

EDUCATION REVIEW

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



iTurf Expo 2011

The 2011 iTurf Expo was held at the CDGA Golf House, in Lemont. It was geared to be a little more than a Field Day and continues to be a "work in progress" trying to respond to the ITF Members needs and desires. Chris Painter and his staff had the Sunshine Course in great shape. Dr. Derek Settle had the turf plots well marked, defined, and set up for the attendees to do their own evaluations, ask their own questions and get a "hands on" learning opportunity.

The day started out with coffee and donuts and networking among attendees and all present. Silent auction items were on display by various vendors. University of Illinois Extension was on site and hosting a "Rate the Annual" competition of flowers planted throughout the site to see, evaluate, and choose the preferred plants. They were available to answer questions about growing habits, flowering trends and future hybrid varieties.

At the signal of a horn, groups were divided up and then spread out onto the Sunshine Course to hear presentations by some of the top pathologists, agronomists and researchers from the Midwest.

Some Research Presentations included:

- "Selective control of creeping bentgrass and other weeds for golf course roughs." Dr. Aaron Patton, Purdue University
- "Using preventative DMI fungicide applications for control of fairy ring and other turf diseases." Dr. Lee Miller, University of Missouri.
- "Everything Dollar Spot." Dr. Jim Kerns, University of Wisconsin.
- "Waitea Gone Wild – Research Experiences of Early Summer 2011" and "Testing Newer Fungicides For Disease Control on Golf Greens." Dr. Derek Settle, CDGA
- "Multi –State Evaluation of Dollar Spot Susceptibility in Creeping Bentgrass Cultivars." Tim Sibicky, CDGA
- "Sustainability Using LIST – Low Input Sustainable Turf: Zoysia" and "Relative Aggressiveness of Zoysia Types in Northern Illinois" Dr. Ken Diesburg
- "Response of Turfgrass to Urea-Based Fertilizers Formulated to Reduce Ammonia Volatilization and Nitrate Conversion". Shelby Henning, University of Illinois
- "Late Fall Turf Management and Imprelis Update," Dr. Bruce Branham, University of Illinois

The stops were short and interesting and we kept on the move from site to site. Each site had something to see and something to learn.

A delicious lunch was served by the always friendly staff of Cog Hill Golf and Country Club.

After lunch, festivities included games and raffles for prizes. Almost everyone got a free ITF golf shirt.

The Superintendent and Vendor turn out for the iTurf Expo was a little "light". The weather was nice so why the small turn out?

I spoke to Dr. Derek Settle about the current state of research in general. "Research continues to expand, the demand is strong. It has been unaffected by the recession. Companies are continuing to develop new products and research is needed to bring these products to market. A strong sign was the number of confidential plots featuring new chemistry that we had on site today. If you look around most of the industry leaders are here."

Erwin McKone, current ITF President and Superintendent of Briar Ridge Country Club had this to say: "The Illinois Turfgrass Foundation was founded as a not for profit fundraiser for the University of Illinois Turfgrass Program. The importance of the ITF is to continue to select and fund independent research for real world problems that aren't tied to company product based research. This fits in with the concept goal of the Big Par 3 contest. It is a new way to fund research that truly benefits the end user, the golfer – and allows them the opportunity to become educated and take part in the funding of turf."

Look for more educational events coming this winter hosted by the ITF. **-OC**