tourist season but many courses remain open year-round. Green speed is important with speeds of 10 ft or better desired even on greens of colonial bentgrass mowed at 4 mm. Mowing height may be increased during the winter and speeds allowed to slow to as much as 8.5 ft.

Greens are typically irrigated and many golf courses also have irrigated fairways. In urban areas the water is usually from the town while country courses will draw water from wells or reservoirs.

Turf managers in New Zealand seemed to be a very realistic group

of people and relied on tried and true agronomic practices. Like U.S. superintendents, turf managers were extensively well-read and were eager for research-based information. Nitrogen is the main nutrient supplied. Spoon-feeding N in liquid applications is common, particularly on greens. A strong push for organic N sources started several years ago but the bubble burst in 1999 and its use has continued to decline.

Aeration is viewed as an important management tool. Greens are usually core-aerated (hollow tines) 1 to 2 times each year, generally spring and fall. Older greens are usually composed of native soil while newer greens are constructed according to USGA specifications. Holes are backfilled with sand with seed mixed in if needed. Wet or compacted areas on fairways may be verti-drained or



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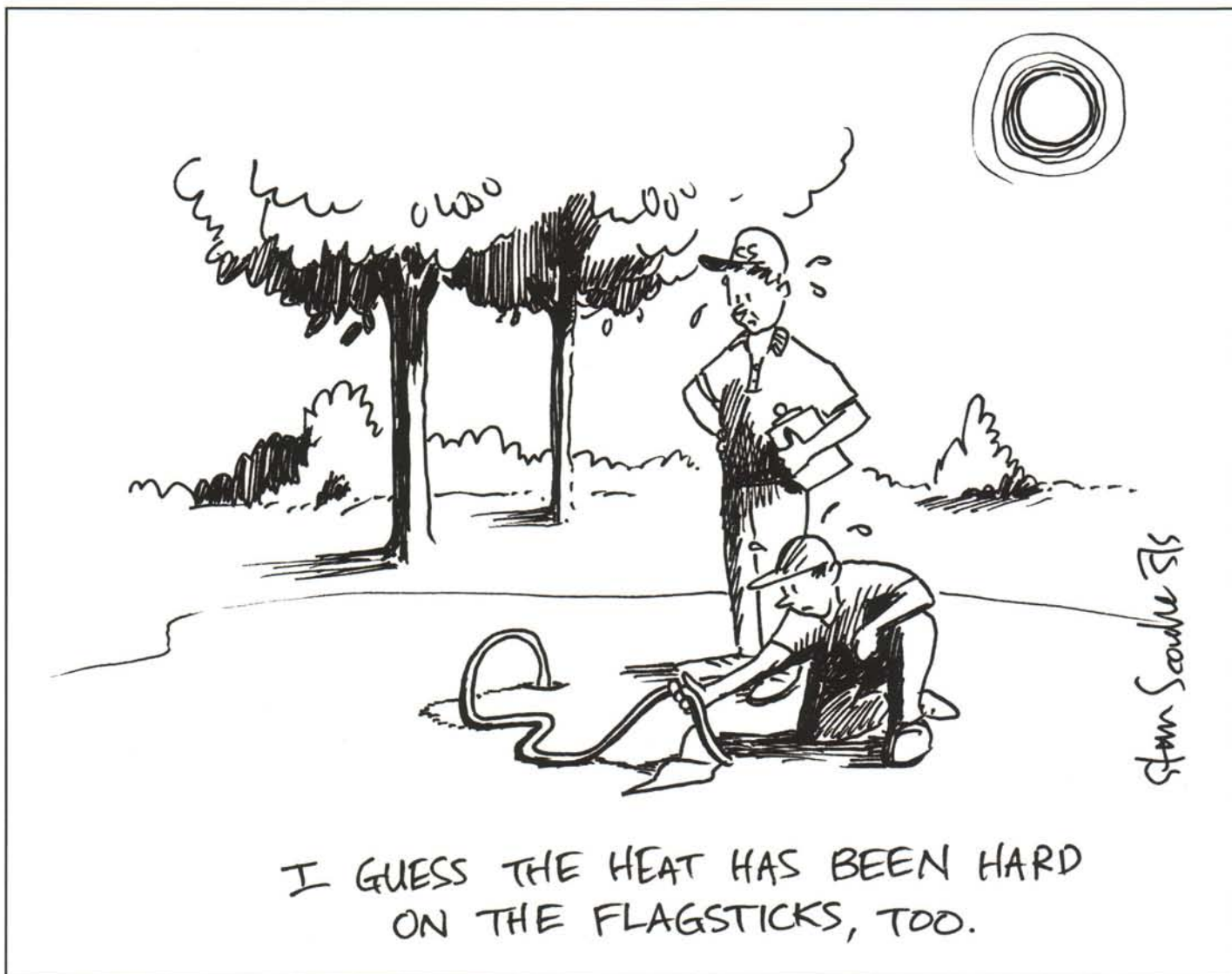
spiked according to weather and playing conditions. Needle tines may be used on greens several times throughout the year. Topdressing is usually 100% sand. Peat is seldom used for two reasons: it is viewed as a non-sustainable use of a natural resource and is not readily available in much of the country.

Disease, weed, and insect control play only a minor part in golf course management. Access to pesticides is similar to that of the U.S. market with all or most of our products available for use. Auckland has started to restrict spraying in public turf areas but

most golf courses can still use pesticides as long as spray shields are used to reduce chemical drift. The main diseases are dollar spot and Fusarium (i.e., pink snow mold). Annual bluegrass is the most problematic weed. Insect pests appear to be extremely rare.

In general golf course maintenance in New Zealand mirrors our own practices in the states. The country itself was amazingly easy to visit: apart from having to drive on the opposite side of the road, travel and accommodations were similar to the U.S. People were extremely friendly and sharing and prices were great as the exchange

rate is about 2:1 in favor of the U.S. dollar. The most interesting aspect was how the lack of a university-sponsored research and extension program has led to the development of a completely fee-based service in education and outreach in the NZSTI. The turf managers I met had a sincere appreciation and respect for the NZSTI personnel and services. It never ceases to amaze me that no matter how far one travels from the U.S., how common that thread of human decency and friendliness is among people involved in the turf industry. ♣





Where Is He and What's He Doing Now?

By Lori Ward Bocher

He's moved into the same house three times. He previously was a third generation golf course superintendent. Since then he has worked for three different companies, and he has had three different positions with his current employer. Dean Musbach may be a one-of-a-kind guy, but, when it comes to his career, he seems to have an affinity with the number three.

Dean is currently turf sales manager for Reinders, Inc. Although this current title seems pretty straight forward, his career path to this point in his life has been anything but straight; it's been full of twists and turns, ups and downs.

"When Monroe called me to see if I'd agree to this article, I was flattered," Dean explains. "But then Monroe said, 'You know, Dean, we just have to know what the heck's going on with you. Are you in Milwaukee? Are you in Minocqua? Nobody really seems to understand what your position is. This would be a good way of letting everybody know what's going on with you.'"

But first, back to the beginning.

Family tradition...

Dean was born and raised on a golf course. And when he went to visit Grandma and Grandpa Musbach, that was also on a golf course. His grandfather, Frank, was superintendent at Bluemound Golf and Country Club in Wauwatosa at the time. And his father, Bob, was superintendent at North Shore Golf Club in Menasha.

"We literally lived on the golf course until I was 4 years old," Dean recalls. "We lived in a big old farmhouse right next to the shop. It was pretty typical in those days for the shop to be in an old barn and for the superintendent to live in the farmhouse. My grandpa did the same thing. He helped build Ozaukee Country Club and lived in the farmhouse near the barn. And when he went to Bluemound Country Club, he did the same thing."

Dean's grandfather, Frank, was a golf course superintendent for 55 years - 20 at Ozaukee and 35 at Bluemound. "They called him the straw boss in the early years," Dean explains. "He ran a team of horses. The team made a dollar a day and he made 50 cents. The worst part was, his father-in-law owned the horses!"

Dean has a plethora of memories about growing up on golf courses. "I could keep you on the phone for hours talking about memories of running around Bluemound with my cousins, hassling the night waterman," he says. But one of his earliest childhood memories comes from



Four generations of Musbachs - Bob, Frank and (a very young) Dean with Dean's new daughter Meghan.

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North Shore where his father worked. "After a big rain storm, there was an area next to the shop that was low and full of water and mud. I recall my older brother Jeff coaxed me in there. It was muck. Every time I tried to lift my foot out, my boot would stick in the mud. Jeff got out and was laughing at me while I'm standing there crying. My dad's assistant, Ralph Heckel, came in and saved me, picked me up and pulled me out, and carried me over to the house."

When Dean was 4 years old, his family moved out of the course-owned farmhouse into a house that still was near the course. "It was close enough that my dad would bring home a Cushman and go back to work that way, which I thought was pretty cool - driving down the highway or in the ditch with a Cushman," he says. "I have a lot of memories - sitting in back of the old F10's while guys were mowing fairways, or running around in a bunker after a big rain storm."

Summer jobs...

Dean's father transferred to North Hills Country Club in Menomonee Falls when Dean was 8 years old. Not surprisingly, Dean's first jobs were on his father's course. "I actually started working on the course when I was 12,"

Dean recalls. "North Hills has hosted the Vince Lombardi Memorial Golf Classic, and my first job was to put up and take down ropes that first year. Between 8th grade and my freshman year, I went to work for the grounds crew, primarily doing grunt work, earning my stripes by raking bunkers and trimming around trees."

He worked at the course every summer and after school when he wasn't running on the cross country team. Dean enjoyed his work on the course. "As a kid, you like earning the money," he relates. "But it was also a chance to get back together with my pals who were also working on the crew. It's a social thing."

Dean had no problems working for his father. "I think he was pretty fair with me," he says. "Sometimes when you're working for your father you're held to a higher standard. But he was pretty fair. He was fair to everyone in his crew. He was a good guy to work for. He was very clear about his expectations and his process; as long as you did your jobs the way he wanted them done, he was a great boss. But if you deviated, you had hell to pay!"

After graduating from Menomonee Falls East High School in 1981, Dean attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to study business administration. But, after three years, he left without earning his degree. "I didn't know what I wanted to do, I was side tracked," he explains. So he began working full time at North Hills. His father was still the superintendent there, and Mark Kienert was the assistant. His brother Jeff worked there, too.

Dean was married in 1985, and his father began to encourage him to apply for other golf course jobs - partly so that he could work for someone else to see how other people do things. "At that point," Dean remembers, "I didn't think anyone would want to hire me. But Dad said, 'You know a lot more than you realize. Being literally born in the business, you've been involved in aspects from a practical sense. You can go and get a turf degree from the UW. However, there are a lot of things they can't teach you there. Ultimately, you need to work with good organizations to hone your skills, to learn the art of the business.' Dad prodded me along, so I put together a resume."

"My father also told me, 'Don't take just any position,'" Dean continues. "He told me to go somewhere with name recognition, where people know there's a good turf program. In his mind, this was a stepping stone in my career."

Becomes a superintendent...

Dean followed his father's advice and applied for a job at Timber Ridge Country Club in Minocqua. "Timber Ridge had a good reputation," he points out. "Back then, it was a jewel in the rough because there weren't many courses up there. It was a very well-designed, beautiful course."

"And it was a unique job situation, too," he continues.

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"The superintendent (Tom Lindeman) was retiring in a year, and they were hiring an assistant who could work with him for a season and then become the superintendent. I went up there and had a great interview. By the time I got home from the four-hour drive there was a message that they wanted to make me an offer. It kind of went bing, bang, bang!"

So Dean moved his family - which now included two very young children - up to the north woods of Wisconsin. And, like his grandfather and father before him, he lived in a house that was on the golf course. "That was very natural for me," Dean relates. "Even though I was working a lot, I was nearby and able to pop in and out. I took my kids on the course like my dad did with me. They still cherish those memories. They still miss the days riding with dad and the nights checking the sprinklers."

Unlike his father and grandfather before him, Dean was not destined to be a golf course superintendent forever. After six seasons at Timber Ridge, he left the profession. "People asked me why I left the business," he recalls. "As much as I loved working on the golf course, one thing I didn't like - and you'll probably hear this

from many superintendents - is that it can be a very thankless position.

"You can go out there, bust your tail, put in 60 to 70 hours a week or more, and then get kicked in the butt because of the politics that go on behind the scene or because you can't control the weather," he continues. "Much of the time you're working very early in the morning when nobody is around, or you're there very late at night to set irrigation, things like that. People don't see you working, so many times superintendents are under appreciated."

Attracted to sales...

While working as a superintendent for six years, Dean came in contact with many sales representatives. "I was attracted to sales," he points out. "I thought it was very fair. You get out what you put in. If you work hard and do your job well, it's reflected in what you make."

So in December of 1993, Dean went to work as a Reinders territory sales manager in north central Wisconsin. His territory went from the Wausau/Stevens Point area north to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. "This was a good job opportunity because we could continue to live in Minocqua where we were



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