

The 50th Annual Mid

The 50th Annual Midwest Turf Clinic took place on November 6 at Medinah Country Club (Tom Lively, CGCS host), and a near-record crowd of 175 people was in attendance for the day-long education-packed event. The roster of speakers was chock-full of industry professionals who kept us entertained and informed throughout the day (although, as noted by Dudley Smith, there were very few superintendents on the roster, which is contrary to the original intent of the Clinic). Always keep in mind that this Association, its educational seminars and its monthly

publication rely on the participation of you, the golf course superintendent, and you, the assistant superintendent, for its continued success. We want to hear your story, be it through an article in this magazine, or through an appearance at the podium at our monthly meetings. Okay, now to jump off my high horse and get back to matters at hand . . . A brief recap of the day, for those of you who were unable to attend (or who did attend, but didn't take notes):



Morning moderator Scott Witte—one of the few who got a laugh out of his jokes.



Gene Wojciechowski of ESPN kept us awake and guffawing in the tough after-lunch time slot.



Dudley Smith relates the story of how he learned he was the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award winner for 2002.



Greg Martin led off the day and got our sleepy brains cooking.



Bill Middleton of Emerald Isle spoke on "What Is a True Foliar."



Dave Ward can still look stress-free with the U.S. Open just around the corner.

West Turf Clinic

The day began with the MAGCS Annual Meeting, during which several checks were passed around to ensure a strong future for our industry. Holly Gilmour of J.W. Turf donated a check for \$2,500 to the John Buck Scholarship fund, which was conceived to commemorate John while allowing a child of an MAGCS member to pursue a college education. John Meyer of Simplot Partners presented a generous check in the amount of \$4,750 to the MAGCS Scholarship Fund; these proceeds were generated from their Daconil early-order program set up at last year's NCTE. A whopping 950 cases were booked at that time, and Simplot donated \$5 per case to this worthy cause. Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU for your generous support of our children's futures, guys.

Not to be outdone, the MAGCS chimed in with its own donation—to the CDGA turf research program—for \$5,000. Dr. Randy Kane graciously accepted the check, noting that there WILL be a Green Seminar in March that will include participation from the USGA Green Section. Look for news and specifics on this in upcoming issues. In other Annual Meeting news, past president Brian Bossert, CGCS noted that he was appointed a member of the Nominating Committee for the Illinois PGA Hall of Fame (in which but two of our colleagues are honored—Ray Gerber and Bob Williams). Brian asks that anyone with ideas on future nominees for this coveted place in Illinois golf history please contact him at Bryn Mawr Country Club.

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Jon Jennings and Erwin McKone show off their Gerber and Opperman hardware.



Dr. Al Turgeon was all smiles when his PowerPoint presentation finally loaded.



Dr. Tom Fermanian—jack of all trades—was both speaker AND audio/video technician.

On to the business of the day—the education portion. Scott Witte, CGCS served as our morning moderator, and after a few misguided attempts at humor began by introducing our first speaker—Greg Martin of Martin Design Partnership—who gave an insightful presentation on the “State of the Art—Golf Course Architecture.” The theme of Greg’s talk centered on an issue that will soon affect all of us in the Green Industry (if it has not already)—the transformation of golf as a game to golf as a business, and the dangers involved in this transformation. To paraphrase, it is a snowball effect whereby owners feel the need to market something with “WOW,”

forcing architects to design something with “WOW,” forcing superintendents to maintain something with “WOW,” forcing golfers to cough up big-time dough to play something with “WOW.” Unfortunately, “WOW” doesn’t necessarily translate to enjoyable golf, nor does it appeal to the average golfer who can’t afford “WOW,” which means money stops entering the cash registers of courses with “WOW,” which means superintendents must maintain “WOW” on “HOHUM” budgets, which means owners must go broke, leading them to say, “Hmmm—I’m broke and now I must sell my golf course. Wow.” I hope this was not too technical a summary of Greg’s presentation . . .



Tim Johnson gave a very informative talk from the technician’s point of view.



Mike Mumper presents Tom Lively with the coveted “host gift.”

Next on the agenda was Dr. Al Turgeon, making a triumphant return to the Clinic after a 23-year absence. Dr. Turgeon gave a very informative report on “Competition Between Bentgrasses and Annual Bluegrasses,” leaving those of us saddled with maintaining bent/*Poa* turf a ray of hope for the elimination of *Poa annua* from our playing surfaces (although I myself am still skeptical about my chances of doing so). Following Dr. Turgeon was Bill Middleton of Emerald Isle, who managed to gain free air time in describing the benefits of using their brand of seaweed (as opposed to the countless other brands of seaweed)

on turfgrass while educating us on “What Is a True Foliar.” Dave Ward, superintendent of Olympia Fields Country Club, followed with “U.S. Open Preparation,” going into detail about the extensive steps he and his staff (most of whom were in attendance) have taken to host next year’s big event. Seems Dave has done this before, and the result is always the same—I wouldn’t want any part of that nightmare! What Olympia Fields has accomplished in the past several years would take most courses 100 years to complete.



While Dudley and Ray Schmitz count votes and pregnant chads and such, Ed Braunsky is stumped trying to get the eraser to write.

After Dave’s classy move in having all his assistant superintendents stand and be recognized, the program shifted to the presentation of the Ray Gerber Editorial Award and the inaugural presentation of the Fred D. Opperman Editorial Award. The “Gerber,” which recognizes the superintendent whose article first published in *On Course* magazine is deemed to be best by a panel of five esteemed judges, went to Jonathan Jennings, CGCS of Chicago Golf Club for his article, “Get Pumped! Case Studies in Pump Station Replacement.” The “Opperman,” which made its debut this year, recognizes the author of the best article written by a non-superintendent

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member, and was won by Erwin McKone of River Forest Country Club for his article titled "Mabel's Magic." Congratulations to both Jon and Erwin for their achievements, and thanks for your invaluable contributions to our magazine. Remember that you, too, can have one of those pretty plaques—all you need to do is write an article (oh, yeah, and of course, win).

After lunch, afternoon moderator Jon Jennings (still beaming from his big moment) introduced Gene Wojciechowski, the senior editor of *ESPN The Magazine*, who entertained us with his many anecdotes on life as a sports reporter. Most memorable was Gene's recollection of meeting Robert Trent Jones, Sr. after an uninspired round of golf on Spyglass Hill. Gene: "Mr. Jones, that course kicked my butt." Mr. Jones: "Perhaps you're not a very adept golfer." Gene goes on to say he'd never before rooted for someone to have a brain aneurysm until then. Another ditty from Gene that we can all take to heart came while describing Lou Holtz's analogy regarding his team's effort in practice: "Much like the kamikaze pilots who returned from their mission, they were interested but not committed." Good stuff, that.

Next up was Dr. T. Don Taylor of Griffin LLC who enlightened us with "New Technologies for Moss and Algae Control." Again, the line between unbiased information and an outright sales pitch may have been crossed here, but anyone with an initial for a first name is worth listening to. Dr. Tom Fermanian then gave a high-tech talk on the high-tech future of "Precision Turfgrass Management—What Data Should Be Collected." Did I mention it was high-tech? Seriously, though, the research that's being conducted at universities is truly mind-boggling in its complexity; but it is coming, and we thank Tom for opening our eyes to the future of our industry. Rounding out the program was Tim Johnson, equipment technician at Royal Fox C.C. and president of TETA (Turf Equipment Technicians Association). Tim filled us in on "What's New on the Market," which included biodiesel fuel alternatives, small-engine emissions control and new golf cart technology, to name a few items of interest. Check out TETA's Web site at Tetaonline.org for more information.

Following the program, the annual election of officers was held. Ed Fischer, with the assistance of Ray Schmitz, Ed Braunsky and Dudley

Dr. Turgeon gave a very informative report on "Competition Between Bentgrasses and Annual Bluegrasses," leaving those of us saddled with maintaining bent/Poa turf a ray of hope for the elimination of Poa annua from our playing surfaces . . .



The passing of the gavel from Luke Strojny to new president Kevin DeRoo . . .



So Kevin just gives one "right back atcha, Luke."

Smith, conducted the process, and the results are now official. Your new Board of Directors for 2003 is as follows: Kevin DeRoo, president; Fred Behnke, vice president; Phil Zeinert, secretary/treasurer. Joining incumbent directors Tim Anderson, Dave Braasch, Luke Cella and Gary Hearn (who was re-elected) are Scott Speiden of Itasca C.C. and Tony Kalina of Prairie Landing G.C. Joining the group is Dave Armentout of TPEC, who gets to fill the very large shoes of Paul Yerkes as the commercial advisory representative and will tackle the job of arranging the hospitality suite in Atlanta (to be at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel). Congratulations to all, and best of luck in keeping this ship sailing straight and smooth.

MAGCS thanks all of those involved in making the 50th Annual Midwest Turf Clinic a success, including Gary Hearn and the Education Committee, Tom Lively and the staff at Medinah C.C., our education speakers and of course, all who attended. Thanks also to Brian Bossert, who is leaving the Board after seemingly decades of service. Brian put a new spin on leaving the Board by not only accepting his parting gift (a \$300 gift certificate from Fleet Feet Shoes), but by presenting gifts to all MAGCS members as a token of thanks. Class move, Brian. See you all next year.



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and we will do everything in our power to make it happen.

At each MAGCS meeting, Gary Hearn and his Education Committee had the not-so-enviable task of providing an educational topic and speaker. A considerable amount of time and energy goes into lining up educational speakers to discuss their respective fields of expertise. The last survey showed the Board that more than 60% of the membership wants an educational session at each meeting, and yet attendance is far less than that. I would hope that going forward, our membership will give these speakers the time and courtesy of their attention that they so richly deserve.

We see the fruits of the Editorial Committee's labor each and every month with another fantastic issue of *On Course*, a publication that we as an Association should all be very proud of. The professional work of Cathy Miles Ralston, John Gurke, Dave Braasch and the Editorial Committee goes without saying. But I would be remiss if I did not mention our monthly advertisers. Frankly, without them, this magazine does not happen. I do hope the membership realizes this and helps support those who help support us. Since the days of *the Bull Sheet*, the search for member-written articles continues to be an ongoing hurdle for this committee to jump. I urge everyone to take the time during this off-season and write. Just imagine if every member wrote just one article! I can guarantee the feeling of accomplishment you get out of it will far surpass the effort you put into it. Besides, being published is a really cool thing.

We know only this: participation is the key to our success. And no participation is too great, or too small.

The Long-Range Planning Committee and its chair, Luke Cella, have just completed a plan that has been adopted by the Board. This plan mainly calls for updating SOPs for each committee, appointing a co-chairperson for those committees with a greater workload, the creation of exit summary forms for each committee chair, and ways to increase membership involvement on committees. The purpose of these changes is simply to enhance the continuity between changing boards, chairpersons and committee members.

The direction that we as Association are heading is simple as well: forward. It is my intention and challenge to keep us on that path. I am as proud as can be to be president of this Association, and I know we as a Board are only as good as the membership we represent. We know only this: participation is the key to our success. And no participation is too great, or too small. Have a wonderful holiday season.



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