

Noer Turf Group Anticipates Important Season

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

The Noer Facility professors and staff are bracing for an action packed summer in 1997. Four main areas signal an exciting year: 1) more faculty and staff will be bringing their energy and ideas to the turf program, 2) new and interesting research will be added in 1997, 3) more assistance with turf problems will be provided and 4) a rejuvenated summer field day is planned. Each of these will benefit the turf industry and help build a stronger turf program at the University.

The big news in the personnel area is the addition of the new turfgrass/horticulture faculty position, Dr. John Stier. John recently acquired his Ph.D. from Michigan State University (MSU) and he will be working in Wisconsin by the time you read this. Reports from MSU say we are getting a top-notch researcher who is also very good with students. John was responsible for the research and installation of indoor turf for the 1992 World Cup Soccer Tournament at the Pontiac Silverdome. This kind of research should be a valuable addition to the questions being asked about natural turf at County Stadium, Lambeau, and also if Camp Randall ever returns to "the real stuff." John has experimented with different forms of sod production and has also done research to learn characteristics and possible uses for a relatively new selection of turfgrass—*Poa supina*. He'll be an asset for the many different turfgrass industries in Wisconsin.

Jeff Gregos, the new manager of the Turf Disease Diagnostic Lab, is another positive addition to the UW-Madison turf program. He started late last fall and has been traveling Wisconsin extensively to install research and meet the state's turf people. You probably already have met him — if not, come meet him

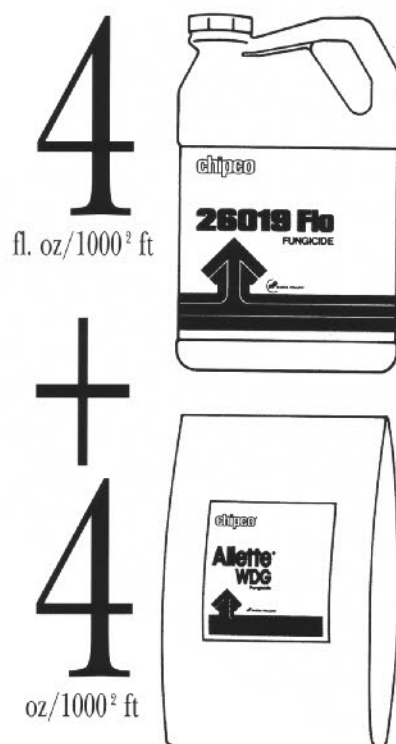
and see his research during one of the spring snow mold field days or at the WTA summer field day. Although most of those snow mold field days will be done by the time you read this, if you have missed the other ones, the last one will be hosted on May 12 by Todd Renk at Gateway Golf Club in Land O' Lakes.

Jeff will be making some big changes at the Noer Facility this summer. He needed a larger short-mowed bentgrass area to do fungicide trials, so he is constructing a half acre putting green to carry out those investigations. A familiar Wisconsin turf professional, Randy Smith of Admire Greenscapes, will be the contractor on that large project. The green is funded half by the WTA and half by the UW Department of Plant Pathology. Jeff is confident he will have that green established and producing lots of diseases and information by Summer Field Day.

In addition to the above two researchers, Dr. Wayne Kussow hired a skilled graduate student to help him study the WGCSA funded Putting Green Management Systems study. Late last fall, Wayne also built another new putting green where he will be investigating some organic supplement effects on putting green quality. There will be plenty of other new soils and nutrition information from Wayne again this summer.

Gary Gaard, who operated the Turf Disease Diagnostic Lab (TDDL) last summer, will be doing the lab work for homeowners this year. Gary has also taken the lead on getting the Noer Facility certified in the New York Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. There is a part of the Noer's Audubon program that could benefit you. Dr. Scott Craven from the UW-Madison Wildlife

Ecology Department is on our Audubon resource committee. Scott gave a great talk at the 1997 Turfgrass EXPO on nuisance and beneficial wildlife. The benefit to you



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could be that by getting Scott more involved at the Noer Facility, he may become a valuable resource about the wildlife concerns at your golf courses.

Another revision to the Noer activity is a change in the format of the WTA summer field day. For the first time ever, it will be extended to a two-day event planned for August 19th and 20th. The price will remain the same as in 1996! What a bargain! We hope that at least one day of the two-day field day will fit your schedule. On the first day the hours will be from 11:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and include lunch, plus an optional barbecue dinner the first evening. The later starting time the first day may work better for people who like to get their crews out and working before they go to a meeting. The second day will be a morning show from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

which will allow people to get home at an earlier hour. The second day will include a continental breakfast. You will be able to attend one day or both days for the same low price. The main goal is to allow an opportunity for more professionals to attend this once-a-year event.

The research tour is often the main draw for field day. We're hoping the new and abundant research will draw more people than ever. The tour has been extended to three hours each day and each tour will be a repeat of the other. Send your assistant or some crew members on the day that you're not attending; then you can compare notes when you get back to the shop. Hopefully all of you can attend the optional Tuesday night barbecue since it offers a great time to meet other turf professionals and share stories with peers. We hope you'll partake in the

barbecue whether you're staying late the first day or coming the night before to attend the second day.

The trade show at field day will take place on the new six acre addition at the Noer Facility. The vendors wanted more room and this site should provide that. The additional space will allow us to increase the number of vendors, which will make the show even more valuable for you. So mark the dates for summer field day 1997 on your calendar — Tuesday and Wednesday, August 19th and 20th.

There are some ambitious projects being undertaken at the Noer Facility this summer and some positive additions both in personnel and education. The faculty and staff at Noer are looking forward to a positive and productive season and hope that their work will benefit you in your operations. 🌱



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