

FEATURE ARTICLE I

Jason Sarna, MAGCS and Keith Rincker, CDGA

iTurfExpo – Unleashed



On August 25-26, 2009, the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation (ITF) will host the first ever iTurfExpo at the Midwest Golf House Complex – Sunshine Course. This event combines aspects from both the annual Illinois Professional Turf Conference (IPTC) and the biennial Midwest Field Day into one unified event.

The ITF is committed to funding turf research and education in Illinois. It seeks to accomplish this through:

- Providing the best solutions for turf management
- Presenting opportunities for members to advance their knowledge, professionalism, and value to the turf industry in Illinois
- Establishing a viable network between industry, research, and education

The iTurfExpo is the conduit for all of these objectives to occur. The ITF is steeped in funding turf research and strives to bring impartial and useful research conclusions to its members. The unique setting of the Sunshine Course allows the ITF to conduct this research and present findings directly to you—the turf professional. We have all spent many winter seminars viewing slides and images of turf under research, the iTurfExpo allows our researchers to present their findings in real life. Come be a part of this exchange of information. Bring your questions and leave with new understandings that make you a better turf manager.

The iTurfExpo research topics are:

- Fungicide Trials and Programming
- Organic Fertilizer Trials
- *Poa Annua* Management and Control
- New Herbicide Testing
- Turf Variety Trials
- Foliar Nutrition



In addition, the iTurfExpo allows attendees the opportunity to see new products and services, but unlike the IPTC, the iTurfExpo tradeshow is outdoors. Turf professionals work outdoors, why shouldn't they have education and events specifically designed for them to learn in their working environment? The iTurfExpo does just that. Through careful and advance planning, the iTurfExpo strives to achieve the following:

- Create an atmosphere where attendees can actually SEE the latest products and equipment in action, not just brochures and parked equipment
- Offer attendees the opportunity to discuss products/equipment with suppliers and professional product representatives
- Discuss options for future needs

The iTurfExpo is the fundraising event for your profession. Through

the utilization of the Sunshine Course and the Midwest Golf House Complex, the ITF is able to provide access to the event at a very reasonable expense for all attendees. If you register prior to August 14 (early bird registration deadline) the registration fee for an ITF member is only \$50 per person. The cost of the IPTC and Field Day combined (2008 numbers) would total over \$250! The iTurfExpo provides attendees with just as much useful information at not nearly the cost, a true value to you and your facility.

(continued on page 9)

Please note, your fee covers entry to the event for both days. You and your staff are encouraged to come each day, as the research presented will be different.

Attendees will also have the option to play at Cog Hill's Dubsdread on Tuesday, August 25 @ 1 pm at an additional cost. The field will be limited to the first 144 registrants and may fill up fast as we will be the last group on the newly remodeled course prior to the PGA Tour coming to town. Thank you to Ken Lapp, golf course superintendent, for hosting this event for our group. The event will be a two man best ball.

The iTurfExpo also offers many different education sessions for you and your staff. Utilizing the environment and resources of the Midwest Golf House Complex, the education has been planned to be different from anything you can get and see indoors. The education committee has chosen topics and sessions based on their ability to be led outdoors. The idea was simple – if it is a class that can be taught indoors, we will present that in the winter, let's create education sessions that are hands on and interactive. The sessions that will be presented include:

- Bedknife Facing and mower sharpening
- Chainsaw / Line trimmer Safety
- Chemical Mixing and Loading
- Annual Flower Trials
- Irrigation Repair
- Logo Painting
- Paver Installation
- Pesticide Spill Containment
- Pruning Walk
- Rotary Mower Sharpening
- Sprayer / Spreader Calibration
- Weed Identification

Education sessions will run concurrently and be repeated throughout, there is no need to sign up for a specific one, just attend the ones that interest you or your staff.

General Information

Entrance onto the Sunshine Course will begin at 8 am each morning. Research stops will run concurrently at the top of each hour. At the bottom of the hour, product and equipment demonstrations will take place. Various exhibitor booths and tables will be setup throughout the course. Once inside, attendees will be able to wander and visit the various trade show booths, check out research stops, and view live equipment and products demonstrations. Food and beverages will be available to purchase onsite during the trade show.

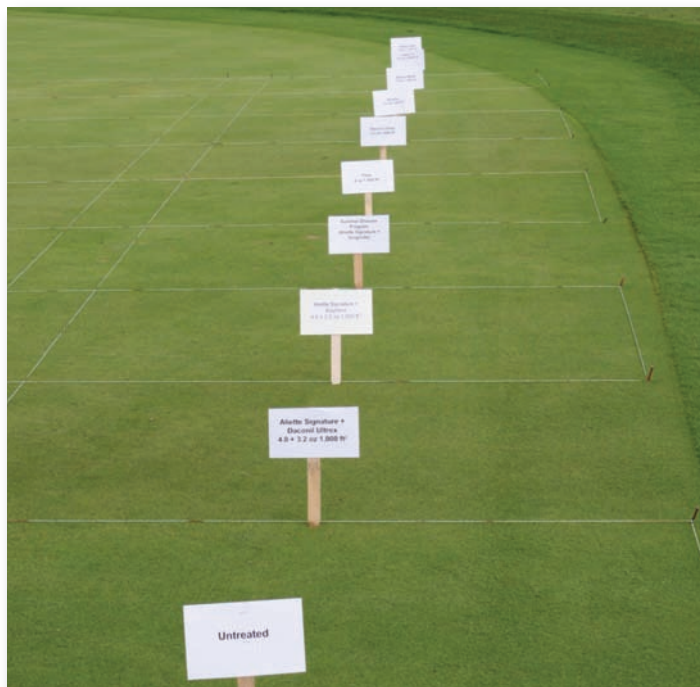
The ITF board has been working extremely hard to create a unique, fun, and beneficial event for all parties involved. They have listened to you and hope this new venture meets your needs as a turf professional while raising funds to propel the future of turf.

There is no other show around that offers its attendees an experience like that of the iTurfExpo. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending this year's iTurfExpo!

(continued on next page)



The iTurfExpo education will be outdoors, interactive and hands on.



Come out and see research results funded by the ITF and MAGCS.



Check out the latest equipment and products in action.

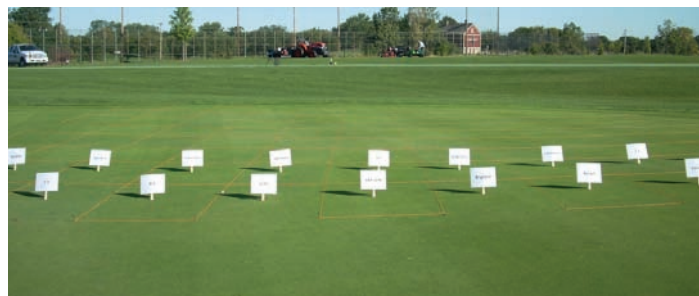
CDGA Sunshine Course, an Outdoor Laboratory



In 2001 the Chicago District Golf Association (CDGA) began construction on Sunshine Course. The idea was to build a golf course dedicated to the Sunshine Through Golf Foundation and affiliated groups for educational, therapeutic, recreational, and rehabilitative uses. The facility was to become a turfgrass research laboratory and a living arboretum. A multitude of turfgrass species and varieties as well as different trees, shrubs, flowers, and ornamental grasses, were planned to fill this outdoor laboratory. Many organizations pulled together to accomplish this task which was completed fall 2002 and saw its first round of golf in 2003. Today the idea lives on with an expansion of turfgrass variety trials and has taken on a new breath by investigation of annuals and perennials for the landscape.

When the CDGA moved to their new location in Lemont, Dr. Randy Kane already had a turfgrass program in place. Dr. Kane provided diagnostic consultation and active research. For example, his program collaborated with area superintendents to conduct fungicide and plant growth regulator trials on Chicagoland golf courses. He was instrumental in the planning of Sunshine Course's turfgrass and with the assistance of Lee Miller set up many varieties and species to cover the greens, tees, fairways, and rough. Creeping bentgrass varieties primarily covered the tees, fairways, and greens, while other not so common turfgrass species were also established. Six different turfgrass species were established on the course and over twenty-four varieties of creeping bentgrass on the practice green. Two additional plots were set up in out of play areas in collaboration with Dr. Tom Voigt and the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP). One trial included creeping and

colonial bentgrasses to be tested for fairways and tees. A second fine leaf fescue trial was installed to evaluate for unmowed roughs. These trials were the result of Chicagoland superintendents' desire for turfgrass research in their region that would be nearby and accessible. The turf industry in Chicago needed Sunshine Course, an outdoor turfgrass laboratory to address their needs.



The practice green at Sunshine Course is complete with 24 varieties in randomized plots and 15 represented in ten foot strips across the green.

As the three holes of Sunshine Course were established with turfgrass varieties, more research and demonstration plots were installed around the course. Dr. Voigt from The University of Illinois (U of I) evaluated several turfgrass species under unmowed conditions and set up a demonstration of 20 different ornamental grasses used in landscapes. Dr. Ken Diesburg from Southern Illinois University brought a touch of southern grasses to Sunshine Course as he evaluated different zoysiagrass varieties and how they establish in a cooler environment. The grounds of Midwest Golf House were also used as an educational tool when Carl Hopphan, with help of Illinois nursery men and women, planted landscape trees and shrubs around the building. Numerous ornamentals, woody and herbaceous, were selected to show the latest advancements from the Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanical Gardens, and area nurseries. In the years that followed, two U of I Extension specialists, Greg Stack and Richard Hentschel, moved their offices to Midwest Golf House and added more landscape beds around the building. Each demonstration garden is complete with signage to show the name of each landscape plant for daily visitors and during the summer research Field Day.



Sunshine Course was completed in 2002 and serves as an outdoor laboratory for many visitors throughout the year.



Each year landscape beds are filled with color surrounding Midwest Golf House. Common and scientific names are labeled.

In addition to the variety trial research and demonstrations on Sunshine Course, IPM (integrated pest management) research, under the direction of Dr. Kane and later Dr. Derek Settle, began every year on Sunshine Course. Replicated research trials focus on controlling dollar spot and brown patch, two of the biggest disease issues facing golf course turf in Chicago. Fungicide research continues to see many new and different product names. Some are available, and some are on the cutting edge and not yet available. The access of fungicide research trials to turf managers has become important and allows a direct comparison of their ability to control disease in the field. Other research to benefit golf courses has included controlling moss encroachment on putting greens in a 2005-2006 research project with the United States Golf Association (USGA). Later in 2007-2008, USGA- sponsored research investigated several

biostimulant products on putting greens with collaboration of Dr. Peter Dernoeden, University of Maryland. Herbicide research was brought to Sunshine Course by Dr. Bruce Branham and Bill Sharp from the U of I. They have shown the usefulness of new herbicides available to golf courses and sod farms.

With all the many plant types, varieties, turfgrass species, fungicides, and product testing it is easy to see Sunshine Course is a place to learn, but who are the students?

Many people can view Sunshine Course for a lesson in turfgrass science and the Green Industry. College students from Joliet Junior College visited last fall, and this spring a group of graduate students and researchers from Kansas State University and North Dakota State University got a glimpse of active turfgrass research at a facility that is also an active golf course. In addition, university researchers regularly visit Sunshine Course as they work on research projects which not only generate valuable data but later can be showcased on Field Day. Also, company research and development representatives come to visit when research of their product occurs on Sunshine Course. Not to forget, all of us in the CDGA Turfgrass Program learn from Sunshine Course every day. To learn the dynamics of the turf environment, we continually scout for pest issues and rate plots. Most importantly, participants at field day can visit to learn about testing on Sunshine Course. Each of the research trials can be visited with labeled plots. It is important to note that superintendents or interested committee members can come and inspect the turfgrass variety they are interested in. They can visualize what the end result will be on their course by seeing newer varieties in a mature state.

(continued on next page)



Many new products are tested on Sunshine Course each year.

What have we learned from this outdoor laboratory?

We learned that at fairway height colonial bentgrass gets too much brown patch to remain competitive during the summer months and cannot persist year after year. The creeping bentgrass varieties of 'Declaration' and 'Pennlinks II' have shown good dollar spot resistance and performed well in the fairway/tee NTEP trial. In 2008, newer fungicides like Emerald and Tourney performed well controlling dollar spot on Sunshine's number 2 bentgrass fairway, while some did not work during peak season pressure. We learned that moss infesting Sunshine's number 1 green can be controlled with either spot-applications of baking soda or with broadcast applications of Quicksilver. In addition, cultural practices like a low mowing height can increase moss development. Most recently, research on Sunshine's number 2 green has shown that urea can provide a good visual quality while supplying the plant with basic nutrition at a good price. Research on Sunshine Course yields results throughout the season and are posted regularly in the weekly Turfgrass eScouting Report.

What is new in 2009?

Seven years after the initial establishment of turfgrass variety trials on Sunshine Course, three are in the process of being replaced and a new trial location was installed this spring. A bentgrass variety trial is currently being established and managed as a fairway and also another to be managed as a putting green. These two trials will take a new look at about 25 varieties and incorporate two fungicide treatments to find varieties that provide adequate quality with reduced inputs. In addition to two new bentgrass trials, our number three fairway bluegrass

is currently being replaced with 52 new Kentucky bluegrass varieties that are intended to grow under fairway conditions. These varieties will be tested for their quality performance and tolerance to new selective herbicides. The fourth trial, a tall fescue trial of 58 varieties made its debut to Sunshine grounds in May and continues to grow in. These varieties will be evaluated for their resistance to brown patch. Also, an exciting new addition to Sunshine this year is a trail of different annual landscape plants. Over 150 varieties are included with 35 different petunias and various begonias, salvias, zinnias, and snapdragons. Some plants are All America Selection winners and will be released in 2010. Within the fungicide trials are several new names as well. Honor, Interface, Reserve, Triton, and Civitas are all being tested on Sunshine this year. In total, about 30 products will be tested for dollar spot control in the fairway.



58 tall fescue varieties are now showing their color and texture differences on Sunshine Course.



Field Day is a great opportunity to see research conducted on Sunshine Course.



*A show of color from 150 annuals
has just begun on Sunshine Course.*

Also new this year, the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation will host a new field day format called the iTurfExpo. The new event is scheduled for August 25th and 26th and the timing is perfect. Sunshine Course is full of new research and excitement, and anticipation can be felt throughout the CDGA Turfgrass Program. The number of organizations that have come together in the past to establish and sponsor research on Sunshine Course is amazing and the effort continues. The iTurfExpo will be expanded and will cover not only golf turf but also lawn and sports turf. In addition, safety demonstrations may be available for employee training. The annual ornamental trials add another component to show new introductions available for landscape beds that so many turf managers work closely with. This year Sunshine Course has expanded and added many new trials that will teach us all in the Green Industry.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the information provided to me by Carl Hopphan, Greg Stack, Richard Hentschel, Dr. Derek Settle and Dr. Randy Kane. **-OC**



Your Single Source for:

- pH Control
- Fertigation
- Injection Equipment
- Irrigation System Monitoring & Alarm

Ask about our NEW 990v!



- P** VFD Technology
- P** Eliminates Overfeed Spikes from On/Off Control
- P** Affordable
- P** Remote Control from Irrigation Central
- P** Optimize Treatment Costs
- P** Easy to Use

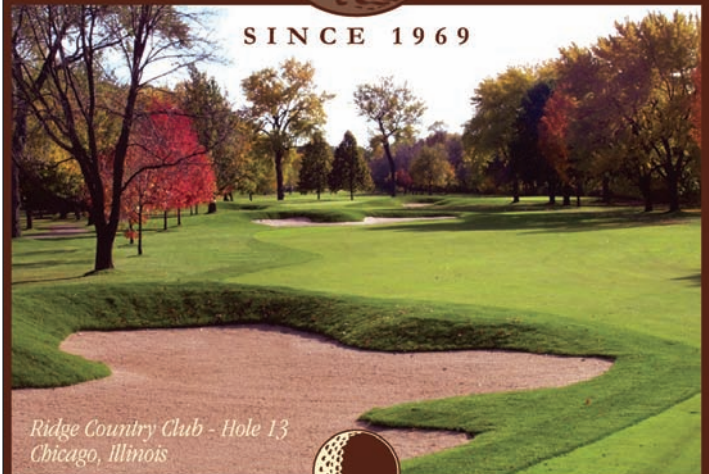


PRODUCT * EQUIPMENT * SERVICE * SUPPORT

For additional info or to schedule a demo, call 800.677.8097

HOLLEMBEAK CONSTRUCTION INC.

SINCE 1969



Golf Course Construction • Renovations • Bunkers
Clearing • Feature Grading • Shaping • Drainage
Tee and Green Construction • Cart Paths • Grassing
Shoreline Stabilization • Pond Construction and Dredging
Laser Tee Leveling • GPS Golf Course Mapping

P.O. BOX 103 • BIG ROCK, IL 60511 • 630-556-3891