




Figure 3: Pythium blight observed on recently seeded bentgrass plants, where their juvenile state, lush state, and ample water make them especially susceptible to the disease.

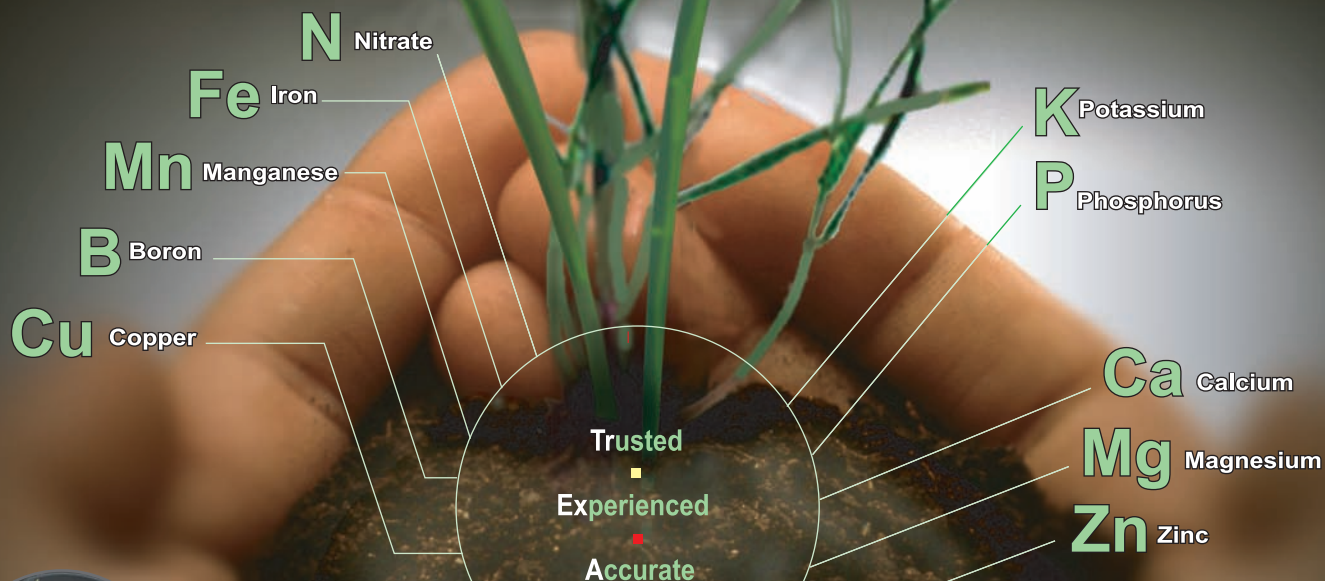
affected, it is humbling at the level of industry support the Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab continues to receive. I will list each one of our contract members in the TDL Year in Review issue, but in the meantime would like to single out a couple large gifts the TDL has received this year. As they have done for several years, the WGCSA donated

\$1,500 for general support of the TDL in 2009. The Northern Great Lakes GCSA donated \$2,500 in 2009 to the TDL for general use and to partially fund a study researching disease tolerance of modern bentgrass cultivars to snow molds. For the second year in a row, Dennis Robinson of Horst Distributing has donated the proceeds of Aquatrols 'Turbucks' program earmarked for research to be presented to the TDL, a gift in excess of \$1,300! These gifts are instrumental in keeping diagnostic submission fees low while still maintaining the excellent quality of service you have come to expect and deserve. Please remember these organizations and companies when considering the benefits of membership or purchasing a product, for without their support our state industry would be much less vibrant.

References:

- Couch, H. B. 1995. Diseases of Turfgrasses, 3rd ed. Krieger Publishing Co., Malabar, FL.
- Smiley, R.W., Dernoeden, P.H., & Clarke, B. B. 2003. Compendium of Turfgrass Diseases, 3rd ed. APS Press, St Paul, MN.
- Vincelli, P., Powell, A. J. 2007. Chemical control of turfgrass diseases, 2007. Cooperative Extension Service, University of Kentucky - College of Agriculture. 

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North Shore Country Club – Mequon / October 5

Where: North Shore Country Club
 3100 W. Country Club Drive
 Mequon, WI 53092

When: Monday, October 5, 2009
 9:00-10:30 Registration
 9:30-10:30 Buffet Brunch
 10:00-10:45 Range and practice
 11:00 4-Person Best Ball Shotgun Start
 After Golf Hors-d' Oeuvres, Reception, Prizes, Cash Bar

What: Golf, Cart, Practice Range,
 Brunch, Door Prizes, Golf
 Awards, Hors d' Oeuvres

Cost: \$125 per person

North Shore Country Club - Mequon

North Shore Country Club is a championship golf course that has hosted the Greater Milwaukee Open, the Wisconsin State Open and the State Amateur Championship. The club has recently undertaken an ambitious plan to rebuild all 27 holes based on the Master Plan of nationally recognized Golf Course Architect, Ron Forse. Renovation of the first nine holes began last fall and reopened this spring to rave reviews. The new course features a unique bunker style, multiple tees and strategically placed water hazards that challenge every caliber of golfer.

Director of Grounds and Facilities, Bob Erdahl and Golf Course Superintendent, Garrett Luck, invite you to enjoy their golf course and help support turfgrass research in Wisconsin. Proceeds from the golf outing will be used by UW-Madison scientists to develop new techniques for managing turfgrass in the most environmentally responsible and cost effective manner.

The \$125 registration fee includes a buffet brunch before golf, practice range, golf, cart, hors d' oeuvres after golf, door prizes, and event awards. You may register by yourself or as a group.

ENTRY FORM – WTA Golf Outing Fundraiser

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

of People Attending ____ x \$125 per person = _____

You May Also Sponsor A Golf Hole or Make An Additional Tax Deductible Contribution

Optional Tee Sign Golf Hole Sponsorship x \$100 = _____

Name To Be Printed on Tee Sign --- _____

or Additional Tax Deductible Contribution = _____

- Please make check payable to WTA and return to 2502 Highway M, Verona, WI 53593
- Refer questions about the outing to Audra Anderson at @ 608-845-6536 or ajander2@wisc.edu
- Registration deadline is Tuesday, September 29, 2009



Come Play the Newly Renovated North Shore Country Club

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

Participants in the 2009 WTA Golf Fundraiser will have the opportunity to play one of Wisconsin's premier golf courses – North Shore Country Club in Mequon. Event hosts Bob Erdahl, Director of Grounds and Facilities, and Garrett Luck, Golf Course Superintendent have a wonderful day planned for you. The event occurs on October 5, 2009 and a registration form is included here (on left).

North Shore Country Club is a championship golf course that has hosted the Greater Milwaukee Open, Wisconsin State Open, and State Amateur Championship. The club has recently undertaken an ambitious plan to rebuild all 27 holes based upon the Master Plan of nationally recognized Golf Course Architect, Ron Forse. Renovation of the first nine holes began last fall and reopened this spring to rave reviews. The renovated course features a unique bunker style, multiple tees and strategically placed water hazards that challenge every caliber of golfer.

For \$125, you will be treated to a delicious buffet brunch before golf, practice range, and golf with a cart. After golf you'll enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres and hopefully go home with one of the valuable door prizes and/or golf awards. Many door prizes are worth more than the cost of registration. You may register as a foursome or by yourself. The event is a four person best ball format.

Your registration fee not only provides you the above benefits, but also supports the Distinguished Graduate Fellowship in Turfgrass Research program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Fellowships include the Wayne R. Kusow, Terry and Kathleen Kurth, Robert C. Newman, and John and Flora Burbee Fellowships. No other turf school in the country has this many fellowships for turfgrass research. These fellowships facilitate the development of new techniques for managing turfgrass in the most environmentally responsible and cost effective manner.

Several of the studies funded by the turfgrass fellowships include a comparison between turfgrass and rain gardens to manage urban runoff, an assessment of different inorganic amendments to improve putting green construction mixtures, and an investigation to improve soil testing and soil test calibration for growing turf in Wisconsin. Two more studies began in 2008. One investigates the optimum time for applying late fall fertilization from both an in-the-field and growth chamber

design. The other study explores water conservation through rooftop collection of rainwater and subsurface drip irrigation.

The golf outing isn't all about funding research though. It's also about spending time with friends to enjoy a round of golf near the end of the season and this golf course will not disappoint! I hope you are able to attend the WTA Golf Fundraiser at North Shore Country Club to partake in this truly outstanding course and fundraiser. You may contact Audra Anderson at 608-845-6536 or ajander2@wisc.edu if you have questions. Whether it's your first WTA Golf Fundraiser or you've attended them all, we hope you won't miss this one. 🌱



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Global What?

By Bob Vavrek, Senior Agronomist, USGA Green Section

There is still plenty of residual winter injury affecting playing conditions at numerous courses across the upper Midwest. The exceptionally slow recovery of winter damage last year and again this year due to unusually cool spring weather sure makes you wonder just what proponents of global warming are referring to.

The creeping bentgrass in old bent/*Poa* greens usually requires several consecutive days of temperatures in the mid 80's accompanied by mild nights before a consistent rate of vigorous growth occurs. Much of the Region experienced nighttime temperatures cold enough to produce frost delays well into late May and early June. Only recently has the growth rate of bentgrass begun to approach the growth rate of *Poa annua*. Golfers have suffered through several months of thin, bumpy greens and their patience is wearing thin.

Plugging out the largest of the bare areas on greens is about the only good option available now that warmer, more humid weather has finally arrived. Some courses continue to seed into large areas of damage thinking that the warm weather will finally provide the right conditions for rapid germination and establishment. However, the frequent irrigation employed to keep the seedbed moist during July and August can create ideal conditions for algae.

Once algae gains a firm foothold on a thin green, the warm weather and frequent watering makes it difficult

to control. Dry out the greens and the new bentgrass seedlings disappear. It's a Catch 22 that has many superintendents wondering why they didn't just plug or sod the damage earlier. Mancozeb and chlorothalonil can be used to slow down the growth of algae. A light dusting of sand to cover and shade the algae can be helpful as well.

Two consecutive years of extensive winterkill has more than a few old courses considering the options of rebuilding or regrassing greens despite the considerable expense and down time associated with either project. A good discussion regarding why some greens need to be rebuilt can be found on the USGA Web site. http://www.usga.org/course_care/articles/construction/greens/Determining-the-Need-for-Reconstruction

An excellent article that discusses why some greens can be resurfaced and why others need to be completely rebuilt can be found at <http://turf.lib.msu.edu/2000s/2006/060101.pdf>

Schedule a Turf Advisory Service visit to document the need for putting green renovation and to help determine the best option, resurfacing greens or rebuilding greens, for your golf course. There is still time to arrange a visit this season, call the North Central Region Wisconsin office for the next available date. 🌱



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Education is Key in a Recession

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager, Rolling Meadows Golf Course

Over the past few years budget cuts are a common occurrence in all industries not just golf. Each season the cuts go deeper and affect more of the operation. Labor and capital purchases are usually the first to be cut because they are easy to see on a spread sheet. Lucky superintendents are able to select the cuts themselves while others have cuts handed down by upper managers.

In the best operations, budgeting is a joint effort between all parties. However club politics is food for another column. In reality, if the revenue is not there cuts have to be made to expenses and the decisions are not easy for anyone. One trend that concerns me is the cut to continuing education funds.

Continuing education may be considered optional by many managers but in reality the cut may cost clubs more than they gain by not realizing the far reaching setbacks of eliminating this valuable asset.

The obvious cost to reducing education is a reduction of new ideas and methods to produce the playing fields we provide. No matter how long we have been in the business or how many classes we have taken in the past, as professionals we need to keep growing. A tight economy it is not the time to reduce education, but it is the time to increase education. The more we learn, the better prepared we will be to make sound financial and agronomic decisions to improve our clubs.

A prime example is the recently held WTA Field Day. Yes it is a day away from work and it comes with a small admission fee but the

research presented is up to the minute cutting edge. Research on plant varieties and species, fungicides, shade, wetting agents and soils are just the beginning of what this event has to offer. From the plots and research it is easy to go back to your club and modify your programs to reduce costs in product and labor.

Another example would be the regular monthly golf events the WGCSA hosts. You or your accountant may ask how you can learn anything from a day playing golf. On the surface the meetings have speakers covering a variety of timely subjects. However important the knowledge we obtain from the speakers is, the ideas and

knowledge we receive from viewing another golf course is just as important.

I can honestly say I have never played a course where I have not learned from the superintendent by viewing their playing surface and surrounds. In rare cases I learn what not to do, but usually I see and learn a valuable method of operation or feature on the golf course that will work at our facility.

For members facing financial cuts to education you may need to look at lower cost opportunities to improve yourself. Free or low cost events sponsored by vendors provide a way to keep up with the latest trends and information

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while saving the facility funds. Just keep in mind that some of the information presented may be slanted to increase sales for a particular product. Not that the information is incorrect or wrong but it just requires a watchful eye and additional time as you compare what you were told with independent research.


GCSAA offers many online courses and on-demand webcasts that can be used at a time and place convenient to you. These sessions are a great opportunity to increase your value to the club and share this knowledge with your staff. As our positions as turf managers change and expand we also need to look at classes outside of the agronomic field. Classes at a local college or tech school can be taken on topics such as human

interaction, communication and business. Most superintendents realize we spend more and more time managing people and facilities not just maintaining the links.

Recently the WGCSA has been recognized by our national association as a leader in the number of continuing education opportunities we offer our members. One of the hidden costs of cuts to continuing education is the potential loss of opportunities. As attendance at regularly held events shrinks because of budget cuts or lack of desire to learn new things, fewer events will be offered. This change will affect us all for years to come.

Continuing education is similar to infrastructure. If your club goes year after year of using equipment and buildings without upgrading and maintaining one day your

equipment or building will no longer be serviceable and will need a total replacement. It is the same for us as turf and people managers. To cut education out for a year or two probably will not end our careers but if we stop bettering ourselves for too long soon we will be obsolete.

There is no easy answer to budget cuts and the deeper they go the harder they are. If the funds are not available there is no money tree to go borrow from. Regardless if you are the final decision maker or a just a salesman selling your budget requests to someone else, keep in mind the importance of continuing education for yourself and your staff during the upcoming budget process. 

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My J-O-B

By **Jake Schneider**, Assistant Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club

If I were to question our golf pro if he's ever been asked if he was really good at growing grass or if he could mow straight, wide passes when he told someone what he did for a living, I suspect that he'd look at me quizzically, say "no", and ask me if I'd been drinking. Why is it, then, that one of the most common responses (next to "What do you do in the winter?" and "Did you have to go to school for that?") that people give when I tell them what my job is is, "So, are you a good golfer?" Oh, the looks of disappointment when I tell them that I usually shoot within five strokes of 90. Once, just once, I'd like for someone's initial response to be something that at least pertains to growing grass; that person will receive \$5 and a firm handshake. However, to be honest, some of the more recent interesting queries to my career choice are a whole lot better than the first time that I was questioned on the subject.

About 10 years ago, my dear mother and I were driving to LaCrosse to take a campus tour at UW-L. At the time, the sports fanatic in me had me thinking about pursuing a career in Sports Management (which undoubtedly has a much cooler ring to it than Horticulture and Soil Science). On this drive, I decided to tell my normally mild-mannered mom, who's drank approximately 6 beers and said 3 profane words in her 50-something years on this planet, that after years of being brain-washed by Scott Schaller as a summer seasonal at North Shore I was thinking about pursuing Turf Management. Her ultra-supportive response? "What the hell is that?"

Don't get me wrong, I love what I do, but it is kind of any odd job that we have. And from my experiences, it's one that isn't very well understood by the general public, or mothers of children who worked on a golf course crew for 3 years before deciding that they wanted to go to school for it, for that matter. Mostly, I blame the word "superintendent." When most people think of superintendents, my guess is that school superintendents, police superintendents, and construction superintendents pop in their minds. While I do agree that superintendent is an appropriate term for what it is that we do, I sometimes wonder if this term hasn't made it more difficult for us to become well-recognized for the vital role that we play in creating memorable golf experiences. To me, golf course superintendent sounds too synonymous to golf course general manager. But, I'm sure that someone who knows a whole lot more about public relations than I do (which wouldn't take much) decided that "superintendent" was our best bet. If I were to tell

someone that I'm the assistant golf course greenskeeper or the assistant director of grounds at Blackhawk C.C., the questions about my lackluster golf game would likely be minimized, and I would no longer have to tell people that I simply "grow grass."

But, for now, I guess that it is what it is; I'm an assistant golf course superintendent, and I'm damn proud of it. At least my mom now knows what that entails, and she hasn't cussed at me about it in years. So, I've got that goin' for me, which is nice. 🌱

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On Board and Ready to Go!

By **Brett Grams**, Chapter Manager, WGCSA

Editor's note: This month we welcome Brett as our Chapter Manager and a new regular feature in The Grass Roots. As Chapter Manager Brett's columns will feature association news and happenings.

As most of you know the WGCSA Board of Directors have spent a considerable amount of time and effort over the past few years reviewing the best way to lead our storied and renowned association. The WGCSA board has created Mission and Vision statements, benchmarked and researched what other chapters have done to gain membership and exposure, and worked extensively with the staff of the GCSAA. This work was done to ensure the chapter maintains its high level of prominence in the golfing world both in WI and beyond. When the board came to the conclusion to hire management services I was very happy to provide my

ideas and interview for the opportunity to offer these services. It is exciting to be working with the WGCSA in offering the management services the board has requested and I want to assure the membership that I will do my very best in representing our organization while carrying out the directives of the board and the rest of the membership.

Those of you that have served on the WGCSA board or been a part of a committee understand the huge time commitment and dedication that is spent serving our association. For as long as I have been a member I have seen this type of dedication year in and year out and that is one of the strongest parts of our successful organization. On my first day working with WGCSA, the board asked me to begin working on the following projects. I wanted to give you an update as to our progress (in this first week of July).

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