



WISCONSIN TURFGRASS NEWS

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The New and Improved Field Day

By Audra Anderson, WTA Administrative Assistant

Do you know the year the WTA had its first Field Day? Do you know where it was held? How many vendors exhibited there? How many of those original vendors still exhibit today? What year was Field Day "rained out"?

If you have attended the WTA annual Field Day over the years, you may know the answers to these questions or at least have a good idea. If you don't know the answers to these questions, you haven't been attending Field Day and are missing out on valuable and helpful information. You should have received Field Day '97 registration information about three weeks ago.

Field Day has always been a day for golf course superintendents, lawn & landscape professionals, athletic field managers, and sod producers to view research that has been done at the O. J. Noer Facility and understand how that research can help you in your jobs. You also have the opportunity to see the latest innovations that the trade show vendors have to offer.

The number of people attending Field Day has fallen over the past couple of years and there have been comments about how Field Day should be more hands on like it was when it first started. With these and other suggestions in mind, the Summer Field Day Planning Committee has made many improvements to give you ample opportunity to attend Field Day and see what you've been missing.

For the first time ever, Field Day is going to be a two day event. The activities and information will be the same for each day, but these will take place at different times of the day. We have added

the second day to offer you an option of days to attend and gather all the useful information that is available at Field Day.

We have also moved the trade show and demonstration area. With the Trade Show having over 55 vendors, we moved it to the six acres that was seeded last year at the Noer Facility. The area where the trade show has been held in the past has become too congested and was not very conducive for vendors to demonstrate equipment. This new larger area will allow more room for you to talk with the vendors and see everything there is to see.

Another addition to Field Day is a Tuesday evening meal. Although this is not included in the registration fee, it is a good way to end a busy fact-filled day, visit with friends and colleagues, or have a good meal before you attend Field Day on Wednesday. This time can also be used to look at equipment, talk to the vendors, look at the research plots, or ask more questions about the research that is being done.

We will offer an organized research tour with specific stops on the plots. At last year's Field Day we tried using a

more relaxed format where people could visit the research plots at their leisure and ask the professors and researchers any questions that they had. We got very specific comments letting us know that an organized tour is much better.

There will also be a separate luncheon for sport turf managers on Tuesday. This will be an informational meeting to talk about the formation of a Wisconsin chapter of the Sport Turf Managers Association.

Of course we still have the great lunches on both days and the Silent Auction where you will find a variety of items that the vendors have donated in an effort to support the research that is done at the Noer Facility.

You should plan now to attend Field Day '97 on Tuesday, August 19th or Wednesday August 20th. With the addition of another day, evening meal, organized research tour, larger trade show and demonstration area, you have plenty of reasons to sign up now. If you need registration materials or have questions, contact Audra at 608-845-6536.

Oh, the answers to the questions are: 1983; Arlington Experimental Research Station; 10; 6; 1986.



A generous crowd at Field Day '96.



The lunch tent is always popular.

Green Reflections

By Randy Smith, President
Admire Greenscapes, Inc

A nearly one half acre putting green was added to the Noer Facility this spring that I was contracted to build. This 20,000 square foot research green will be used for evaluation of chemical and biological control agents, particularly for dollar spot, but other diseases may be evaluated also. The construction was a great opportunity for this past superintendent of Nakoma Golf Club. For the past 24 years, I was involved in many renovation projects that included the managing and construction of greens. Building this green was a welcome challenge that was comparable with the magnitude of some of my past projects.

The need for such a green becomes rather obvious when one realizes that more than one third of fungicide sales in the United States are for dollar spot control, and that it is the most commonly purchased fungicide (along with snow mold controls) in the state of Wisconsin. New chemicals, biological control agents, different rates, old and new pesticide combinations, and preventative cultural practices can be evaluated. Better practices, more economical and effective applications, and possibly safer plant protectants can be recommended to turfgrass managers with good data from this putting green.

The green we have constructed is somewhat unique. First, it is a modified "push-up" type green starting with an 87% / 13% sand / peat mix blended with 15% silt loam to create a sandy loam with a percolation rate of over 10 inches per hour.

Second, it may be one of the largest greens in the state of Wisconsin although I have no way of knowing that until this article is published. The green is about 15% of the green surface of an entire 18 hole golf course.

Third, the green is constructed as a flat plane with approximately 1.5% slope to the southeast for surface drainage. It is also rectangular. This is contrary to my past experiences which involve many contours created by the architects and designers for various play strategies.

Fourth, the green was constructed without the constant interference of golfers. That was a pleasant change.

Support for creation of this new plot area came in many forms. Organization and physical support came from Jeff



Phase one — stripping the sod away.



Name the antique in this picture. Hint — he's wearing a cap.



Finishing touches before seeding.

Gregos, research specialist for the Turfgrass Disease Diagnostic Lab/ Department of Plant Pathology. Dr. Douglas Maxwell, Professor of Plant Pathology at the U.W. - Madison and the Turfgrass Disease Diagnostic Lab were a major inspiration to create this research site. Members of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association helped fund part of this project. Greensmix of Wisconsin donated 1000 tons of mix for the green. The equipment was loaned by Blackhawk Country Club, Maple Bluff Country Club, University Ridge Golf Course and West Madison Experimental Farm. Reinders Brothers and North Shore Country Club donated irrigation parts. O. M. Scotts donated starter fertilizer. Olds Seed Company donated seed and Blackhawk Country Club donated *Poa annua* plugs that were used to establish the green. The green banks and construction damaged areas were repaired with sod from Lurvey's, Long Island, Jasperson,

Jasperson Evergreen, Deaks, and Halter Sod Farms.

Tom Schwab, manager of the Noer Facility and his crew should be thanked for their role as well. Brad Smith a new turf management graduate played a major role in the early construction. To all who helped with this project, thank you!

Editors note: Randy Smith worked his tail off on this project and should be thanked also.

The Wisconsin Turfgrass News

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O. J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility

Ice Age Trail Comes To The O. J. Noer Facility

By Gary Gaard, Turf Disease Diagnostic Lab

For a year I have been working to certify the Noer Facility in the New York Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. The first step in the certification process was the formation of a resource committee (Tom Schwab, Jeff Parks, Dr. Scott Craven, the director of environmental programs for UW-Madison, the Madison School District environmental education coordinator, and myself). Two objectives the committee established were broadening student involvement and expanding activities beyond the property line of the Noer Facility. Now, other areas where we can make some positive contributions have developed, one being the Ice Age Trail. The Trail actually runs through the Noer Facility property. This national scenic trail follows 1000 miles of the youngest terminals of Wisconsin glaciers, roughly from Janesville to Sturgeon Bay to Antigo to St. Croix Falls. Since we became involved, plans for the segment of the trail that crosses the Noer Facility have been reactivated and some of the plans have been modified. Thank-you TDDL and the Plant Pathology Department for the support and time to work on this project.

The Ice Age Trail will enter the Noer Facility through a tunnel under Highway M, 75 yards north of our driveway (plans are to add two lanes and the tunnel to Hwy. M in about five years). The trail will

proceed to the Catherine Smejkal Memorial Garden, turn east to parallel highway M going south and proceed to an observation platform overlooking Morse Pond. From there the trail will come back to the north and then turn west to run between University Ridge Golf Course and the Noer Facility. Several projects have started or will start this fall and next spring.

Prairie plants will be seeded on 10,000 sq. ft. this fall between University Ridge Golf Course and the Noer Facility. Existing unmowed grass was killed in June and the area will be cultivated. This fall Professor Evelyn Howell of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Landscape Architecture Department will direct student planting of the seed.

Some of the six foot wide trail that traverses the Noer Facility will be a demonstration of turfgrass durability in high traffic areas. Dr. John Stier will select the grasses and direct establishment.

Student groups, mainly from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, will restore a six acre oak savanna in the area between Hwy. M on the east, University Ridge Golf Course on the west, the Noer facility on the north and Morse pond on the south. Pam Schuller from the United States Department of Interior, will oversee the project. I will coordinate the workers.

Removal of invasive plants has begun, but will take several years to complete. Next spring approximately 400 DNR nursery oaks and shrubs will be planted.

The area between the tunnel entry to the Noer Facility property and the Smejkal Garden will be established as a 9,000 sq. ft. demonstration of low input turf, and of shrubs/small trees that provide food and shelter for wildlife. Landscape Architecture student Rebecca Hanson is currently drawing the landscape plan. Two trellises have been erected and bittersweet planted at the demonstration's Ice Age Trail entrance and exit. Low input turf will be planted this fall. Most of the woody plants will come from the DNR nurseries, and planting will begin this fall.

I look forward to the challenges and rewards that our Ice Age Trail activities will provide during the next twelve months. A real plus for the Noer Facility is that it is only nine miles from the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. Students can easily drive out and work on projects as practical application of their classroom learning.

To read more about the Ice Age Trail see "On The Trail of the Ice Age" by Rep. Henry Reuss. For information on the Ice Age Trail, write: Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation / PO Box 423 / Pewaukee, WI / 53072-0423. Their telephone number is 1-800-227-0046.

About Time!

By Rich Riggs, Athletic Fields Manager
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

A group of turf managers in Wisconsin are interested in starting a Wisconsin chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association (WSTMA). The national STMA was created in 1981 when a group of athletic field managers believed that sports turf could be improved through the sharing of knowledge and the exchange of ideas. Sports turf management represents a nearly \$1.5 billion dollar industry with over 40,000 facilities around the country. Nationally there are eight affiliated STMA chapters with several others pending. Given the active interest and expertise in this state, Wisconsin should be a new chapter soon.

STMA members and chapters work to combine the science of growing grass

and the art of maintaining both natural and artificial sports turf to produce safe and aesthetically pleasing playing surfaces. They represent all segments of the sports turf industry with more than 60 percent of their members directly involved in management of athletic facilities at elementary and secondary schools, municipalities and universities.

In an effort to better serve Wisconsin, we would like to form our own chapter. A kick-off meeting will be held at the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association's (WTA) Summer Field Day in August. The meeting will take about an hour and will be during lunch. You will need to register to attend the field day which will cost between \$22 and \$32 depending on whether you're a

WTA member and whether you pre-register. That registration fee will include refreshments, a trade show, research tour, auction, and the lunch. If you are interested, contact Audra from the WTA by telephone (608)845-6536 or by E-mail ajander2@facstaff.wisc.edu to receive registration information.

We want this organization open to all that are interested. I've been talking to quite a few people about this organization and many have been saying, "It's about time." If you have a sports field interest, expertise, or anything else to add to this new organization or know of someone who would like to belong, then please get involved. You can call me at (715)346-3622 or E-mail at rriggs@uwsp.edu if you have any further questions about the WSTMA. Further questions about the field day can be directed to Audra at the above number or address.

1997 SNOW MOLD FIELD DAYS

What A Long Strange Trip It Was

By Jeff Gregos, Research Specialist, U.W. Department of Plant Pathology

This past spring kicked off the beginning of a new tradition that should be long lived, Snow Mold Field Days. The trip started on April 14, at North Hills Country Club in Menomonee Falls, where Randy DuPont was the gracious host that had to find us an alternative plan. If you remember, the Milwaukee area was under at least 6 inches of snow that day. But all was not lost, we had about 15 attendees that were able to view the plots via a slide show.

The next stop on our tour landed us at the O. J. Noer Turfgrass Facility. Once again jack frost wouldn't let go. A small group bundled up to bare the frigid temperatures experienced outside on the plots. When our trip landed us at Sentryworld in Stevens Point on April 28, our host Gary Tanko put in a special order for 70° weather and got over 35 people to enjoy the awesome spring day. Growers in the region needed many of these days to get their turf to rebound from the damage caused by those hidden pathogens under the snow.

Finally, the trip was about to end, but not without one more snow fall. We were greeted with an inch of fresh snow on May 12th for our field day at Gateway Golf Club in Land O' Lakes (which they didn't need, they had over 170 inches this year). Todd Renk, the superintendent of Gateway, was ready to blow off the plots when we arrived. A little assistance by some of the early-birds, enabled us to be ready for the 20 visitors.

We had almost 100 attendees for all these field days. We hope to double or triple this number for next year. We also hope to add at least one more field day in the Northwestern part of the state. So, if you have an available 8500 square foot or more of fairway or green to spare this fall, let us know. We plan to have the trial in at least five locations in the state, with all major regions covered. We will be packing up the van in late September or early October to start the trip over again, so let us know soon if you would like to host a snow mold trial. Next spring keep an eye out for that post card telling you when we will have our field days again. It will be well worth your time. The results of the snow mold trials will appear in the next issue of *The Grass Roots*.



Dan Barrett says "What bad weather!"



Gateway Field Day host Todd Renk is pictured front left.



Snow Mold Field Day at the Noer Facility wasn't any warmer.

Turfgrass "Discussion Group" Has First Anniversary

(Continued from page 4)

• Leave your subject line blank if possible. Also leave your signature off of this initial subscribe command. The subscription will probably work anyway but this initial message is read by a computer and it may be confused by this extra writing.

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• That's all you have to do.

• It may take a day before you're entered, so be patient.

You will be sent a welcome message when your name is entered. You will also receive some other instructions such as how to quit, and the University's use policy. I think the members of this discussion group have really found it to be a fun and useful tool so far. It will only get better as the group gets larger and more diverse from other turfgrass professions. We anticipate many more anniversaries if that is the case.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 14	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Evansville GC, Evansville
July 20	WLF 25th Anniversary Party	Golden Mast, Okauchee
Aug 4	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	La Crosse CC, Onalaska
Aug 14	WNA Summer Field Day	McKay Nursery, Waterloo
Aug 19 & 20	WTA Summer Field Day	Noer Facility, Verona
Aug 23	Homeowner Turf & Yard Field Day	Noer Facility, Verona
Sept 9	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Lawsonia, Green Lake
Sept 30	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Rolling Meadows, Fond du Lac
Oct 3 & 4	WGCSA Couples Dinner Dance	Castle Mound GC, La Crosse
Oct 13	WTA Golf Fundraiser	Bishops Bay, Middleton
Nov 4 & 5	Wisconsin Turf Symposium	Marriot Hotel, Brookfield
Dec 9 & 10	GCSAA/WGCSA Seminar	Marriot Hotel, Brookfield
Dec 11 - 13	MT&GF Conference	Minneapolis, MN
Jan 13 - 15	WI Turfgrass and Greenscape EXPO	Holiday Inn Madison West
Feb 2 - 8	GCSAA International Conference & Show	Anaheim, CA
Feb 25 - 27	WLF State Convention	The Edgewater, Madison

WTA Members — If you have an important date you'd like to share with other members call 608-845-6895 or Fax 608-845-8162 and let us include it in the next calendar.

ABBREVIATIONS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

GCSAA	Golf Course Superintendents Association of America	800-472-7878
MT&GF	Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation	612-473-8169
WGCSA	Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association	414-786-4303
WLF	Wisconsin Landscape Federation	414-529-4705
WNA	Wisconsin Nursery Association	414-529-4705
WTA	Wisconsin Turfgrass Association	608-845-6536

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