



## THE NOER CENTER— WE NEED IT TOO!

By Jim Rodgers  
Lohmann Golf Designs

The profession of golf course architecture requires one to be very knowledgeable and well-informed in many areas. Knowledge is needed in landscape architecture, site planning, surveying, engineering of all forms, construction methods, design principles, irrigation, electricity, soils, agronomy, and maintenance practices. With this kind of extensive background necessary, it becomes impossible to be an expert in every area. For this reason, we often consult experts in specific fields. One of these fields is in the area of turfgrass research, encompassing soils, soil mixes, turf, and maintenance. The development of a turfgrass research center in Madison would be a great resource to golf course designers in the area.

Putting greens are the most important single feature on a golf course and are therefore the most closely scrutin-

ized portion of golf course construction. If the green is to remain playable and easily maintainable, it is imperative that it be constructed with the most up-to-date information available. Developments such as the perched water table effect have had positive and lasting effects on the surface we putt on. It is not enough to have a sand, peat, and gravel that appear to be a good base for a green. We need to have these materials tested to insure they are good and that we use them in the right combination. Even with this high level of analysis, problems such as black layer may arise. Therefore, we must not just stay with one standard of construction, but rather continue to pursue developing newer and better materials. In addition to putting green mixes, a turfgrass research center aids the designer in analysis of soils and bunker sands. The more thoroughly we study

the different materials we use on our golf courses, the greater the long run benefits will be.

Another advantage of turfgrass research comes in the areas of playability and maintainability. By developing stronger and more resistant cultivars, we will have golf courses that are greener longer, more uniform, and more aesthetically pleasing which are therefore more enjoyable to play on. Also, if we continue to improve maintenance practices, our golf courses will continue to look better. Recent trends, such as lightweight mowing, contour mowing, and clipping removal have greatly improved the quality of our golf courses. Not only will our courses look better, they will be maintained more economically.

As strides continue to be made in turfgrass research, the lawn maintenance industry and homeowner reap benefits in addition to golf courses. More can be done better for less money.

In summary, the development of a turfgrass research facility will be of great benefit. Golf courses, office complex grounds, and home lawns will continue to look better for less money. And when that happens, everyone comes out a winner.



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