

Impact of One Visionary Thought on the UW Turfgrass Research!



By Dr. Geunhwa Jung, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Our field day on August 12, 2003 was very impressive and successful. Our research reputation is rapidly growing every year. I heard nothing but good comments such as excellent organization and coordination, researchers' great enthusiasm, groups of active participants, and most of all, a variety of ongoing and new research projects. The weather was another bonus.

This year's field day was special for me because of someone's visionary idea in the area of turfgrass breeding, which will impact the course of UW-Madison turfgrass research history. I would like to introduce you to the person playing a pivotal role in turfgrass breeding. His name is Dr. Mike Casler, formerly in the Dept. of Agronomy and now a scientist at USDA-ARS, U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center, UW-Madison. The story goes back to seven years ago when Dr. John Stier was newly hired as a UW-Madison turfgrass management specialist. One important conversation between these two scientists involved the hope of changing the history of the UW-Madison turfgrass research program and reaping benefits for the Wisconsin turfgrass industry in the future.

What a historical moment that was! Furthermore, a few years later the Plant Pathology Department hired me as a turfgrass pathologist who had formal training on breeding and genetics of disease resistance using molecular techniques. The central disciplines of plant breeding are agronomy, plant pathology, entomology, soil science, and horticulture. Knowledge provided by a number of scientific disciplines is needed for developing new cultivars.


Furthermore, because of the ini-

tial foundational work of the bentgrass breeding at the UW-Madison, the USGA funded a three year research project called "Midwest Bentgrass Breeding Consortium" led by Dr. Mike Casler as a leading principal investigator along with Drs. Chris Williamson and Geunhwa Jung at the UW-Madison, Dr. Andy Hamblin at the University of Illinois, and Suleiman Bughrara at the Michigan State University.

At the field day it was a daunting experience for me to see how the vision germinated from the seed is now growing bit by bit. I am confident that the UW-Madison turfgrass program will be different from yesterday and keep making positive spins. Many thanks to the Wisconsin industries' active and persistent participation to support the UW-Madison research. As results of the team development, I am confident that the turfgrass industry will

greatly benefit from research results.

I was very excited at the field day because I had the privilege to introduce to you our first genetic bentgrass population planted at the O.J. Noer. Briefly, we are trying to understand the mechanisms of host (bentgrass) and pathogen (dollar spot in this case) interaction using DNA techniques and advance a step-by-step progress of developing disease resistant creeping bentgrass cultivars. Even though the project that I presented represented Nanda Chakraborty's Ph.D. research (one of my Ph.D. graduate students), the whole project was initiated and will continue to be lead by the group of UW-Madison researchers.

With someone's visionary ideas, the UW-Madison turfgrass research program is now balanced and will continue to grow and grow. Again, thank you for your patience and support. 



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A "Grand" Grand Opening

By **Monroe S. Miller**, *Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club*

For me, the grand opening of The Bull at Pinehurst Farms will rank near the top of the many great golf events I have attended in my career. The August 18th event offered the sort of experience you get at The Masters, The US Open, the WSGA Centennial, the GCSAA 75th anniversary celebration, visits to some of America's great golf courses, and a day with H.W. Wind. And more. Let me tell you a little about it.

Since we had a major outing at our course on that Monday and because we were already losing employees to the upcoming school semester, we all pitch in to get the golf course ready - me included. I even went to the course late Sunday afternoon to get my part of the preparations done.

No matter how well Monday morning went, I was doomed to be late for the start of the grand opening activities. By 10:30 I could see we were in good shape for an 11:30 simultee and took off for home to get cleaned up.

The trip to northeastern Wisconsin gets shorter each year as more and more miles of four-lane highway are completed. It is nearly four lanes to Fond du Lac now (US 151) and construction in that town is done. Highway 23, outside of Fondy and near Sheboygan, offers miles of four lanes. The Bull is only a few miles south of 23 on Highway 32, outside of Sheboygan Falls at the corner of Highways 32 and 28. I was there in a little over two hours.

Police vehicles and uniformed officers were at the entrance, and staff from The Bull checked names on the reservation list. I also produced my invitation. Although late, I was able to park close to the clubhouse.

My first impression was, "WOW!" The clubhouse is on a promontory and each nine falls away dramatically from there. South of the clubhouse is what I speculate to be the farm buildings which were previously the center of operations of this property.

The owners are David Bachmann Sr. and David Bachmann Jr. They were known worldwide as

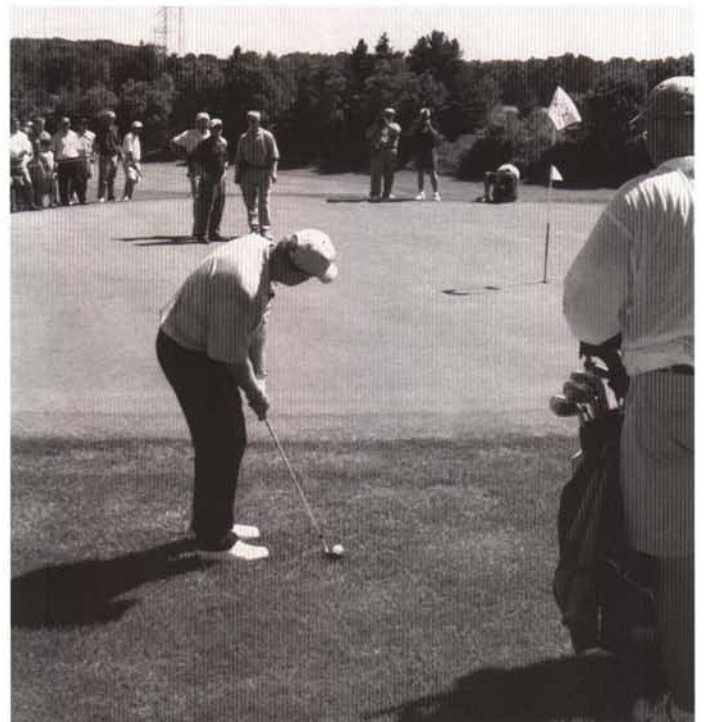


Looking down and back from 9 green to 9 tee.

breeders of purebred Holsteins, and decided to get into the golf course business. They surely did that in first class style.

Jack Nicklaus' design firm was chosen to design the golf course, and the grand opening seemed to be his final walk through. He did that by playing an 18-hole exhibition round, from the back tees, with Tony Rzedzki, David Bachmann Jr., Nicklaus design associates Chris Cochran and Chris Rule

and golf pro David Bruce close at hand. They were in conversation with Jack most of the time. Although most of the talk was private, we were literally next to them and could hear Jack's questions and suggestions. Tony was all business and I suspect he may have enjoyed the day less than the rest of us. He was, after all, working.



Jack Nicklaus used to chip these in, but not anymore!



Jack and Tony discuss a golf course issue during the grand opening exhibition.



The grand opening at The Bull was a work day for Tony Rzadzki.



The conversation here dealt with a shade issue on the 13th green.

The course was primed for the event and Tony had it in excellent condition. Jack was wearing a microphone and talked to the audience about design, reasons for placing features where they did, and how to play the holes.

The Nicklaus firm had a premier piece of property to work with, and it covers over 400 acres. It has substantial grade changes (making it a tough course to walk), wooded areas, wetlands, fields and pastures, and even the Onion River running through it. The only distraction to me was a repeater tower and some heavy electrical transmission lines. There seemed no reason for them to move a lot of soil, given the wonderful natural topography, and apparently they did not. It is like the holes were there and they searched them out and found them.

On this day, which was really warm, the focus was on Mr. Nicklaus. I'd read that he could be a little gruff, but that wasn't the case this day. He was very friendly and outgoing and self-deprecating, recognizing he was among adoring fans who laughed at his every joke and applauded nearly every shot. He was, in every way, a regular guy.

There was a young boy who was particularly taken by Jack and followed him like a little puppy dog the whole way around the golf course. At one point, on the walk from 10 green to 11 tee, he asked Jack, "if Tiger

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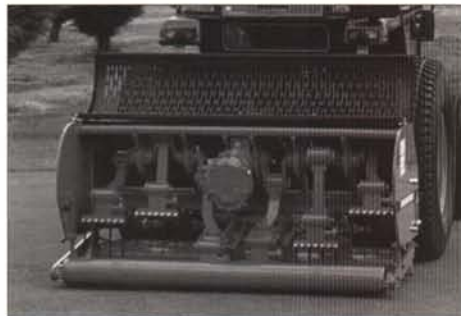
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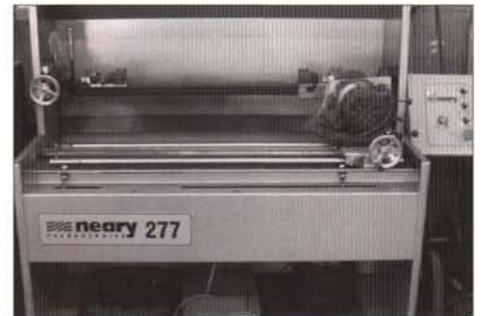
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was playing today, who do you think would win?"

"I would," Jack replied with all seriousness.

"But he's a lot younger than you," the lad said.

"Son, if you don't believe you can beat everybody, then you won't beat anybody." They were words of wisdom he clearly believed.

On the 18th hole, Jack hit his second shot a little right of the green onto a steep bank and into some tall grass. He chipped it up close to the pin. At that point he credited his crew, Dave Bachmann and Tony for the fine work they had done in bringing this beautiful course to fruition. He then said, "this is the way you finish the 18th on a day like this." He stood over the ball, but instead of tapping it in, he smacked it clear across the green to the boy who had followed him and talked with him all day. Then he autographed the ball.

It was a great way to end a perfect day. Jack stayed until every hat, glove, and ball was signed. He even autographed the four books I lugged to Sheboygan Falls with me.

Days like this one don't happen very often to us; I felt very fortunate to have been a part of it. The ride home was sweet. ♡



The 17th green - note the electrical transmission lines.



Mr. Nicklaus finished his round of golf on the 18th green with wonderful comments about The Bull.



L-R: Nicklaus design coordinator Chris Rule, Tony Rzadzki, golf pro David Bruce, owner David Bachmann and Nicklaus design associate Chris Cochran.



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2003 WGCSA Monthly Meeting Schedule

Mon, Sept 22: Nakoma GC, Madison, WI

- Superintendent Tournament
- Speaker Bob Vavrek, "Year in Review"

October 3/4th: Greenwood Hills CC, Wausau, WI
Dinner Dance

Wed, Oct 8: The Bull at Pinehurst Farms, Sheboygan Falls, WI

- WTA Fundraiser Golf Outing

Tues, Oct 14: Racine CC, Racine, WI

- Superintendent/Guest
- Speaker Mark Kuhns "Restoration and Renovation"

Tues/Wed, Nov 18, 19:

Symposium, American Club, Kohler, WI



Newman Fellowship Becomes a Reality

By **Monroe S. Miller**, Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club.

The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association's Summer Field Day on August 12th was selected as the site of the announcement that a Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship, named in honor of Dr. Robert C. Newman, was established with the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association. The Newman family and the WTA are cooperating with the funding of the fellowship.

The Newman Fellowship is housed in the Department of Horticulture and will provide money from the endowment to pay the research assistantship for a graduate student in turfgrass science in that department. A small amount of money is also provided for research supplies and expenses.

The Newman family and the WTA will provide \$250,000 of the endowment, an amount of money that will in turn be matched by the Graduate School and by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF). Investment earnings from the \$500,000 fund the research assistantship.

The Newman Fellowship is the second of four that the WTA has set its sights on funding. The first

was set in the Department of Soil Science and named for Professor Wayne R. Kussow. Plant Pathology and Entomology are the other two departments where the WTA wants WDGs in the next four years.

It was wonderful that Bob and Diane Newman were able to attend the presentation at field day, stay for lunch and visit with old friends.

Dr. Lloyd Peterson, Dean Elton Aberle, UW Foundation director Marcy Heim, and Dean Musbach of the WTA all participated in the presentation of framed awards. One will hang in the vestibule of the Noer Facility headquarters building. Those of us who are former students of Dr. Newman are especially pleased for him. 🌿



Diane and Bob Newman with the Noer building in the background.



The UWF's Marcy Heim with Dr. Newman.



CALS Dean Aberle presents the WTA with a plaque recognizing the Newman Fellowship. It now hangs in the Noer building.



Dean Musbach represented the WTA.



Dr. Newman and friends — Kussow, Harrison, Miller, Peterson and Smith.

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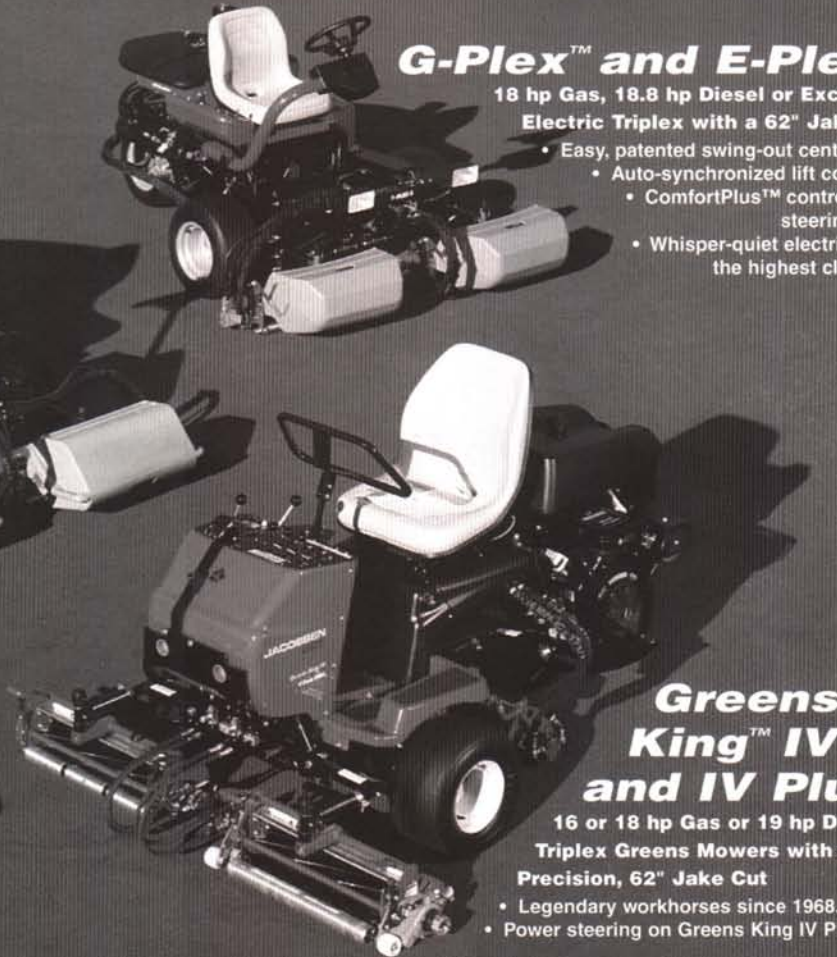


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Dr. Robert Newman Honored at Field Day and Other Highlights from a Wonderful Day

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

WTA Summer Field Day 2003 had all the elements of being a perfect day. The UW-Madison turfgrass researchers disseminated plentiful turfgrass research ideas. There were over 300 interested turfgrass professionals ready to soak up those ideas. The trade show was large with close to 40 different exhibitors who had a broad range of information and product ideas for the attendees. Even the weather was perfect with temperatures in the mid 70's and overcast skies. But the highlight of the day for many in the audience was witnessing a most respected and former professor of ours get a new scholarship named after him.

Dr. Robert Newman was honored in a short ceremony after the morning research tours. He was named on a fellowship that will forever provide support to future turfgrass graduate students in the Department of Horticulture. These students will discover new technologies for turf managers to use well into the future. The industry appreciates the funding support of the Robert Newman family and the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association for sponsoring the fellowship. Research results from the Robert Newman Distinguished Graduate Fellowship will be presented at one of the next Summer Field Days.

Research information from the fellowship that was given three years ago, named after Dr. Wayne Kussow, was presented during this year's research tour. Doug Soldat was the graduate student recipient of the first Wayne Kussow fellowship. Doug gave a presentation about using several inorganic amendments in the root zones of sand putting greens for better nutrient and moisture retention. That was just one of the many

interesting talks given during the research tours.

There were seven other presentations during the research tour aimed at the golf turf industry and eight for the landscape, sports turf, and sod industries. Golf subjects included mapping for dollar spot resistance genes in bentgrass, fungicide evaluations, mowing reductions with plant growth regulators, and calibrating soil tests to achieve better putting green establishment, among others. The subjects for the landscape, sod, and sports turf tour included herbicides for controlling bentgrass in established lawns, managing new heat tolerant bluegrasses, influence of buffer strips for water quality and surface runoff, turfgrass species and management, and others. A description of all these presentations was outlined

in the field day tour book and results will be given at the Turfgrass and Greenscape EXPO in January.

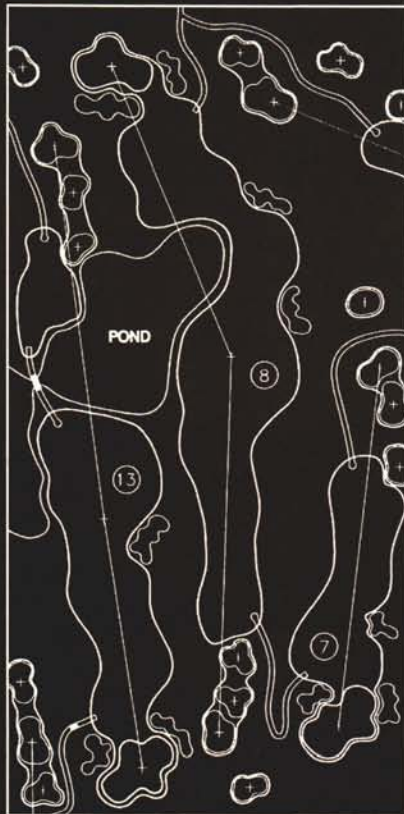
If you didn't get all your questions answered during the morning research tours, there was the afternoon ask-the-expert period. That period allowed time for you to have one-on-one conversations with the professors and other researchers about any turfgrass subjects of concern you had. A wildlife habitat tour also took place in the afternoon that showed attendees how to create more wildlife friendly environments on their properties.

But the main activity in the afternoon was the trade show. Many attendees use the trade show to comparison shop among the many vendors present. There are so many different products,



Dr. Newman commenting on having a Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship named for him, while his wife Diane and professor emeritus Lloyd Peterson look on.

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services, and supplies to find out about during the WTA Field Day trade show. And the exhibitors were all eager to help solve your needs and show you their most recent offerings. They also did the turf industry a great service by helping sponsor the Field Day through their registration fees and silent auction. I hope you return the favor by shopping with them throughout the year. The 2003 Field Day exhibitors are listed below.

The whole field day was superb this year. The only negative aspect was the numbers of attendees and

exhibitors were down slightly this year. There were 301 attendees compared to last year's 334. The number of companies represented in the trade show was down one to 38 from last year's 39, and the number of sales personnel went from 93 to 78. But that didn't dampen the enthusiasm of a wonderful and educational Summer Field Day. Just seeing Dr. Newman being honored would have been enough for me — but there was so much more. Attendees, vendors, and guests left with smiles on their faces. ♣

**2003 Wisconsin Turfgrass Association
Summer Field Day Exhibitors**

Be sure to call these Summer Field Day exhibitors any time you need supplies, equipment, or advice on growing better turfgrass.

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| Herford Norby Golf Architects | Vissil International |
| Horst Distributing | Waupaca Sand & Solutions |
| J W Turf | WDATCP |
| Johnson Turf Equipment | Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association |
| K E I | Wisconsin Turf Equipment |
| Lebanon Turf Products | Wisconsin Turfgrass Association |
| Lesco | Wolosek Landscaping & Golf Course Materials |
| McFarlanes | |
| Miller & Associates - Sauk Prairie | |