

Insight **One Superintendent's Perspective**

By Steven A. VanNatta Owatonna Country Club Owatonna, Minnesota



I am currently the Superintendent at Owatonna Country Club and have been in the turf business for 31 years after receiving a B.S. degree in Horticulture at the University of Wisconsin/River Falls.

Why and/or how did you enter the turf management industry?

I started to work, at the age of 14 and really developed a passion for this type of work. I was fortunate enough to be approached by Joe Moris, Supt. Of Tartan Park Golf Course and became aware of the golf course maintenance careers that were available. Also Davis Usgaard, high school teacher. Their support and vocational information inspired me from that point to pursue my passion and enroll in a horticulture science program.

Who was your professional mentor?

My mentors were John Granholt, Superintendent of Eau Claire Golf & Country Club, and Dr. Donovan Taylor at the University of Wisconsin/River Falls.

11-0-22 "All-Star Special" Fertilizer Utilizing Slow Release K with High Mg & Mn

This 11-0-22 greens fertilizer provides complete greens nutrition in a single formulation.

- "Product Features"
- Product Peatures Contains a unique combination of multiple nitrogen release sources 100% coated controlled release potassium sulfate 4% magnesium from low residue, highly dispersible magnesium sucrate 3% manganese from low residue, highly dispersible manganese sucrate 2% iron from low residue, highly dispersible iron sucrate
- "Product Benefits" es three nitorgen sources providing staggered, more consistent N response
- Controlled release coated potassium reduces potential for leaching
 The micronutrients are high concentrations of dispersible sucrates which
 provide improved plant utilization and minimize staining
- The micronutrient delivery system provides immediate and longer term availability resulting in improved plant utilization versus traditional source of micronutrients.

SGN 100

potassium sulfate

70% Nutralene / 20% AS / 10% Urea

4.55 (Low) 6.82 (Medium) 9.10 (High)

Andersons

100% coated controlled release

4% Mg / 3% Mn / 2% Fe

N: 0.501 P: 0.000 K: 1.00

198 lb/A at low rate (4.55)

AGC117WM

Product Specifications: Thinking about N Source: better agronomics? Give us a call. K Source: Microputrients Lbs Nutrients/M (4.55 rate): Pounds / Acre

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What has been the highest point in your career?

I've had many high points in my career.

What has been your lowest point?

Dealing with Summer Bent grass decline the past two seasons on three new golf greens.

Are your greatest challenges political, agronomic or managerial?

Agronomic. Trying to maintain an 18-hole golf course at today's standards with outdated maintenance equipment and irrigation system, without budgetary support.

> What is the most difficult disease to manage on your course and how do you?

Dollar Spot. This is dealt with by practicing good cultural maintenance practices.

Is it hard to find good help in your area of the state?

Quality people are out there. You just have to find them.

Do you have a dog on your crew?

Yes, I have a dynamic duo. Bell, an Australian Shepherd and Abbey, a Black Lab cross. They do a pretty good job with geese but how they control wood chucks is unbelievable.

Where will our industry be in 10 years?

We will be a much more environmentally conscious industry. All inputs and decisions related to turf grass culture will be highly regulated and scrutinized.

Where would you like to be in 10 years?

Growing turf on some golf course in the Midwest.

What is your perspective of our state association?

I feel the MGCSA is making great strides to support today's Minnesota Golf Superintendents through its financial support for research.

Name your foursome

Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Bobby Jones. Having the privilege to spend an afternoon with three of the game's greatest and most influential players.