

# 2005 WGCSA SPRING EDUCATIONAL AND BUSINESS MEETING



By **Randy DuPont**, Golf Course Superintendent, North Hills Country Club

The annual Spring Education and Business Meeting was held on March 7 at the Ramada Inn in Fond du Lac. This meeting signals the end of the winter season and the beginning of a new golf season. The weather outside, however, told a different story.

Mixed precipitation and temperatures in the 20's made it feel like the beginning of January, not the beginning of March. Much of the talk during breaks and over lunch focused on the "roller coaster" winter weather, and the effect it may have on the turfgrass, particularly on greens. Thunderstorms in January and wild temperature fluctuations have made this "off" season interesting, to say the least.

The featured speaker of the education program was Mr. Mike Woolcock, Service Manager for Leibold Irrigation. Mike's talk was entitled "Common Questions in Irrigation Projects and Maintenance."

Part one of Mike's presentation dealt with the timeline, and challenges that need to be met for a successful irrigation project. As with any successful project, planning is key and lead time a must. He referred to the project triangle as a blueprint for success. It consists of a consultant, contractor and distributor. All three must be on the same page and work together or there could be unsatisfactory results, mainly time delays in the project.

Mike talked about how important the mobilization phase of an irrigation project can be. At this time equipment is brought in along with supplies. Wires and tiles are located, mainlines and satellites are laid out and any bridge crossings or borings are completed. This phase can take from three to four weeks, but if done successfully can lead to a smooth transition to the actual pipe laying and sprinkler installation.

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In conclusion: Mike's key to a successful irrigation project can be summed up by the acronym C.O.R.E.: Communication, Organization, Reliability, and Education.

The second part of Mike's presentation dealt with field troubleshooting. He took us through some common electrical problems that occur on golf course irrigation systems and walked us through the diagnostic process.

While not all of these problems can be eliminated, many can be minimized with proper grounding and surge protection. Often overlooked, we should have grounds tested and surge protection installed as insurance against electrical storms.

If anyone has questions on field troubleshooting, Mike will gladly send you that part of his presentation. He can be reached at [mwoolcock@yousq.net](mailto:mwoolcock@yousq.net)

Next on the agenda was the business meeting. President Marc Davison presented the meeting agenda and all areas were addressed.

Marc reported that Dave Van Auken had resigned his board of director position and that Randy DuPont has been appointed as his replacement and is chairman of golf and arrangements. Marc then recognized Monroe Miller on winning, for the 21st consecutive year, the best editor category II for *The Grass Roots* in the GCSAA chapter publications contest. Monroe has also been busy working with David Brandenburg and Gene Haas in the production of a 75th year anniversary book on our association. Our hope is that this book will be available late this year to the membership at no cost. Thanks guys for all your efforts. It was also noted that the board of directors will be creating a Class E member board position which will be non-voting and advisory in nature.

After the committee chairpersons presented their reports, Eric Jasin had the honor of presenting 25-year plaques to the eligible. Those present to receive their awards were: Marc Davison, Joe Fryman, Rod Johnson, Joe Kuta, Charlie Shaw, and Karl Wehausen. Those not present were Charlie Kisow, Victor Peterson, Randy Staubli, and Jack Storm. Not only are this year's award winners incredibly knowledgeable in our field, they are also great guys who are willing to share their knowledge with others. Is it no wonder that they have stayed in this business for 25 years. These men are a true asset to our association.

Following the presentations to the class of '80, Dr. Jason Kruse was introduced to the association. Jason is the new UW Extension Agent for Winnebago County.

Dr. Kruse is presently sitting on a committee formed to help develop a nutrient management plan for those who manage turf areas larger than five acres. The goal of the committee will be to set standards for optimum turf and flexibility. This standard, which we know as NR

151, is scheduled to go into effect in 2008. Presently soil tests will be required every four years with labs for the tests to be recommended from the UW.

Dr. Kruse can be reached at [jason.kruse.unex.edu](mailto:jason.kruse.unex.edu) for more information.

The meeting concluded with Dr. John Stier's thoughts on this year's possible winterkill. Dr. Stier cautioned us that ice damage and crown hydration could be a real concern come this spring.

Earlier I mentioned that the "buzz" during the meeting was the unusual winter weather. Superintendents were comparing notes. How long has the ice been on? How thick is the ice? Have you removed the snow cover? What have you put on the ice to break it up? Have you pulled any plugs yet, and if so, how do they look? They are all great questions with the myriad of responses.

A WGCSA meeting has more to offer than what's on the agenda. In addition to speaker presentations, shared information between superintendents is often valuable information. I hope all of you consider attending one or more monthly meetings this summer. You never know what you'll learn! ♻



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# Looking (and Acting) the Part

By Bruce Schweiger, Reinders, Inc.

It is amazing how time moves on and the next thing you know, twenty-five years have passed. I am talking about all the years I have been involved with the WGCSA as a student, a superintendent and a vendor. It does not seem like that long ago and our association was in a battle with our employers and golfers to be recognized as golf course superintendents and not just greenkeepers. We needed respect because we knew without respect we would not be considered professionals.

That brings me to my point. We have spent many years attempting to show the world that we are professionals and deserving of pay and respect equal to that as golf pros and clubhouse managers. Then you attend one of our monthly meetings and watch a lot of the good we have done being dismantled before your eyes.

If you have attended any meetings in the recent past you have to agree that these meetings are not much more than a chance to play golf. I would like to look at

our last meeting at Grand Geneva Resort. We had between forty and fifty people show up for the education and eighty-eight people to play golf. This is an excellent facility that treated us to a grand day. If you had happened to be a staff member working that day, what kind of an opinion would you have had of our association after we left?

We had a luncheon speaker who gave his time to share with us his experience with the Audubon Society. The schedule that we each were sent clearly stated that education started at 11:00 a.m. I was there at 11:00 and we had a handful of attendees ready for his talk. It took at least fifteen minutes for the group to arrive. Mr. Leuzinger had to adjust his talk so as to not put the day behind schedule. What kind of respect did our association extend to Mr. Leuzinger, a retired fellow golf course superintendent from Illinois? Do you think he will be back in Chicago telling everyone what a great day he had




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with the WGCSA, or will he talk about the country bumpkins who cannot even make a meeting on time? Do you suppose he was impressed by those who preferred to work on their swing or putting stroke instead of listening in to what he had to say?

I have had the task of finding speakers for this group and others, and I know they are very hard to find. Then to have half of the attendees for the day show up after his talk but in time for lunch shows considerable impoliteness. And it doesn't make the education chairman's job any easier.

What about the footnote on every meeting notice we receive that says APPROPRIATE GOLF ATTIRE REQUIRED? We were playing at Grand Geneva Resort; the APPROPRIATE ATTIRE would be that of any country club and NOT blue jeans. Blue jeans do not make the grade at an excellent facility like this one. If we have a question as to what would be appropriate attire, please check the Sunday afternoon television and see what the golf pros are wearing - a golf shirt and slacks. In the summer, mid-thigh length shorts are acceptable.

We have some of the finest golf facilities in the nation right here in Wisconsin and as a group it would be great to play some of these. But what superintendent would take the chance that his peers would arrive for the day in violation of the basic dress code of the host club or facility? As I look at the schedule of meetings for the

year, I applaud Dave Smith, Marc Davison, Dave Braasch, Randy Witt and Michael Lee for hosting a meeting. I hope they don't experience the dress code problems I witnessed at Grand Geneva. For our association, I hope we can put a better foot forward. Remember folks, that means when you are eating lunch or dinner, please take off your hat.

How do we fix this problem? We must remember that we are professional people and act like accordingly. We expect the respect normally accorded to professions like banking and law and must conduct ourselves as though we deserve it. Let's be proud of what we do and who we are and act accordingly. If we cannot do this without policy and procedures from our board of directors, then I suggest we make every meeting a coat and tie affair. Those not able to make it for the education or who choose not to attend should be billed a \$20 surcharge. After two such surcharges, maybe we should limit your involvement. I have a busy schedule too and can be late; these should be our exceptions and not our norms.

Lastly, who had the super-sized bag of sunflower seeds? Maybe shells on the course are not that bad, but we could really tell how far from the pin you hit your approach shot and I think our group was keeping track of the number of putts you took. Please don't tell; we would not want to see a job opening after the next meeting! ♣



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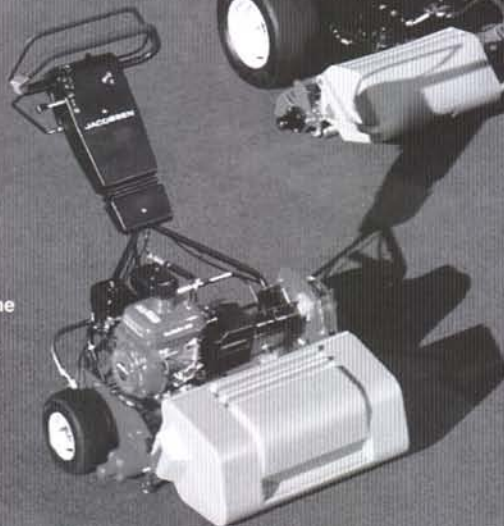
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# People vs. Pros Tournament

By **Marc Davison**, Golf Course Superintendent, Green Bay Country Club

**B**ASF Professional Turf has brought us a tremendous opportunity - the chance to host a 2005 People vs. the Pros qualification tournament. As host, it is GUARANTEED that one of our member superintendents will win a trip to the People vs. the Pros national tournament at Barton Creek to compete for a chance to play Justin Leonard or Ben Crenshaw on ESPN for \$100,000. Will it be you?

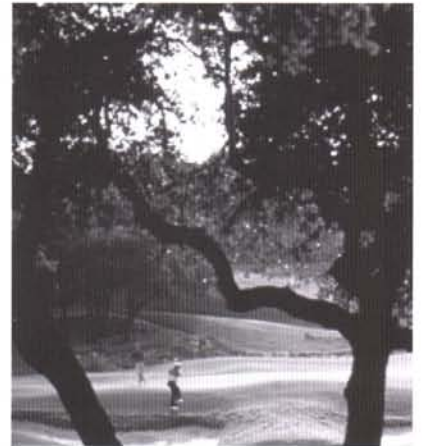
Both our local stroke-play tournament and the national championship tournament will use handicaps to level the playing field. In fact, last year, John Daly and Gary McCord each lost their match on ESPN to a regular person like you!

This will be a fun event with food, drinks and giveaways. And, it's worth repeating - one person from our chapter WILL win a trip to the People vs. the Pros national tournament to compete for \$100,000.

Few chapters have this opportunity. And only invited superintendents like you will be eligible to win. So don't miss this chance of a lifetime. Keep an eye open for your invitation. I am personally happy to be hosting this event at Green Bay Country Club on June 13, 2005. ♣



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# The Dean DOES Matter

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

My father was a big influence in my reverence for the dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at Wisconsin. He had that same respect. I have heard many stories about his freshman year at the UW - Madison, and the most oft repeated involved the dean's horse.

Dad had a room in the Stock Pavilion on campus and earned that room by doing chores - cleaning pens and barns, and feeding livestock housed on campus. In 1940, the College still had livestock at what is now Eagle Heights graduate student housing a mile or so west of campus. He usually rode a horse there from campus. He especially enjoyed those chores at Eagle Heights when he rode the Ag dean's horse to get there. Apparently it was a "spirited" animal and Dad said he wasn't quite as spirited after he rode him through the University Bay marsh to get to Eagle Heights. He was sure Dean Christensen would have approved!

Dean Christensen was a favorite, but Dad also spoke of fondness for Dr. Ira Baldwin and Dr. E.B. Fred. He was familiar with those CALS deans because of WW II; Christensen left in 1943 and was succeeded by Dr. Fred. E.B. Fred was named president of the University in 1945 and when Dad returned from overseas in WW II, Ira Baldwin had succeeded Fred as dean. Since both Baldwin and Fred were bacteriologists, many students had them as classroom instructors; that included Frank Miller.

Dad often told another story that related to the atmosphere in Ag Hall and the concern administrators had for students. He needed permission to miss a few days of classes to go home and help get the crops planted in the spring. Associate Dean Kivlin gave him that permission and asked, "Frank, do you have any money to get home on?" Of course he didn't, but hitch hiking didn't require money. Dean Kivlin gave him a couple of bucks "just in case you need it."

Dad gave the money back to Dean Kivlin after he returned from planting. He never forgot the gesture and shared the incident with others many times in his life. My daughter Christie, a CALS grad with a degree in Genetics, tells similar stories, especially with undergraduate advising and help she received directly from Associate Dean Paul Luden.

In my life, several men who have held the top spot in CALS have influenced me. My freshman year - 1964 - was the same year Dr. Glenn Pound started his

tenure as dean. He was a high-energy guy who provided visionary leadership in the position until 1979. Anyone enrolled in CALS during those years probably had the chance to meet and talk with Dean Pound.

Dr. Leo Walsh, known to many people in the golf course industry, succeeded Dean Pound. Students in the Wisconsin turfgrass science major were housed in the Department of Soil Science, the same department Dr. Walsh served as a professor and chairman. We knew him as a bright, ambitious, decisive man who could be as affable as he could be tough. He had experience in research and Extension in the department and was extremely well prepared for the duties of dean of the College.

We prospered under Leo's leadership because he encouraged and supported the creation of the O.J.

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When Donna Shalala was in charge of the Madison campus as chancellor, she appointed a man to the CALS dean position that had no previous connection to Wisconsin, a mistake in the minds of many people associated with CALS. I think his lack of history in Wisconsin had little to do with his failure, and character had everything to do with his short tenure in the position. It was a short chapter we would like to forget. Shalala made a number of bad appointments that have become part of her legacy at Wisconsin.

A great man rose to the task of righting the ship. Dr. Neal Jorgensen had a successful career on the CALS faculty, following a path somewhat like Leo Walsh's. He was a farm kid from Luck, Wisconsin who also had a successful Extension and teaching and research program in the Dairy Science Department. He had some experience as an associate dean, so when he stepped into the dean's office he knew what was going on. He always was grateful for the support of the turf industry and appointed the first turfgrass professional to the board of visitors. Neal returned respect to the position.

When the selection process was going on for Neal's replacement, guys like me hoped for several things - an applied scientist, a plantsman instead of an animal scientist, a great intellect with a strong background in administration, high ethical and moral standards, and a Wisconsin person.

We were introduced to a person with all but two of our requirements; Dr. Elton Aberle was an animal scientist most recently from the University of Nebraska who grew up in northeast Kansas. That was seven years ago.

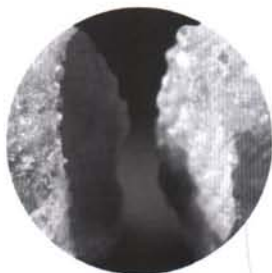
Dean Aberle is retiring this summer, and once again I am left with an empty, hollow feeling, thinking he is going to be nearly impossible to replace. Abe, to anyone who has spent even a little time with him, is one of the finest individuals you could ever know. He is an excellent administrator and has earned respect from faculty and deans all across campus. He is fair, listens when you talk to him and has an easygoing style that is enormously appealing.

He also enjoys golf; many WGCSA members have gotten to know him from our WTA annual golf fundraiser in the fall because he is frequently there. You have also seen him at the Summer Field Day

and the WTA EXPO each January. When he arrived from Nebraska, he had an appreciation for turf programs and knew the turf faculty there. In fact, he told me that he and Bob Shermann attended the same church. He has continued to appoint turf professionals to the board of visitors; Mike Lee is the most recent.

The next while will be pins and needles time. I cannot find anything out about the search and how it is going - rather secretive, it seems. Ultimately John Wiley, the Madison chancellor, will make the choice. It is a critically important selection, to all of us. And whoever is chosen has a mighty big pair of shoes to fill and traditions to live up to. About all we can do is hope for wisdom on the part of those making the decisions, pray that objectivity will prevail, and the best choice for the citizens of Wisconsin is made.

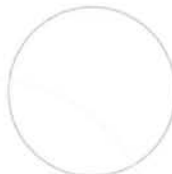
And to Dean Aberle, thanks for a job very well done. You have spoiled us all. ✦



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# Diem adimere aegritudinem hominibus

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

It was some time between 190 - 159 B.C. when Terence uttered the famous words in the Latin title. Translated, it is the familiar "time heals all wounds." We are starting to see that on Wisconsin golf courses.

May 2005 has been a busy month for all Wisconsin golf course superintendents, especially those among us (a considerable number, maybe even a majority) facing the ravages of winter. It followed an equally busy April, but in May we started to see the fruits of our efforts at hurrying along turf recovery. April was the

hope and effort of bringing a return to normal; May was achievement. It felt kind of good, at least once in a while.

It was a tough winter for Wisconsin crops other than turf-grass, too. The Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service reported that nearly 70% of Wisconsin's alfalfa crop suffered some damage - about 17% was severely damaged. The blame is placed at the same doorstep as that blamed for golf turf injury - warm weather in January, melting snow and rain followed by brutal cold. Curiously, the UW Extension

forage agronomist said it was the most serious alfalfa injury since 1993, the same year we lost so much golf course turf.

Our injury was serious; in the case of alfalfa, the loss could touch one million acres. Like golf turf, the most serious damage occurred on older stands of alfalfa.

Production agriculture also saw injury to clover, rye, winter wheat and pasture ground.

If it is true that misery likes company, then we seem to have plenty of that this spring.

Good recovery requires some warm temperatures, and we



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