

Recognition for a Lifetime of Dedication to Minnesota Turf

# Dr. Donald White Inducted Into MPGA/MGA Golf Hall Of Fame

By Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, North Oaks Golf Club

"... a teacher, mentor and friend to those of us who battle Mother Nature on a daily basis to provide Minnesota golfers with the finest playing surfaces in the Midwest." Indeed Dr. Don White fits those descriptive words, spoken by Jack MacKenzie just prior to Dr. White's acceptance of induction into the Minnesota Professional Golf Association/ Minnesota Golf Association Golf Hall of Fame on the evening of Sunday, October 1st. Finally, one of our own has been recognized for his relentless dedication to the industry.

**After 45 years of passionate education and research** Dr. White, a leader in annual blue grass breeding, was given a place upon the wall of infamy at the MPGA headquarters at Bunker Hills Golf Course. Almost speechless, he received his plaque to the twice standing ovations of those in attendance at the ceremony. His resounding message: "Above all else, support your Golf Course Superintendents and their Association. There are big battles looming on the horizon and they will need your support to continue providing you with the best turf conditions possible."

**Throughout his distinguished life,** Dr. White has had a significant impact upon the turfgrass industry locally, nationally and internationally. White began his career at the University of Minnesota in 1961 and has since taught several courses related to turfgrass science, landscape design and nursery management to many of today's superintendents throughout Minnesota and the United States.

Perhaps Dr. White's most important

contribution to turfgrass research has been the development of seeded varieties of creeping bluegrass, *Poa annua*. *Poa annua* has long been considered a weed that should be eliminated from golf courses; however White's research led to the release of the first creeping bluegrass in 1997. The bluegrass is being used by golf courses throughout the world including Pebble Beach.

Dr. White's perseverance and drive have served the State well and his contributions to education and research have been invaluable to golf course superintendents in Minnesota and beyond.

**The Minnesota Section of the PGA** provided a grand evening for the event. A well-attended and spacious reception,



Dr. Donald White with his wife, Jean.



Dr. Donald White with former students and MGCSA members, from left: Drew Larson, Dr. Brian Horgan, Jeff Johnson, John Steiner CGCS, Erin McManus, Dr. Donald White, Jack MacKenzie CGCS, Doug Mahal CGCS, Ben Just, James Gardner CGCS, and MGCSA President James Bade.

complete with a fantastic display of delicious edibles, allowed participants a relaxed atmosphere to visit before a sumptuous dinner. Throughout the evening award winners of the MPGA were announced and recognized for their

achievements. But the best was saved for last as Dr. White was presented by a legion of his grandest supporters, former graduates of his at the University of Minnesota.

During the final presentation Dr. Brian Horgan, Extension Turf Specialist at the University of Minnesota, described the demands and challenges of breeding turf for commercial production. And Dr. White's posse of graduates presented him with a token of their appreciation, a glass pitcher filled to the brim with golf balls recognizing all of the courses that shared his knowledge through them. Jon Tollette, Executive Director of the Minnesota Section PGA, honored Dr. White with a plaque and hearty "thanks" for his contributions to Minnesota golf.

**And then the crowd went wild as Dr. White lit up the room with a smile** from wall to wall. Congratulations, Doctor, on a well-deserved achievement.

*(Dr. White's) resounding message: "Above all else, support your Golf Course Superintendents and their Association. There are big battles looming on the horizon and they will need your support to continue providing you with the best turf conditions possible."*



Some of the MGCSA members attending Dr. White's Minnesota Section of the PGA Hall of Fame induction ceremony were, from left, MGCSA President James Bade, Somerset Country Club; James Gardner, CGCS, Indian Hills Golf Club; Doug Mahal, CGCS, The Jewel; Pat Walton, Reinders; Jeff Johnson, The Minikahda Club, and Ben Just, Midland Hills Country Club

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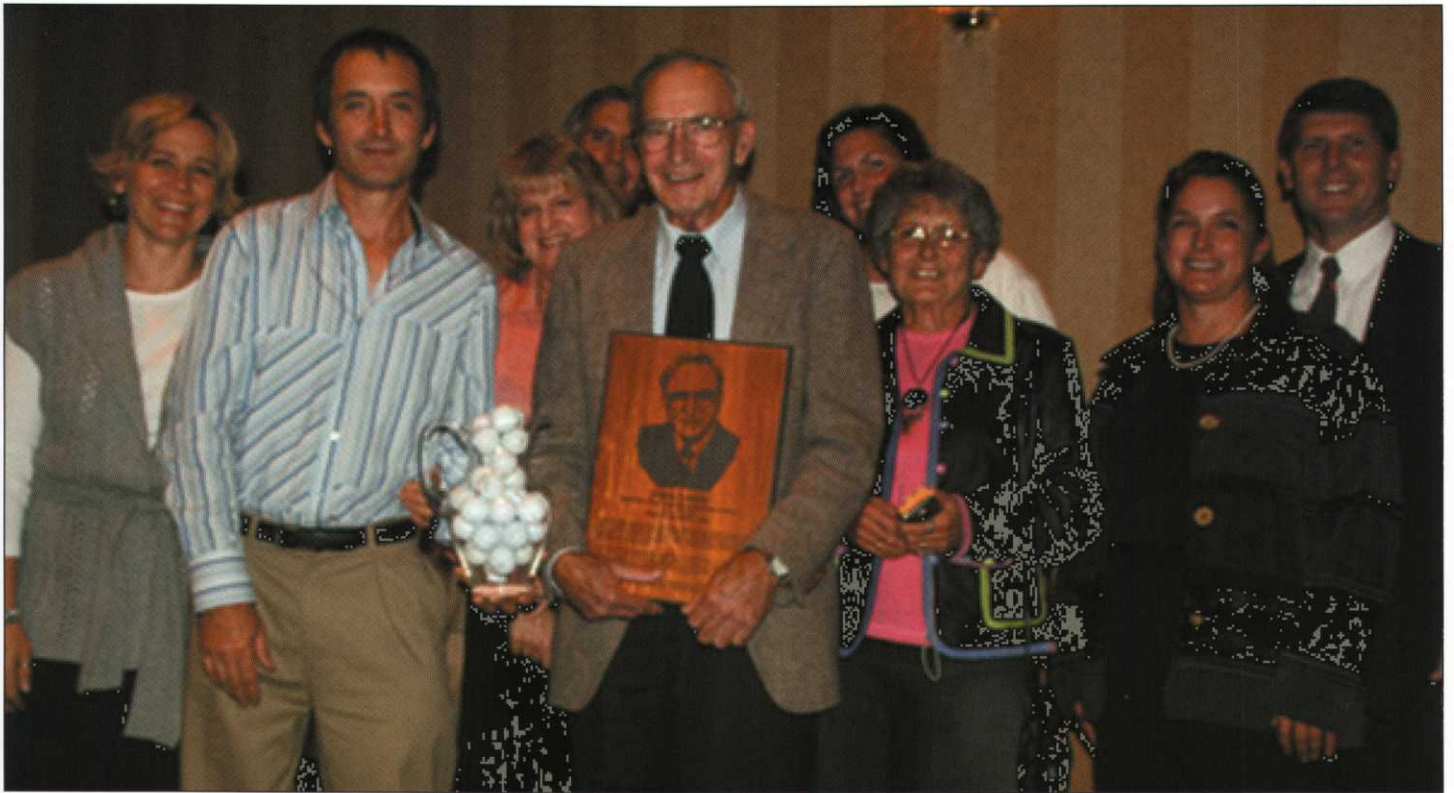
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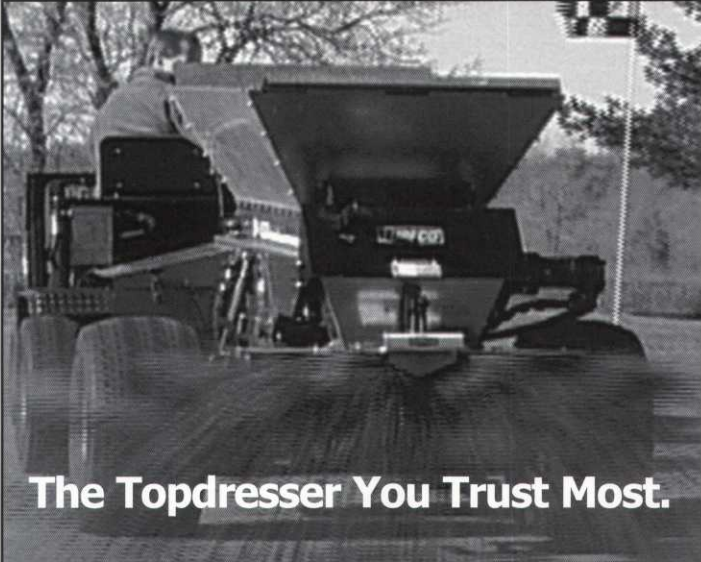


*Dr. White, surrounded by his biggest support group – his family – at his Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Pictured below is Jeff Johnson, a former student of Dr. White's and now Superintendent at The Minkahda Club in Minneapolis.*



*Mike Sonnek, Spring Hill Golf Club, Erin McManus, Medina Golf & Country Club attended Dr. White's Hall of Fame ceremony.*





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