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THE GRASS ROOTS

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NOER FOUNDATION AWARDS KUSSOW MAJOR RESEARCH GRANT

By Monroe S. Miller

Following through on its long held and publicly stated desire to fund the first research at the new O. J. NOER Turfgrass Research and Education facility, the O. J. Noer Research Foundation has announced that Dr. Wayne R. Kussow has been awarded a major study grant. The announcement was made on February 14, 1992 at the GCSAA Conference in New Orleans.

Kussow submitted the proposal to the Noer Foundation Research Committee in August 1991. Entitled "Performance Standards For Amendments In Sand Matrix Putting Greens", the project proposal covers something more than three years of work.

The research project as proposed by Dr. Kussow has three interrelated objectives. They are:

1. To develop laboratory methods for organic amendment characterizations that have potential value as performance standards.
2. To assess in simulated putting greens the impact of various organic amendments on putting green performance.
3. To confirm in a long-term field trial which organic amendment characteristics relate significantly to the sustained performance of sand matrix greens.

"The ultimate goal of this research," according to Dr. Kussow, "is to develop performance standards for rootzone amendments. Emphasis will be placed on organic amendments, but new and promising inorganic materials will not

be ignored."

"There is also great anticipation that early steps of the research will generate information that enhances understanding of the properties and processes that govern the performance of sand matrix greens."

The proposal was initially solicited from Kussow by the Noer Foundation. The first part of the project is a greenhouse study, and the money—some \$40,000—is already available. The amount of further funding and its timing is dependent on the amount of money that can be raised from other sources.

One of those other sources may well be the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association. Most WGCSA members are greatly pleased by this grant from the Noer Foundation. The membership meeting in March saw a lot of interest in adding money to the efforts of the Noer Foundation.

The Foundation move to fund the first research at the Noer Facility touches its own history. O.J. Noer himself, who was alive when the Foundation was formed, asked that the very first funded research be conducted at his alma mater, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Soil Science. Professor James R. Love was the recipient of that first grant.

Over three decades later, history has, in a sense, repeated itself with this research grant.

We couldn't be happier or more pleased.

SPRING BUSINESS MEETING FEATURES IRRIGATION

By Pat Norton

Eighty interested and dedicated attendees came to Fond du Lac on Monday, March 23 for a day of education, discussion, some heated debate and a bit of healthy disagreement. No, this wasn't a political caucus for George Bush or Bill Clinton. This was the spring business meeting of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Three great speakers filled the morning hours with a thorough discussion of golf irrigation. Bob Emmerich of Watertronics led off the morning program with an interesting lecture on water, water rights and water conservation. Bob is the elder and more composed of the famous Emmerich Brothers!

Be thankful, Wisconsinites, that we do not live in many of the water starved areas of the Sunbelt. Bob suggested that other states may someday want access to Great Lakes water. Wouldn't that shake the citizens of Wisconsin out of their political apathy immediately? There would be a deafening outcry of public protest from normally very docile citizens.

That futuristic idea would certainly accomplish political activism. Bob also stated that, in the future, the golf industry must be able to state that water conservation is a priority and part of our mission.

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Spring Business Meeting

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Water conservation could easily become the next focus of political attention and receive the kind of publicity that pesticide issues receive today.

"Technical Tom" Emmerich, of T.G. Emmerich and Associates, gave the lowdown on the complexities of today's ultramodern irrigation systems. Contrasted against these systems were the quick coupler systems still in use in some places today.

Interestingly, Tom has left Reinders Brothers after many years of service in order to start up his own irrigation consulting business. If and when Tom becomes highly successful in his new venture, we can all say that it's because of his enthusiasm and energy. If Tom's nervous energy could be harnessed and converted to electric power, Northern States Power would probably go out of business!

Best of luck, Tom.

Peter Beaves finished the morning's education in a very informative and humorous style. Beaves, president of Midwest Irrigation, has been involved in irrigation design and installation for nearly 30 years. He shared many good tips on design, installation and service of irrigation equipment. He kept the audience involved and amused throughout his discussion and easily demonstrated why he has been so successful in business for almost three decades.

After a hefty noon lunch, lively debate and discussion followed at the business meeting. "Our man at the Capitol", Rod Johnson, updated the group on the status of AB468 and possible Ag 29 revisions.

Kudos to Rodney for his role as our informed advocate. His voluntary service is critical to the WGCSA and is typical for those members who have stepped forward in the past ten years to help with any number of causes critical to the profession.

It may be necessary for superintendents in Wisconsin to post signage at key points on their golf courses. The signs will likely read "Pesticides are periodically applied to this golf course. For further information please contact the golf course superintendent."

Hearings are being held around the state on Ag 29. Those in attendance felt that revisions to Ag 29 were very much in order. They felt very much opposed to the half-baked legislation included in Assembly Bill 468.

Other items of business that seemed to consume the entire afternoon were proposals for scholarship and research, committee reports and a review of the 1992 meeting sites and speakers.

Legal Matters



OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE WGCSA ON AG 29

"The membership of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association has been informed of and supports the proposed amendments of Chapter Ag. 29 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code of Pesticide Use and Control.

Our organization is made up of professional golf course managers who approach their jobs with environmental sensitivity and integrity. We are supportive of golfers' right to know that pesticides are periodically applied to golf courses as a standard and necessary maintenance practice.

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is pleased to have been responsibly involved in the amending of Ag. 29 through representation on the Ad-Hoc committee which helped draft these proposals.

The posting of signs on the first and tenth tees and at the point of registration will serve to give adequate notice to our golfers that Landscape Applications, per the proposed rule definition, are periodically made.

The proposed signage has been discussed and has met with no resistance at meetings of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association. It is our understanding that part of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection focus in development of these proposals was to insure a high degree of voluntary compliance.

It is our feeling that this proposal, which was developed in partnership with industry, will meet with the desired voluntary compliance. We cite the fact that there are several Wisconsin golf courses that already post notice signs or are planning to do so, even before it becomes a requirement.

The proposed signage does have an impact on our industry, but we do not see it as a significant threat to the way that we do business. It is our belief that the financial impact and golfer reaction will be minimal.

All in all, it was a great meeting, even if it was too lengthy. Let's keep the professional interest in our association going for the remainder of the 1992 golf season!

The proposed sign regulations have a proven track record. Other states have successfully adopted similar regulations.

The information to be provided upon request is not of burden to golf course superintendents. Portions of the information to be provided is information already in hand through accurate and required recordkeeping. The remaining information is easily and readily available.

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association wholeheartedly supports that these proposed regulations are of statewide concern and affect every county and municipality. We are in agreement with the need to preempt local units of government from enacting regulations which are in conflict with or expand or detract from the proposal."

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