

Now *THAT* Was A Field Day!

By Monroe S. Miller

The smell of diesel smoke. The sound of mowers. A "normal" August day. Over six hundred turfgrass managers. Good food. A research tour. An auction.

These were a few of the ingredients that combined for what was a great event—the 1994 Wisconsin Turfgrass Field Day. The judgment was nearly unanimous that this was about as good as a field day could be. Company reps reported that Wisconsin has reached a level where the best of the others are at and gone beyond many.

Attendance almost doubled from last year to this and speculation is that there will be another big jump in 1995. Simply stated, on August 16, 1994, the Field Day was the place to be if you work in the turfgrass industry in the Badger State.

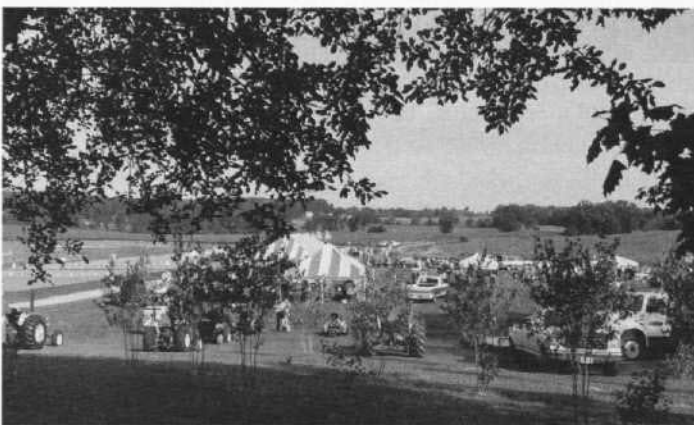
Faculty, graduate students and Noer Facility staff were on duty at the eleven stations of the research tour, which started after lunch. The groups were small and rotated at pre-determined intervals, giving everyone a chance to get a

close look at the studies underway. It was very educational and equally interesting. Many used the opportunity to get specific answers to problems they were having at work. And it wasn't all grass research. Landscape managers will be able to make good use of the dahlia cultivar trial and the perennial trial.

The morning hours were occupied by product and equip-



A young man destined for great career in turfgrass pathology—PhD candidate Steve Millett. He explains his snow mold research and his "Box o' Turf".



A beautiful setting on a beautiful day for a Field Day.



Professor Kussov explains the basics of his nutrient and pesticide runoff and leaching research.



Dr. Frank Rossi was everywhere on Field Day, the ultimate venue for a professor with so many U.W. Extension responsibilities.

ment demonstrations at the north end of the farm, just beyond the display area. It was better organized than in the past, and it ran on time from start to finish.

Everything ran smoothly—parking and registration included, just as promised after last year. The meal was superb and generous. The handouts—books, really—were excellent educational aids.

The news that the research facility will be expanded by twenty acres to the north as soon as the corn crop is harvested this fall was exciting. We can only dream what things will look like next year.

The only downside to this grand event was that it marked Scott Mackintosh's last day as Manager of the Noer Facility. His good work in the past year is appreciated.

Once the final reporting of the income of the Field Day is available, we will know just how valuable the auction was. It was bigger than last year, and the generosity of donors was impressive. Organizers were wise in keeping it as part of the 1994 Field Day.

It is appropriate that thanks are extended to the Field Day Committee - Tom Harrison, Tom Schwab, Frank Rossi, Wayne Kussow, Julie Meyer and Scott Mackintosh. And no Field Day would be complete without exhibitors. We thank those in attendance for 1994 and recognize them: Wisconsin Turf Equipment, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,



Dr. Wayne Kussow's traffic simulator, made possible by a donation from Bob Erdahl.



Rod Johnson, when he saw Dr. Kussow's "spikulator", asked "where are the soft spikes?"

Vigoro, Tyler Enterprises, Turf Supply Co., Town and Country Ford Tractor, Tillman Landscape Nursery, Temporary Rain, Spring Valley Turf Products, Scotts Proturf, SCN Sales Inc., Ryco Industries, Roberts Irrigation, Reinders Irrigation, Reinders Turf, Pro-Lawn Inc., Pendleton Turf Supply, Milorganite - MMSD, Miles Inc., Mechanical Soil Technology, McKay Nursery, Lesco Inc., Lebanon Turf Products, L.L. Olds Seed, Knox Fertilizer, KEI, Johnson and Associates, Jerry's Small Engine Supply Co., J.W. Turf, Horst Distributing Inc., Hanley Implement, Growmark Inc., Greenmix, EZGo-Textron, CIBA Turf and Ornamentals, Chipco Specialty Products, Central Wisconsin Evergreens, The Andersons, American Sod Company, and Agr-Evo.

Joe Morris, president of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association, travelled to Madison with a group of his colleagues to attend our Field Day. It is good to read what golf course superintendents from somewhere else thought about this event. Following is Joe's "President's Message" from the September issue of Hole Notes, official publication of the MGCSA:

On August 15 & 16 Kevin Clunis, Tom Johnson, Dale Parske, Bob Frank, Dr. Ward Stienstra and I attended the Wisconsin Turfgrass Field Day at the O.J. NOER Turfgrass Research and Education Facility in Madison. There was more electricity in the air than during a lightning storm. I was very impressed, as were the other members of our group. When I saw Dr. Stienstra on his hands and knees, I knew he either wanted to go home or was really into it. Of course, I asked him, and if you want the answer, ask him or anyone else who attended.

Dr. Frank Rossi and Dr. Julie Meyer were very happy to see us and gave us a very personal walk-through. That's not easy when there were in excess of 700 people in attendance. I spotted a distinguished looking gentleman that looked a lot like Jim Latham. Sure enough it was.

In the past I have had mixed thoughts on needing a research facility in the metropolitan area. However, after realizing how far south geographically Madison really is, and talking to a lot of researchers, I have come to believe, without any doubt, we are in great need of a facility such as the O.J. NOER.

I didn't think Madison falls somewhere between Austin and the Iowa border geographically.

After hearing the background of the WTA, I am positive the great turf people in Minnesota will be able to merge into a very strong Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation.



Darin Lickfeldt, a new PhD grad student in turfgrass management, held court for the first time. He is also a new Grass Roots columnist.



Ed Devinger had reasons to be happy—lots of customer traffic through his Toro tent.

It was a great event to everyone, no doubt. Here are a few personal highlights of this attendee:

- If I planned to seed quality Kentucky bluegrass fairways, I would consider the variety Indigo, based on what I saw at Field Day. It is very fine textured.
- Providence creeping bentgrass looked especially good. But then, so did Penncross.
- Crenshaw and Providence suffered a pretty good infection of yellow tufts this spring past.
- Grad students and NOER Facility employees did a good job at their station assignments.
- The ice cream cones with the Milorganite topping, provided by MMSD for a donation for research, were really good!
- WGCSA members like me had a chance to see how our money was being spent.
- Dr. Kussow's research on nutrient and pesticide runoff may be the most valuable for the public to learn about. This work is confirming the value of turf to society.
- Best and briefest advice of the day came from Jim Latham on the subject of using Zoysia in Wisconsin: "Forget it."

And my advice for everyone is this:

DON'T MISS FIELD DAY 1995! 🏆



NTEP bentgrass trials, in case you wondered about varietal differences.



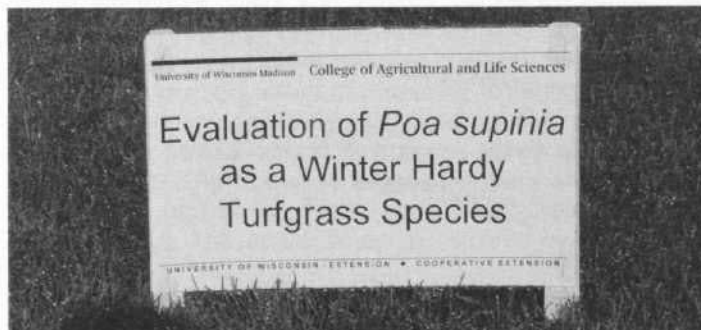
Dr. Chuck Koval's insect traps.



The "Freedom Lawn"—a weed patch to most.



Tom Schwab (r.) ran the second annual Field day auction, which generated several thousand dollars for turfgrass research.



Wonder what *Poa supina* looks like? Visit Field Day and find out!



NTEP fine-leaf fescue plots were an especially interesting stop for Field Day-goers.



The Noer research facility includes an EnviroCaster.



There was some BIG equipment at Field Day '94.



WTA President Curt Larson. He's also the man who makes Wisconsin Turf Equipment Corp. work.