



2004 WGCSA Fall Business Meeting and Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium

By **Dave Van Auken**, Golf Course Superintendent

There was something for everyone at this year's Golf Turf Symposium and WGCSA annual business meeting. Whether your interest lies in the research being conducted above ground as presented by Dr. John Stier and Dr. Geunhwa Jung at the annual business meeting, or you are intrigued by what's going on under the ground, "SOILS - Managing the Pressures," resulted in a "can't-miss" event.

Although attendance at the Symposium was as strong as ever, precious few opted to hear what their organization has been up to this past year and the direction they are charting for the future. This is good stuff, important stuff, and each and every one of you should make a conscious effort to attend. The executive committee and the board of directors works diligently on your behalf, researching, debating and voting on issues that have a direct impact on you and your chosen profession. Do you know the financial state of your association? Do you know where all the research dollars are going? Do you know the WGCSA mission as it relates to the national organization? Apathy abounds at a time when there should be unprecedented support and involvement. Time to get with the program folks.

Okay, enough soap box orating for now. I'm sure the opportunity to continue on this tirade will present itself in the near future unless the majority of you are willing to do something to stop it. Let's recap the outstanding program many of you did choose to attend, and rightfully so. I've been fortunate enough to attend the Golf Turf Symposium for the last 17 years and unbelievably, it just keeps getting better and better. The tireless efforts of the Symposium



It was entirely fitting that Dr. Wayne Kussow served as the keynote speaker in his final year at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Committee, consisting of Shelly Biro — Milorganite, Dave Brandenburg - Rolling Meadows GC, Rod Johnson, — Pine Hills CC, Mike Lyons — Old Hickory GC, (The Late) Wayne Otto — Turfgrass Support Services Inc., Danny Quast — DHD Tree Products, Pat Sisk — Milwaukee CC, Bob Vavrek — USGA Green Section, Terry Ward — Brillion Turf Division and Bruce Worzella — West Bend CC should be noted by each and everyone of us. It's above and beyond the call to duty and they deserve our gratitude. So next time you bump into one of these talented and generous individuals, thank them. The list of speakers and the breadth of information they presented was truly outstanding. Whether you consider yourself a seasoned veteran or you are relatively new to the trade, there was a lot to review and learn this year.

Dr. Wayne Kussow set the tone on the first day with the complexi-



A favorite Symposium speaker, the USGA's Jim Moore.

ties of our terra firma environment. Basic information presented by Dr. Kussow in Soils 301 revealed just how complex this science is. Jim Moore of the USGA Green Section let us know that there is so much more to know. Common practices and construction guidelines are constantly being updated and amended for our benefit. I personally thought this was great material. We were privileged to have Dr. Bob Carrow of the University of Georgia join us and share with us some of the newer ideas surfacing in the world of organic matter. I also thought there were some interesting concepts exposed by Dr. Jim Murphy of Rutgers University. Some of what he said was different from what I have heard in the past but it certainly reinforced the importance of open-mindedness.

The second day brought us just as an impressive list of speakers and topics. If you missed Dave Swift's breakfast talk, you missed any excel-

Dr. Bob Carrow shared a lot of his research in soil science issues from the University of Georgia.



Rutger University's Jim Murphy brought great expertise to the Symposium.

lent lecture. Needless to say, it was interesting and I'm grateful Dave took the time to share with us. Phil Brown of Clemson University spoke on compaction and gave us some additional information to use in our ongoing battle to features of the golf course in order to make it better. In retrospect, how many of you wished you had brought your owner or

green committee chairman with you for this meeting? Dr. Jim Murphy and Dr. Bob Carrow each graced our stage a second time to speak on organic and inorganic amendments and topdressing respectively. What a privilege to have these educators come to Wisconsin and share their insights with us.

Finally, some of our fellow super-

intendents braved the stage to discuss issues involving aerification and different approaches to this task. I took something home from each one of these talented individuals and when I got home I ran my electric pink highlighter over their names in the directory for quick future reference. I was personally grateful for





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their contribution to the program. I hope you were too. Bob Vavrek put it all in a nutshell for us and, as always, with his own running commentary. Bob is also a gift to our area and an undeniable resource. Use him wisely.

So there you have it. This year's annual business meeting and golf turf symposium. Let's hope it took some of the pressure off each and every one of you who attended. ♣




Phil Brown shared his research work from Clemson University.



The Whistling Straits staff that made the 2004 PGA Championship so memorable: L to R — Jeffrey Rottier, Kyle Jacobsen, Al Bancroft, Dave Swift, Grant Davey, Michael Lee, and Tony Rzdski. Mike spoke about the PGA before the lectures started and introduced his staff at that time.



The always popular roundtable discussion included golf course superintendents Mark Pettigoue, Kurt Thuemmel and Pat Sisk.




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