



Notes from Ninety-Eight

By Tom Schwab, Superintendent, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

I'm going to use this forum to document some improvements and accomplishments of a productive year at the Noer Facility. Everyone on the UW-Madison Turf Team contributed to the improvements. Our annual Research Report, which you'll be receiving at the Turf EXPO on January 12th and 13th, will further summarize the extensive work.

The attached map names most of the studies being conducted at the Noer Facility. It shows 92 irrigated plots with 43 active projects. Twenty-three new studies were initiated in 1998. Eighteen involved major renovation of the land (shaded ones on the map). Five others were installed onto existing turf. The remaining studies on the map are either ongoing long-term stud-

ies or are proposed ones for the future. Next year will likely be another big construction year, as you'll see from the number of plots designated as future.

The map shows only four plots that are not currently used or claimed for future studies. I'm sure they will soon be claimed by the new urban entomologist, Chris Williamson, or by the new turfgrass pathologist when that position gets filled. The current turf team may quickly claim those remaining plots also. That is the reason we are trying to increase the size of the facility. We are running out of land to conduct the amount of turf research that needs to be done at the UW-Madison. Enlarging the facility will be one of the big achievements that we hope to

report on next year.

We hope to add approximately 10 acres to the 13 acres we currently own. Our discussions about this are getting pretty serious too. The last discussion had some pretty big players in attendance including UW-Madison representatives Al Fish from the Athletic Department, Dale Schlough from Agricultural Research Stations, Doug Maxwell from the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Dean's Office, and Fred Winding from the Foundation, among others. There were also representatives from the Madison City Planning Office and Metro Sewerage District. The land near the Noer Facility is becoming urbanized. That fact combined with the need to establish a facility that will serve the needs for turf



research well into the future makes this acquisition urgent.

Getting back to the current accomplishments, one of the biggest achievements or events for the Noer Facility had to be the Summer Field Day back in August. The responses from the attendee's conference questionnaires and personal comments were that it was the most informative and organized field day ever. Professor Stier coordinated the day's events as conference chairman and Audra Anderson, WTA/Noer Facility secretary, continued to organize all the behind-the-scenes details. The rest of the Turf Team really put their hearts into it also and will use that field day as a model to continue the progress.

Other accomplishments this year were the addition of irrigation to 13 new plots that are the ones numbered C-27 through A-31 on

the bottom of the map. Also the old irrigation lines were looped to improve pressure to some of the remote plots this past year. Additionally the Noer Facility building received some improvements. Two new windows were added that made a big difference. One converted a Turf Disease Diagnostic Lab storage closet into a nice office area and the other gave Audra a professional office/reception area. Previously she conducted all of her Wisconsin Turfgrass Association and Noer Facility business from a desk in the hallway. She is also now conducting this business with a new computer that Dan Williams and Riverview Country Club just donated to the OJ Noer Facility. We're so thankful for their generosity.

Gary Gaard continues to make environmental enhancements at the Noer Facility. He achieved

Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary certification for the facility. This past year he added another prairie section to the Wisconsin Ice Age Trail that is adjacent to the facility and also added a wildlife garden, wildflower sod garden, and numerous bird feeding stations. These additions are not directly related to turfgrass but they improve our public relations and aesthetics of the facility.

Nineteen hundred and ninety-eight was very productive for the Turf Team making improvements at the Noer Facility. Next year will be another very productive year. Many turf researchers from around the country visit our facility every year telling us ours is one of the best. We're going to stay that way by continuing to make big improvements and accomplishments every year. ♣

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