



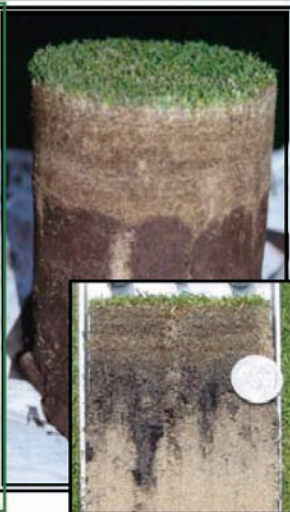


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I am the ITF. RU? Part 1

The Illinois Turfgrass Foundation has made it its mission to realign itself with its allied associations and Universities in 2012. This year the ITF needs to reintroduce itself to the turf industry in Illinois so we better understand the importance of turf research and education in our state for our entire industry, nation wide, and internationally. The ITF is doing this by consistent communication with you and your association through meetings, a new blog (which can be found at www.iturf.org), and written updates in your publications like what you're reading right now.

As the current President of the ITF, I have asked our advisors to share some interesting facts, in their own words, about their programs to help us have a better understanding of who they are and why their program is important to our state and Foundation. The Illinois Turfgrass Foundation wants to make you proud to be supporting our great turfgrass researchers and educators.

This first installment and following writing comes from Ken Diesburg from Southern Illinois University.

"The SIU Turf Program cannot exist at its historical level of production without support from the ITF. For me, ITF funding provided the means for managing a research facility at a level of viability that corporation research agents desired to engage in cooperative research, thus providing even more funding.

Many times throughout my 23-year tenure at SIU, we Illinois turf professors were called by various ITF Boards to communicate our productivity, thus putting a value on the returns for the many monetary grants we have received. Until the break in funding which occurred four years ago, the various Board members always came to the same conclusion that it was justified to support both the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University turf education and research efforts, recognizing that both of them were proportionately productive. During the same time as the break in university funding, the ITF saw justification in supporting the research efforts of Randy Kane and his successor, Derek Settle, employed and supported by the Chicago District Golf



Association. For 18 years previous to that change we university turf professors enjoyed equal status in the Board's vision. Given the three professors at Champaign—Tom Fermanian, Tom Voigt, and Hank Wilkinson—and one professor at Carbondale, Ken Diesburg, the total funding was divided 75/25. No matter how great or small the funding might be, the positive psychology was always there; we each had comparable value to the Illinois turf industry. Research conducted at both universities applied to turf management issues across the state. Do not underestimate the enormity of this

concept for us. Being employees of the state, and choosing to take a career path of service through teaching and research, our dominant motivation in getting up each morning is to serve our constituency. When the ITF chose to cut support to my program it was devastating; both instantly in my mind and heart, and later in my struggle to keep my turf research trials at a reasonable level, no longer able to hire help, purchase supplies, or maintain equipment. That struggle continues today. Corporate contracts diminished. It is with that sentiment that I am preparing this report. I hope and pray that you will see the value of the SIU Turf Program as comparable; no better and no worse than those of the UI Turf Program and the CDGA Turf Program, and that you will fund each professor and Ph.D. at the same level, no matter how large or small that amount might be.

The SIU Turf Program is the dominant turf-teaching program in the state. Turf research is a significant component of the program comprising 45% of its resources. The program is truly comprehensive: (1) it trains the sons of Illinois to become professional turfgrass managers, the majority of them going back up state as assistant superintendents. There are many SIU graduates in golf course management in northern Illinois as well as throughout the state. (2) The SIU Turf Program conducts turfgrass research and provides training in managing warm-season grasses as well as cool-season grasses. (3) The SIU Turf Program has an even balance between turf research and teaching, serving the turf industry, itself, as well as the Illinois citizens wanting to learn how to devote their careers to it.

The SIU Turf Program started in 1961 when Dr. James Tweedy, who eventually became the Dean of our College of Agriculture, then a Vice President of SIU, established the turf plots at the SIU Horticulture Farm. In 1965, Dr. Herbert Portz moved from forage to turf teaching and research; a move that was happening at several universities across the country during those years as the turf industry was rapidly growing. When Dr. Portz retired in 1987, Dr. Anna-Marie Pennucci was hired to replace him. She moved on in one year and was



replaced by me in 1989. I have remained at SIU for 23 years because of the great teaching and research environment we have here. I am allowed to pursue the avenues of research that I deem critical for the state of Illinois. The results of my research benefit the entire eastern transition zone. My zoysia breeding will benefit the future turf industry of United States from the latitudes of Chicago to northern Florida; everywhere low-input, persistent, playable turf is needed. In this SIU environment, I was allowed to model and expand my undergraduate turf program to match those of other major Midwest turf programs. I used the model I had learned from at Iowa State University with Dr. Nick Christians. The average number of turf

students in the SIU Turf Program has doubled since 1989 from 8 to 20. We send teams to the GCSAA Turf Bowl every year. One of those years, our 'A' team took 5th place against over 90 teams from across the country; surpassed only by the Iowa State team and three Purdue teams. That's pretty good company. All this has been possible through the years because the ITF has realized the value in supporting the SIU Turf Program. Please, don't let it fall during these tough times." **-OC**



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EDUCATION REVIEW

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



Miller and Vavrek highlight the March Meeting

The MAGCS March meeting was held on an unusually warm day at Arrowhead Golf Club in Wheaton, hosted by Mike Mumper. With the early spring conditions and staffs not up to full swing, I think most guys were out cutting grass that day.

Dr. Lee Miller, Extension Turfgrass Pathologist from the University of Missouri was the first speaker. His topic for the day was "Efficient Use of Spring Fungicide Applications for Disease Management." This presentation featured how to select fungicides and how and when to apply. His models are based on Growing Degree Days (GDD). Most of us use these GDD models to predict application timing of pre-emergent for crabgrass control, *Poa* seed head control and grub control. Dr. Miller cited that foliar diseases such as dollar spot are more difficult to predict because they are dictated more on moisture, relative humidity and surface temperatures. His recommendations are based on his research data. If your course is prone to these diseases, he believes better control can be achieved with the use of preventative applications of fungicides before disease symptoms occur.

Lee offered the following recommendations based upon soil temperatures. Websites, weather stations or a good old soil thermometer can monitor temps. If you use a soil thermometer, Lee recommends you base your data on a 2" depth taken daily at 11:00 a.m.

Take All Patch: Apply preventatively when at 2" soil depth, the temperatures is at 50 degrees.

Summer Patch: Apply preventatively when at 2" soil depth, the temperature is 65 degrees.

Fairy Ring: Fairy Ring is one of the most complex systems in plant pathology. Dr. Miller has done extensive research on this disease and written numerous articles and has become one of the experts in the industry on fairy ring. He said he was tired of the nicknames he gets called, use your imagination to fill in the blanks.



Dr. Lee Miller

Type I: Basidiocarp (mushroom) formations

Type II: Green rings caused by the degradation of lignin.

Type III: Necrotic turf. The pathogen coats the soil particles and organic material causing hydrophobic soil and localized dry spots.

In all types the fungus is in the soil at varying depths. Preventative applications are much more effective than curative. Apply preventatively (2) applications at 28 day intervals and water in immediately with .125" or .25".

If applying only curatively, a wetting agent is recommended along with the fungicide. You must water in the application with at least .25" immediately or within 10 hours. Keep TGR's off for at least 14 days as the DMI fungicides have growth regulation characteristics.

Dollar Spot: Early preventative applications using DMI's can delay onset and reduce severity for the entire season. It will also give you the ability to use lower rates later on.

Some of you may remember Dr. Miller when he worked for the CDGA from 2001 -2006 and helped Dr. Randy Kane "launch" Interactive Turf. He says "he drank his milk and is all grown up now". The prodigal son has a family now and has returned. Lee can be reached at www.turfpath.missouri.edu.

Our new/old USGA Senior Agronomist of the North Central Region, Bob Vavrek has also returned to our shores. His presentation for the day was, "2011 Year in Review". Bob took some time and commented on the unusually warm weather we have been having.



Bob Vavrek



"It is the warmest winter on record in Milwaukee with an average temperature of 34 degrees. It was the first time in 20 years we have not had any snow/ice damage. The warm weather has been a source of extra revenue for struggling clubs. I believe the hardiness zones are moving north. Winters are becoming more variable and summers have been hard to predict. It is uncertain if we will see more insect problems for this coming season. Possibly we may see an extra cutworm cycle."

Bob commented on possible future regulations that may be coming our way similar to what Canadian Golf Course Superintendents are currently experiencing. Regulations on irrigation documentation/justification and pesticide application/justification/documentation may be on the horizon.

Bob's power point slide presentation went over winter 2011 ice damage, summer USGA events in his region, herbicide damage, greens under stress, collar protection devices, green drainage problems and the usual assortment of dead green photos.

"2011 was a difficult year for cool season grasses that were on the edge." Venting greens was very popular as was the hose, for hand watering trouble areas.

Lunch was served and after the delicious Italian food was devoured, I witnessed a vapor trail of what had previously been where trucks were parked as guys headed back to work to work.

(BTW, we recorded the talks and if you'd like to see them call 630-243-7900 or email luke@magcs.org) -OC





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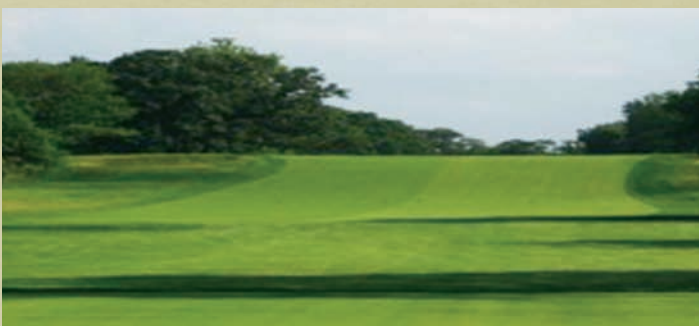
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