



# Exciting Year Ahead for the WTA

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The WTA has big plans for a very exciting 2007, with some big changes in-store for 4 events. The year started out with the Winter Turfgrass and Greenscape EXPO, followed by the biannual Homeowner Turfgrass Field Day in the spring, the professional turf manager's Summer Field Day, and the Golf 'Fundraiser for the Fellowship' in the fall.

EXPO 2007 will be over by the time this article appears, but it's not too early to start planning for EXPO 2008. Your UW Turf Team and WTA Board are meeting in January to make plans for next year's show. They're meeting earlier than ever and have added new Soil Science Department professor Dr. Doug Soldat to the committee to help brainstorm for the best turf education possible for 2008. Education is foremost on the committee's agenda but other factors of EXPO will likewise be discussed. One of the discussions will be location. Is it time to move the conference to another venue? In '07, we changed the format of the trade show to be table top displays only. If this is successful, EXPO will not need the large exhibition center that a full blown trade show needs, and it could be moved to other convention centers around the state. Stay tuned and call the Noer Facility if you have opinions to make EXPO the best.

Next on the WTA calendar is the biannual Homeowner Turfgrass Field Day which is conducted in cooperation with the UW Extension. This event is held every other year at the Noer Facility for the general public to learn about caring for their lawns at home. Traditionally this event was held in the late summer to coincide with the professional turf-

grass field day, but we've realized that homeowners are more interested in improving their lawns in the spring. Subjects covered include how to establish a new or rejuvenate an old lawn, and how to choose the best turfgrass. Other subjects include managing problems with turf diseases, insects and weeds, in addition to teaching how to do a soil tests, interpret the results, and fertilize to maximize turf health. Yet more topics include complimenting traditional lawns with prairies or ornamental grasses. Lastly homeowners are encouraged to bring questions and yard samples so our panel of experts can suggest ways to improve their lawn's condition. The date for Homeowner Turfgrass Field Day has not been decided yet but will likely occur in late May.

In summer, the WTA shifts its focus from homeowners to professional turf managers. This year's annual WTA Summer Field Day will combine with Turf Producers International and the Midwest Sod Council to form a mega field day on Thursday, July 26th. The Summer Field Day trade show segment usually takes place on one acre of turf that compliments the research tour segment. The research tour will still be held this year but the trade show will expand to 15 acres of land! The huge trade show is needed to display and demonstrate all the equipment used in sod production around the world. Field Day '07 will be very exciting as it unites all turfgrass industries in one location.

The year will finish with the most fun event, the ever popular Golf 'Fundraiser for the Fellowship' at the Blackwolf Run, Meadow Valleys Course on Thursday, October 11th. This course is so special that nine of

its holes played host to the 1998 U.S. Women's Open. Mike Lee hosted the WTA Fundraiser five years ago on Meadow Valleys and we are appreciative that he has once again invited us back. The Kohler courses are such a pleasure to play and our scores should be that much better having played the course before. This golf outing has sold out for five years in a row, partially because of the terrific host venues and partially because of its fundraising goal of supporting turfgrass research into the future.

These four events make for a busy and exciting year for the WTA. We hope you are able to attend all of them. They will provide great turfgrass management information for an area as small as your backyard to something as large as a world-wide sod production industry and everything in between. Then to finish the year, there's a fun round of golf awaiting you and your friends at Blackwolf Run. ♣

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