



THE GRASS ROOTS



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ANDY NORTH VISITS 1985 WISCONSIN GOLF TURF SYMPOSIUM!

The 20th annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium will be long remembered by those in attendance. The 1985 meeting, co-hosted by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District and the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association, was honored by the presence of the 1985 U.S. Open Champion, Andy North. Andy, a resident of Madison and a member of the Nakoma Golf Club, joined the noon luncheon and after some very interesting remarks and reflections about his career in professional golf, took questions from the audience. It was a rare opportunity and he was candid in his answers. The warmth and sincerity he conveyed left a lasting impression. It was gracious of Ted Woehrle to attend since Andy won his most recent Championship on Ted's golf course, Oakland Hills Country Club in suburban Detroit. Gene Haas summed up the feeling of many when he pointed out that Andy North was a hero in the eyes of thousands of junior golfers in Wisconsin, as well as everyone in the room that day. As an expression of gratitude, WGCSA President Monroe Miller presented Andy with a numbered, limited edition, leatherbound copy of "The Life of Old Tom Morris."

The Wisconsin State Golf Association selected the occasion of the Symposium luncheon to present the Wisconsin Golf Hall of Fame Award to the late O.J. Noer. Noer, to whose memory the Symposium is dedicated, was the sole 1985 inductee into the Hall of Fame and is the first non-golfer

ever selected for this honor. Thanks to the efforts of Gene Haas, Mr. Noer's daughter, Mary Noer Van Der Burch, travelled from her home in Pebble Beach, California to accept the award for her father. It was presented by the WSGA's Jerry Lemberg. Also given to Mrs. Van Der Burch was a water color caricature of O.J. painted by GRASSROOTS illustrator, Gene Haas. It was a sentimental moment that made for some special memories.

The Noer Foundation, represented by its President Tony Grasso, also chose this time to make a Distinguished Service Award to Jim Latham. Latham, longtime WGCSA member, was the Foundation's research director for many years. He retired from the MMSD last year after 25 years of work and assumed the directorship of the Great Lakes Region of the USGA Green Section.

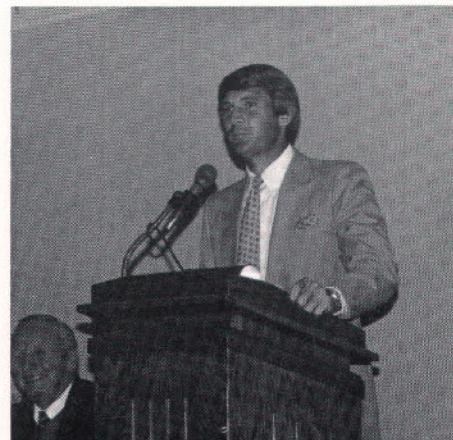
The speakers accepting invitations to address the 1985 Symposium provided a wealth of infor-



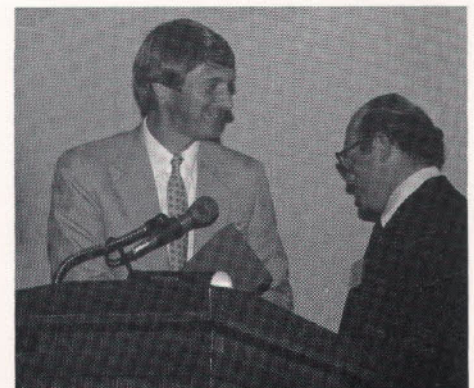
O.J. Noer's daughter, Mrs. Dirk Van Der Burch, accepts Wisconsin Golf Hall of Fame Award from Jerry Lemberg of the WSGA.



Mrs. Van Der Burch accepts congratulations on behalf of her father, O.J. Noer.



Andy North, 1985 U.S. Open Champion.



WGCSA President Monroe S. Miller presents Andy North with a copy of "The Life of Old Tom Morris." (Continued on page 33)



mation valuable to their audience. This year's keynote speaker was WGCSA Honorary Member Dr. Joe Vargas. Vargas, a 17 year staff member at Michigan State University, titled his remarks, "Fairway Clipping Removal — The New Messiah." He pointed out that although clipping removal is a good practice, it will not solve all fairway management problems. It is a simplistic approach and, like many other practices, will not work by itself as a solution to turf problems. Dr. Vargas also expressed the opinion that it will take three years to see how clipping removal will affect the turf micro-environment and what problems may result, since that is generally the period of time taken to reach equilibrium.

Vargas presented basic management recommendations for both creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass fairways. Briefly, they are:

Cultural Management of Poa annua Fairways

1. Deep vertical mowing after green up

2. Aerifying (coring)
 - after spring green-up
 - after seedhead production
 - fall
3. 3# — 4# of nitrogen per season
4. Collect clippings
5. PGR use — Embark
6. Nitrogen fertility: ½# June 1, ½# July 1, ½# August 1, 1# September 1 and 1# November 1.

—OR—

- 1½# June (e.g., 6-2-0), 1# September 1 and 1# November 1.

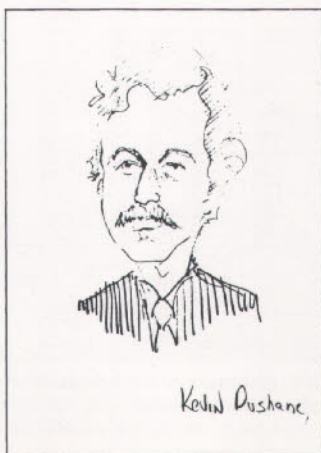
Cultural Management of Creeping Bentgrass Fairways

1. Aerifying during annual bluegrass seedhead production
2. Vertical mowing, lightly in summer to prevent scalping
3. Approximately 2# nitrogen per season
4. PGR use — Cutless
5. Nitrogen fertility: 1# May/June, ½# August, 1# November/December.

Dr. Vargas was followed on the program by one of his former students, Kevin Dushane. Kevin gave a wide ranging talk on

lightweight fairway mowing at his club, Bloomfield Hills, near Detroit. He has been using smaller units on his fairway turf for four years and has observed the benefits of less water usage, less fertilizer and fewer fungicide applications. Along with lightweight mowing, Kevin has been collecting clippings. Part of that program was the sculpturing of his fairways to reduce acreage and therefore program costs. The resulting long **Poa annua** rough adjacent to the fairway created a major problem and Kevin did an outstanding job of covering the story of changing this unfair playing area to a more acceptable Kentucky bluegrass/ryegrass rough. His presentation was complemented with a great set of slides.

Bob Randquist, Golf Course Superintendent at Southern Hills Golf and Country Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma, travelled to Milwaukee to share his experiences with the hand mowing of putting greens. Bob, who has a B.S. degree in Metallurgical Engineering from the University of Oklahoma, analytical-



ly reviewed his reasons for instituting walking mowers into his putting green management program in 1981. He considered labor requirements, equipment costs and effects on cultural practices. He concluded, based on the eight machines needed to do the job at Southern Hills, that walkers cost \$2,000 per year less in equipment costs than triplex machines over a ten year period. In a golf season of ten months where greens are cut six days a week, he calculated that the use of walking mowers increased his labor expense by \$9,500 per year. The subjective observations on putting green quality weigh heavily in favor of the smaller units. He has seen a decrease in vertical mowing requirements and less soil compaction. They have eliminated the "triplex ring." He has measured their effect on green speed and recorded an average of 9" to 10" in speed increase over triplex mowers when both are set at the same height of cut. Although inexplicable, you can conclude you will be able to achieve the same speed with a walker at a somewhat higher height of cut, thereby reducing some plant stress. Bob did point out that this program may not be for everyone and many factors must be considered:

1. Contouring and size of greens, steep slopes adjacent to greens and difficulty in maneuvering the triplex mower.
2. Bunkering, principally as it relates to closeness to putting surfaces.
3. Labor market translated into availability, cost, unions, etc.
4. Mowing frequency.
5. Length of season.
6. Convenience.

In conclusion, he has seen great member acceptance at his club because of the elimination of hydraulic leaks, no triplex ring, better rough grasses around the greens, a decrease in syringing requirements of collars and an overall pleasing appearance.

The afternoon session, chaired by WGCSA Director Dale Marach, welcomed Mr. Bruce Boegel, a member of Wayne Otto's club, Ozaukee Country Club. Mr. Boegel addressed a number of topics pertaining to golf course maintenance from the golf players perspective. He emphasized that enjoyment of the players and the pace of play

should be the primary concerns in the work that we do. He also made the point that our golf courses should be clearly marked so that the rules of golf can be easily applied.

Dr. John Street, an Associate Professor of Turf from Ohio State University, followed Mr. Boegel on the program. Dr. Street addressed the strategy and potential long range problems of low nitrogen fertilization programs. He stressed proper timing of nitrogen applications to maximize root growth and CHO reserves going into the summer stress period. He warned that low nitrogen programs combined with clipping harvest on fairway turfs could deplete nitrogen reserves and that higher N rates may be necessary in the future.

Wrapping up Wednesday's pro-



Dr. Clint Hodges.



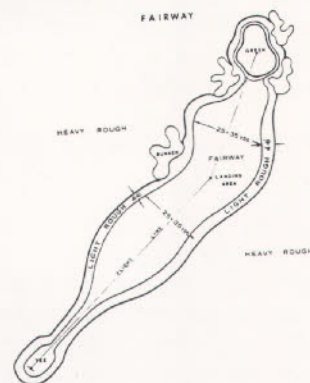
Jim Latham wraps up the 1985 Symposium.



Billy Buchanan makes a point about golf course maintenance.

gram was Mr. William R. Ward, Golf Course Superintendent at Morris Park Country Club in South Bend, Indiana. He led a discussion on his use of Roundup to convert his mixed *Poa annua*/bentgrass/Kentucky bluegrass fairways to bentgrass. His experience showed that proper timing and removal of existing thatch greatly helps in the success of this endeavor. Key to his presentation was the importance of long range planning when attempting a project of this magnitude.

The PGA's Tour Agronomist, Mr. Billy Buchanan, came to Wisconsin from Ponte Vedra, Florida to participate in the Symposium. In a talk filled with many words of advice, Buchanan drew together problems and conflicts between the game and the care of the golf course. He remarked that golf

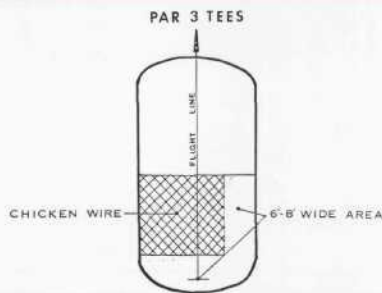


course management is a compromise between what is agronomically correct and what is good for the game of golf. What is important, bottom line, is what the players have to play on, and we must recognize that **how** we



Tony Grasso, President of the O.J. Noer Research Foundation, presents Jim Latham with the Foundation's Distinguished Service Award.

prepare the field matters little to the players. Billy recognized our problems with the weather, but said, "Sound agronomics will diminish the impact of the weather." He expressed the need to control the growth of grass,



especially on putting greens, and reminded everyone that they are **putting surfaces and not landing areas.** (Editor's note: better to remind players than us). Golf is supposed to be played on firm surfaces, not dead and not wet. Commenting on remarks made by Lee Trevino and Hubert Green during the 1985 PGA at Denver's Cherry Hills Country Club, Buchanan suggested, "Do what you have to do to get the job done and don't worry about impossible remarks of players."



Mr. Buchanan commented on some specific golf course practices involved in the management of fine golf turf. Among them were:

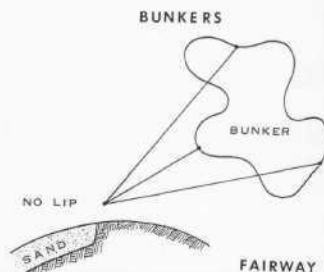
1. Mowing. Cares little what machines are used; look at what is left for putting. Is it smooth, firm and true? You cannot overmow a good surface. More is better and there are clubs where greens are cut nine times per week. The second cutting of a double mowing will increase the stimpmeter reading 6"-8". If you mow the same path, you can get 8"-10" increase with the second cut.

2. Rolling. A good maintenance tool. Some moisture is needed. Mow once and roll once and ex-

pect 8"-10" increase on stimp-meter reading.

3. Irrigation. We need absolute control of what is applied. Hand watering is important — all good courses do. Use nozzles when hand watering. Cycle irrigation system frequently rather running the time off in a single setting. Irrigate for the lowest spot on a putting green and hand water the highest.

4. Fertility. Lowered levels of nitrogen are good. Don't ignore other nutrients that give strength to grass blades. Consider a 1:1 or 1:2 ratio of N:K.

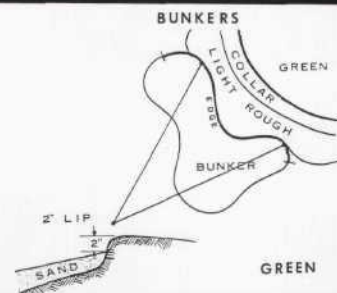


5. Vertical Mowing. Clip only the tops. When you can see evidence of vertical mowing straight on but not when you turn 90 degrees, you've done a good job.

6. Topdressing. Use light amounts of dry material. Even if you are on a straight sand program, **you still need to aerify.** We must get oxygen down into the root zone.

7. Spiking. Not seen much anymore on putting greens, but it is a good practice and should be done once a week.

8. Sand. Sand is a hazard on the golf course, just like water. Players should not complain about the



depth of sand anymore than they complain about the depth of the water!

Tournament preparation guides, made available to attendees, are reproduced in this article with Mr. Buchanan's permission.

Dr. Clint Hodges, Professor of Horticulture and Plant Pathology at Iowa State University, made his second appearance at the Symposium as a speaker. He was a participant in the 1982 program. Dr. Hodges gave an extremely interesting presentation on the interactions between **Helminthosporium** leaf spot and herbicides. He shared research information on how rates of different herbicidal materials affect the germination of leaf spot spores and their subsequent growth. He demonstrated stimulation and inhibition of spores at varying degrees of concentration of herbicide. Since the herbicides involved in his study are plant hormones, their impact is not totally surprising. At this stage of his research, Dr. Hodges is unable to say whether or not we need to do anything to counter the influence of herbicide applications on the leaf spot organism.

Jim Latham had a new role in this year's Symposium. He wrapped up the program with an excellent summary of what each speaker said. Although he wore a different hat this year, we are fortunate he continues to be an important part of the Symposium.

Gratitude was felt by all to Don Gurda, Jim Spindler and all the staff people at Milorganite. Without their hard work and dedication these excellent annual programs wouldn't be possible. Members of the Symposium Committee — Jim Belfield, Jim Latham, Monroe Miller, Wayne Otto, Danny Quast, Jim Spindler and Woody Voigt deserve thanks for yet another job well done. But most deserving of applause is Bob Welch. He provided the guidance and the glue that made this year's meeting one of the best ever.



Members of the WGCSA that attended the 1985 Symposium.