

fed up with the company and unsure of how to proceed, they called us.


We made a site visit down to Illinois in August and immediately made the same diagnosis that many of you might already have made. Necrotic ring spot (*Ophiosphaerella korrae*), a common root-rotting disease of recently sodded Kentucky bluegrass, was causing the great majority of the damage to the turf. We informed them that this is a common event on sod, that fungicide applications are rarely the most effective form of control, and that proper cultural practices along with proper communication with the homeowners is the best method to combat the disease. We also noted that removing the top foot of soil and backfilling would do nothing to prevent necrotic ring spot from reforming on the next batch of installed sod. Contacting the TDL rather than listening to the landscape company in northern Illinois, saved them tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars.

While this is primarily an example for homeowners or landscapers, it provides an example to golf course superintendents as well that while the great majority of people you do business with are intelligent and have your best intention in mind, you might come across one in the future that has only dollar signs in his or her eyes. As a lab created and supported primarily by turfgrass managers, the TDL has only your interests in mind all the time.

These are just three specific examples of how the TDL can save you money in difficult economic times. Contract members with the lab get even more in the way of money-saving benefits, from the latest turfgrass research out of the University of Wisconsin to biweekly email updates throughout the growing season on what we're seeing and what to watch for. For more information on the Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab, or to download a contract membership form, visit our newly redesigned website at www.plantpath.wisc.edu/tld.

New Website! As I just mentioned above, the Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab has a new website for the first time in many years. While the design is new and will likely remain in place for several years, it is our hope that this site continues to evolve to meet the needs of its users. Likely improvements in the near future include updated disease keys and the ability to pay for samples and contracts right on the website. If you have ideas on how to improve the site for both professional and amateur turfgrass managers, please feel free to contact Paul Koch at 608-845-2535 or plk@plantpath.wisc.edu.

References:

- Kerns, J. P., Tredway, L. P. 2008. Pathogenicity of *Pythium* species associated with Pythium root dysfunction of creeping bentgrass and their impact on root growth and survival. Plant Disease. 92(6). 862-869. 

ELIMINATE GUESSWORK WHEN SPRING FEEDING

Spring fertilization varies greatly on a number of factors. Cultural practices performed, soil amendments made, irrigation and drainage upgrades, fertilizers applied, and what happened last fall plays a significant role with this season's success. However, having a sound fertility program will provide you with your best chance of success for the upcoming season.

Typically, spring applications are applied after the early flush of shoot growth has occurred, but predicting spring weather can be a challenge when it comes to soil and air temperature, and precipitation. That's why choosing a fertilizer that performs in cool climates is so vital.



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Regional Manager
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Still other products rely on a process called mineralization, depending on soil microbes to break down nitrogen. Whereas soil microbes aren't fully active until the soil temperature reaches 55 degrees – which might not happen until late spring depending on the region – UMAXX begins working immediately and is not dependent on soil temperature for nitrogen release.

Although fine-tuning a spring fertilization program varies on many factors, its importance will be felt all summer long and even into the fall. The benefit of using an all-weather, long-lasting performer such as UMAXX provides immediate benefits, as well as a positive long-term impact. UMAXX gives the freedom to apply as a nitrogen component in a blend or part of a soluble fertilizer program. UMAXX offers consistent performance regardless of temperature or application type.

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Double Duty

By Pat Norton, Golf Course Superintendent, Nettle Creek Golf Course

The constant, stable way of life centered around the seasons is one of the great attractions of being a golf course superintendent. Dad always looked at his golf course career as a series of segments...depending on which golf course was currently considered as his home. The similarities shared by each golf course far outweighed the differences...but it was the differences between golf courses that made everything so interesting.

Since moving down here to Illinois way back in 1994, this stable life has been very good to Dad and to his family. Dad has always had a good job, has always worked hard and been very devoted to Nettle Creek. He always realized that his position at NCCC was, and still is, the financial life blood of the family. He was always able to roll with the punches of being a part of a family owned public golf facility. He was able to take advantage of a few really good investments that will someday provide for a nice retirement nest egg for Mr. and Mrs....as a sort of long term thing to complement the short term thing known as the biweekly paycheck.

About fourteen months ago, Dad had to shift gears a little bit. Nettle Creek...the basis of Dad's working and golf course world...was turned over to a golf management company. The owners of that golf course,,like so many others...were hurting financially to the point of running out of possible solutions. They tried, in vain, to outright sell the golf course, but to no avail.

So, as of January 1, 2008, Dad began working for the golf management company. And, after fourteen months of adapting to company rules, procedures, and operating philosophies...Dad realized that working in the corporate golf world was...in many ways...better than working in the family owned public golf world. He really liked working for the company...which was full of people who understood public golf. Dad did go through a quick period of readjustment in which he had to adjust to their higher standards of operation.


Dad was thrown another curveball at the beginning of this year. The company asked him if he would be interested in doing double duty. It meant that he would be responsible as superintendent at Nettle Creek in Morris and also at Ravisloe C.C. in Homewood...about 50 minutes east and in a south suburban Chicago location. Dad thought a bit...reflected on the economic times in which we all find ourselves...and instantly agreed that it would be a very good idea to keep his job and make himself more valuable and productive to his new company...

Dad started his new duties in late February...and so far says that things are quite interesting, challenging, and even fun! He also says to check back with him in late July...to see if his opinions have changed...

Dad and family have lived south of the border for about fifteen years now, but still strongly consider themselves Wisconsinites. At the same time, Dad is beginning to realize that he may finish out his career over the next fifteen years down here in the Land of Lincoln. With his new duties, he feels the pull of ChicagoLand all the more. He is an expressway traveler...and a faithful listener of WGN and WBBM. He still cannot decide between the Cubs and the White Sox...while still yearning to hear more about the Brewers as summer approaches. His truck radio stills tunes itself in to WTMJ to listen to pre-season games once in awhile.

So, even though the job and position have remained basically the same over all of these years...changes to the family are constantly happening. He and his faithful bride of 26 years are on the verge of experiencing the empty nest...with their youngest graduating this May from high school.

Children ultimately mature into young adults...eventually leave home...and start again the cycle of completing college and entering into the world. It seems like such a few short years ago that Mom and Dad were the wide eyed students enjoying life at UW-Madison...

Now Dad is the middle aged guy typing these paragraphs while wearing his reading glasses...and thinking that it's just about bedtime. He needs to get his sleep as he prepares for the fifty minute drive over to his new golf course tomorrow...early on a cold March morning. 



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Another Successful Performance in New Orleans

By **Bill Kreuser**, Badger Turf and Grounds Club

It has been a busy spring semester for the members of the Badger Turf and Grounds Club. The activity started well before the first day of class at the WTA Winter Expo. Several turfgrass students, studying both Soil Science and Horticulture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, received scholarships from the turfgrass industry. We would like to thank all of the scholarship donors for their continued generous support of turfgrass education at the UW. We are all grateful that the industry is willing to support its future members so adamantly.

The 'spring' semester started like it does every year in Wisconsin; cold and snow covered. In addition to studying for classes, many club members were actively studying for the Turf Bowl. Every year the turf program sends at least one team of four to the Golf Industry Show to compete in the annual Collegiate Turf Bowl. The Turf Bowl tests students' knowledge of all aspects of turfgrass science and business management. Club fundraising over the past year allowed the Badger Turf and Grounds Club to send two teams to participate. We are proud to inform the Wisconsin turfgrass industry that our team has placed in the top ten for the second year in a row. We would like to thank everyone that has helped and supported us to prepare for our success in the Turf Bowl.

All of the members that attended the show also enjoyed the educational and cultural experience that New Orleans provided. Members were present to celebrate Monroe Miller's 2009 Distinguish Service Award at the Opening Session. We also saw the newest products,



Badger Turf and Grounds Club members that attended the GIS in New Orleans.


The testing room after the four hour Turf Bowl examination.



Pat Bastron mans the clubs booth at the GIS.

ideas, and technology in turfgrass science on the trade show floor; including a robotic greensmower. Attending the show is always such an eye-opening experience. The cultural experience the city of New Orleans provided was equally eye-opening. We ate gumbo, oysters, and po'boys at the famous Johnny Po'boys. Mardi Gras excitement could be heard buzzing in the air while drinking a Hurricane at Pat O'Brien's on Bourbon Street. The trip benefited all of us professionally and personally.

Now that spring break is over the turf students are preparing for exams and the transition from the classroom back to the field. As the temperature outside continues to warm, the excitement to finish class and get back on to the course grows. We are sure that many of you feel the same. The Badger Turf and Grounds Club would like to wish everyone in the turfgrass industry a successful 2009 season.

More information can be found about the club at www.soils.wisc.edu/~turfclub/about.html 



2009 WGCSA Spring Business Meeting

By **Scott Bushman**, Golf Course Superintendent, Fox Valley Golf Club.

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendent Association started the 2009 meeting season with the annual spring business meeting held at the Ramada Hotel in Fond du Lac. 65 members enjoyed conversation, donuts and coffee before starting the morning education.

Dr. Chris Williamson, Department of Entomology, University of Wisconsin – Madison started the program with a discussion on the damage, controls and the management of sod webworms. He explained his project of studying 10 golf courses and the genera and species of the webworm moths that were captured and how they were captured.

He also reviewed how to locate and identify the pest causing turf problems with the magic recipe of a solution of 1oz of ultra joy dish detergent in one gallon of water sprinkled on the turf area. Not only will the sod webworms come to the surface but so will earthworms, cutworms, and black turfgrass ataenius adult beetles. Once the webworm population is determined there are many insecticides available for sod webworm control and research has shown applying products at dusk allows for better control because of the nighttime movement of the pest.

Usually worm and grub problems are noticed by damage from verte-

brate predators (skunks, raccoons etc) digging up the turf before the grass plants show signs of decline. Dr. Williamson's research has shown Milorganite and other similar fertilizers may be an effective method to reduce or eliminate the animal damage. Good response was seen through 21 days after treatment but that is dependent on rainfall and fertilizer application amounts.

Dr. Williamson also covered his favorite topic the Emerald Ash Borer. Actually since this was his 88th talk on the topic it is clear Chris wishes these little pests never made it into Wisconsin. He presented the methods of control, their effective-

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Dr. Jim Kerns on the topic of nutrients affect on turf diseases.



USGA Green Section Agronomist Bob Vavrek presents his "Year in Review"



Steve Able presents a check for \$3,005 from Reinders Inc's. Heritage & Daconil Program to President Dustin Riley.

ness and problems along with some determining factors of when and why to treat ash trees. In a golf course setting, treatment is only feasible for highly valuable trees for playability or sentimental reasons. Annual treatments are likely but injection treatments are showing they might last 3 years. Preventative treatments should not be needed until the borer is within a few miles of your property. Once a tree has 40% canopy dieback the best thing to do is perform basal pruning and cut it down.

Unfortunately not much can be done to stop the progression of this

pest. The signs of infestation are difficult to see until borer has been in a area for 3 or more years. The Emerald Ash Borer like many pests does not move itself into areas, we move it around by transporting products.

Dr. Jim Kerns, Pathology Department University of Wisconsin - Madison presented the relationship between mineral nutrition and turf-grass diseases. He talked about macro and micro nutrients and the roles they play in regards to plants disease susceptibility.

An interesting tip for field diag-

nosing the difference in chlorosis from a possible iron or nitrogen deficiency is how the older leaves look. In a weakened plant with a nitrogen deficiency, the chlorosis can be seen in the older leaves while the new leaves look healthy because nitrogen is able to move around in the plant and goes to the new leaves. Iron is not able to move in a plant that way so new and old leaves may show signs of chlorosis.

Jim would like to start studying nutrient levels shown by tissue testing and how different levels of nutrients effect plant disease. By formulating basic levels of nutrients golf course could pioneer results to reduce fungicide applications with an understanding of the correlation between plant tissue nutrient levels and diseases.

Our final speaker of the day was Bob Vavrek, USGA Greens Section Agronomist. His "Year In Review" presentation is always an interesting because of his use of pictures and the experiences he gathers doing visits at golf courses. One of the main topics was winter damage and some of the steps that may be taken to try and help prevent problems caused by the winter months.

He pointed out that there is nothing that can be done to fully prevent winter damage to turf-grass, but how important it is to take the necessary steps in trying to help prevent problems that do occur during the winter. Greens covers have shown to hurt and help greens while removing snow and ice also has shown to help and hurt greens. Bob discussed ways to help the turf recover from damage and when it may be necessary to take the damaged areas out of play to help the recovery process.

Bob concluded his presentation by talking about the USGA TruFirm meter. The meter was originally designed to measure the firmness of bunkers and now is used to measure the firmness of a putting green. Research has shown mois-

ture is the major factor in green firmness and green speed on greens under championship conditions.

After lunch the association held its annual spring membership meeting. The meeting started with two video presentations, the first being Monroe Miller's acceptance speech at the GCSAA Golf Industry Show and the second being GCSAA TV coverage of a Assistant Superintendent meeting hosted by Kevin Knoblauch, Assistant Golf Course Superintendent, Milwaukee Country Club. These videos can be found at GCSAA.org.

President Dustin Riley presented the agenda for the meeting and gave an update regarding the search for a chapter manager. 8 perspective candidates will be honed down to 3 for interviews and the board hopes to have a party selected by late spring. Overall the chapter had a good 2008 despite the economic downturns and is in good financial position heading into 2009.

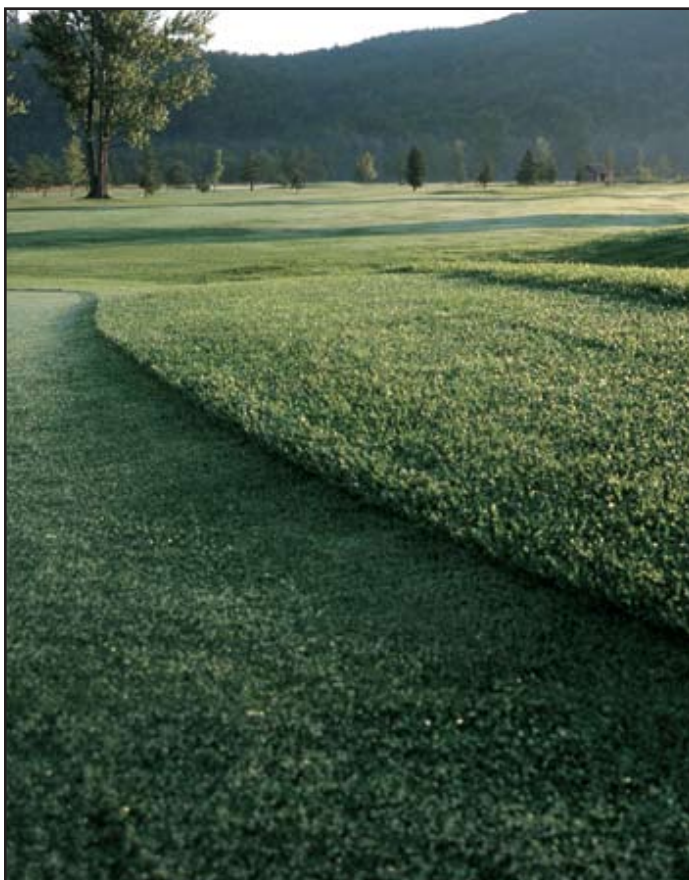
Vice President Jeff Millies presented the 2008 year end treasurers report showing \$7,574.60 in revenue over expenses for the fiscal 2008. The association was able to donate \$38,000 in research and scholarship funds in 2008.

Incoming Membership Chairman Jim VanHerwynen presented 25 year plaques to Andy Kronwall, Lake

Geneva CC, Mark Kastenholz, Tipton Municipal GC, and Bill Rogers, Evergreen GC. Andy Kronwall studied Horticulture Production at the Gateway Technical College and started at Lake Geneva Country Club as the Assistant Superintendent in 1980 working for Gil Burdohl. Andy liked Lake Geneva so much he became superintendent in 1983 and has stayed there ever since. Andy is a past member of the WGCSA Board of Directors and has three daughters, Ashley working on her masters degree at Loyola University, Lisa graduating from UW-Lacrosse this spring and Beth who will start at UW-Madison this fall.

Mark Kastenholz started in the industry in 1980 at Tripoli Country Club working for Jim Belfield. On his way up the golf course industry ladder Mark worked at Medina CC for Dan Pakala, Ozaukee CC for Wayne Otto, Meadowbrook CC for Chad Ball and Kenosha CC for Mike Seaton. Mark spent 7 years as Golf Course Superintendent at Eagle Creek Resort in Findlay, IL and 7 years at Forest Hills in Richmond, IN before becoming the first Golf Course Superintendent at Tipton Municipal Golf Course in Tipton, IN in 2002. Mark achieved the status of Certified Golf Course Superintendent in 1996 and has kept that designation.

Bill Rogers received his Bachelor in Soil Science with a focus on Turfgrass Management in 1983 from the



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Andy Kronwall receives his 25 membership plaque from James Vanherwyn.



Dr. Chris Williamson presented his latest information on sod webworms and the Emerald Ash Borer.

University of Wisconsin - Madison. He was the Assistant Superintendent at North Shore GC in Menasha for Roger Bell before spending 6 years as the Golf Course Superintendent at Lake Wisconsin CC in Prairie du Sac. Bill started at Evergreen Golf Course in Elkhorn WI in 1990 and has stayed ever since. In 1999 Bill became the General Manager at Evergreen followed by adding Partner to his title in 2002. Bill and his wife Cindy reside in Elkhorn and have two

children, Alexandria and Samantha. Bill and the staff at Evergreen will be hosting the WGCSA July Meeting.

Incoming Golf and Arrangement Chair Scott Bushman thanked all of the vendors for their sponsorship in 2008 and gave the dates and locations for the meetings for 2009. Some sites are still available for 2010 if your club is interested in hosting a meeting. Education committee chair Mark Storby stated that there will no longer be any

GCSAA regional seminars but the webcasts will still be offered for education points. This change from national is a positive result of chapters and vendors doing a great job providing local seminars.

Rod Johnson spoke briefly on the Wee One Foundation. The foundation, a tribute in memory of Wayne Otto CGCS, started years ago as an idea to aid families in the golf course industry who face financial burdens with respect to medical needs. Since its inception in 2004 the foundation has gifted over \$240,000 with no strings attached to numerous families in various states. A number of golf outing fundraisers are held for the Wee One Foundation throughout the country but the group needs membership dues to be its main source of income. More information can be obtained at www.weeone.org.

The Spring Business Meeting was an educational experience for all. I hope all of you consider participating in the events planned for 2009. A calendar of events will be included in each issue of *The Grass Roots* and also can be viewed at the association website at www.wgcsa.com.



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