



Updates and Thank Yous

By Tom Schwab, Manager
O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility

On this snowy first day of spring, I'm jotting down some notes on how the Noer Facility season is shaping up. This snow is a welcome reprieve to those of us that still have indoor work to do, like writing GRASS ROOTS articles. The cool, wet weather is conducive to more snow mold damage on our plots. We have enough fungi damage to keep Dr. Meyer, Catherine Smejkal and Steve Millett happy all spring. Some plots were not treated and there is evidence of some distinct genetic resistance among cultivars. The snow mold severity will be evaluated with regard to cultivars, timing of fall fertilization, fungicide variables, and surface covers. This will be reported in the WTA/UW Turf Research Report. The report is one of the benefits you receive by becoming a member of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association.

In addition to analyzing our own snow mold data, the Noer is compiling a data base on how your (Wisconsin superintendents) snow mold applications worked this past winter. I hope you received a questionnaire early in April and returned it. The questionnaire was sent out to all Class A WGCSA superintendents. We'll make a report in the September/October GRASS ROOTS summarizing the practices and successes of your 1994/1995 applications. Thank you for helping the Noer put together this important snow mold data. If you didn't send back your questionnaire, please do it soon.

There have been reports about the Facility growing by 20 acres. The word from campus is it's not going to happen this summer. We really need this land soon though. The WTA board, UW Turf Team, and others are not giving up. We need to expand our Summer Field Day and our scope of research. Dr. Kussow has been asked to do a new putting

green study for the USGA. A prairie study was just installed last fall. I'll be installing an ornamental grass demonstration this spring. The professors will also be initiating a study on so-called "snake oils" as thatch decomposers. Dr. Rossi is going to be installing a new Kentucky bluegrass cultivar evaluation study in the fall. Industry and the public keep putting more demands on the Facility. I hope the new land soon becomes available to meet these needs.

We're all glad the Turf Team is intact this year. Dr. Rossi was almost hired away by the GCSAA to head up their educational program. He is so enthusiastic when it comes to turf management in Wisconsin that we're glad he decided to stay. He's staying, thanks to your great showing of support for how much we need him in the state. Unfortunately though, Dr. Koval is retiring. He is easing into retirement by cutting his schedule down to 20%. With that 20% he will spend more time at the Noer Facility this summer, so the team will remain intact for the time being. I hope the University will find as great an individual to replace him when he completely retires.

The Noer Facility has just joined the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP). The Audubon Society of New York coordinates the program and helps landscape managers develop more ecologically sound greenspaces. Audubon helps by giving tips on conserving resources, creating wildlife habitat, and using plant material

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in more natural communities. There are four different Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary programs, with one tailored to your individual situation. There is a program for golf courses, schools, individual backyards, and at Noer we joined the one for corporate and business properties. The UW Natural Resource Department paid for the registration and they'll be helping us with some strategies. If any of you have advice for our Audubon program or would like to help, let us know. We could also use some extra bird houses if you have some laying around.

I just had the opportunity to participate in the Northern Great Lakes Golf Course Superintendents Association's (NGLGCSA) annual turf symposium. NGLGCSA president Dan Barrett & Co. have a great thing going up there. They dedicated a whole day to topics on landscaping around the golf course. They invited a couple of nursery people, one of whom was growing good size Bur Oak and other hard to find hardwoods for sale. Mark Grundman, Medalist America, gave an excellent talk on establishing prairies. I participated in a panel discussion, along with three NGL superintendents, on landscaping experiences. Watch out Rossi! Those three superintendents were such excellent speakers they may be looking for your job. My personal favorite talks of the day were given by Dr. Lois Berg-Stack from the University of Maine-Orono, Plant and Soil Science Department. This Wisconsin native really knew her plant material! She talked about the latest in planting techniques for everything from trees to perennials. She also talked about design, what

materials work well together, and told us about some of her favorite plants. I hope she starts writing for the GRASS ROOTS again soon! This was my first trip to the symposium but it won't be my last.

Summer Field Day is just around the corner. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, August 15, 1995. The planning committee is working on details as we speak. Exhibitors will receive their registration details early in June and attendees later in June. The research data will be the best ever collected from the Noer Facility because the plots are becoming more mature and data can better be compared with previous year's results.

The facility is ready to take on the new season because of the generosity of numerous individuals and companies. I'd like to personally thank John Deere Horicon Works, Reinders, Wisconsin Turf, Hanleys, and Tiziani Golf Cars for lending us equipment. Numerous golf course superintendents have helped with equipment servicing. Technical support is coming from Reinders Irrigation, Bruce Co., and the UW-Madison. Also I'd like to thank the innovative rebate program donors that donate part of those proceeds to turf research in Wisconsin. And more than that I'd like to thank the superintendents who participate in those programs. With this support of industry and individuals, our turf program will continue to be one of the best in the country. Now, if only this snow would melt! 🍷

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