



UW-Madison Turf Club Members Jens Arnsen, Dustin Bernau and Joe Betcher man the booth at GIS



Jaime Staufenbeil and Tisa Overman work the Milorganite Booth at GIS.



This Model F3 Mete-R-Matic Topdresser was sold to Christina Lake Golf Course, Grand Forks B.C. in 1962 and used until 1987 when it was traded in.

Chris Sorrell, GCS, Eagles Ridge Golf Club presented “Doing The Most With The Little You Have” and how he has provided the club with good playing conditions on a small budget in a area of low population. With a total 2010 budget of 111,087.68 for a 18 hole golf course including labor Chris stressed the importance of planning, bidding, budgeting and staff relationships to succeed with the tools he has. Sorrell does have the benefit of regular winds that reduce turf wetness and the need for fungicides. He also brews a compost tea to apply to putting greens to decrease fertilizer and fungicide applications.

Jeff VerCautren, GCS, Rich Harvest Farms gave “Training for the Long Term Employee” and how to hire, train and enrich golf course staff members to enjoy



The idea for the “Vanherraker” came to Jim VanHerwynen in a dream after a day working on spring willow debris cleanup by hand.

their positions while doing exceptional work.

Terry Buchen, CGCS Retired, Golf Agronomy International presented “Travels with Terry: Ideas for Equipment Modification” taken after his regular feature in Golf Course Industry Magazine on how individual golf course mechanics and superintendents have produced low cost modifications to current equipment. Terry’s features gave those in attendance some great ideas to take home including one from James VanHerwynen, CGCS at South Hills Country Club in Fond du Lac showing a modification to the front blade on a sand trap rake to mount leaf rakes to speed up spring cleanup of tree debris. The crew has named the unit the “Vanherraker. (see picture above)

I skipped the annual Chapter Editors Session to sign up for *Golf Turf PTI (Professional Turfgrass Intelligence)* modeled after ESPN's *Pardon The Interruption* and presented by Dr. Frank Rossi, Cornell University and Dr. Roch Gaussoin, University of Nebraska. I had high expectations and was not disappointed and these two leaders in turf taught, argued, entertained, shocked and gave us plenty to think about.

They covered thatch, aerification, soil testing, foliar feeding, bio nutrition and hair gel preferences. I would recommend this seminar as a must see and it gives turf managers plenty to think about the necessity of many traditional activities and how we may be better off returning to the basics. My notes taken a bit out of context include "roots are overrated", "Regular soil tests are not needed", "no more Potassium applications" and "pulling cores increases organic matter".

Answers On The Hour were short presentations given on the trade show floor. They not only gave some great information it provided tired attendees some time to rest their feet! I sat in on a couple of the sessions and they were worth the time away from product research.

"The Razors Edge: Lessons Learned from the 2010 Growing Season" with Dr. Frank Rossi brought a standing room only crowd as he discussed the challenges of the last year with weather stresses challenging turf managers. Frank felt most of the problems in the north were because superintendents are overall poor users of irrigation systems. We usually have regular rain so our systems are inefficient and "we suck at watering" because we usually have a lot of room for error. Irrigation audits are a must so turf managers no how much water they are applying across the property. Frank felt we needed to use more acidifying fertilizers with ammonium sulfate and iron sulfate as a part of our programs for good low cost results.

He finished with a discussion on the topic of less is more and environmental sustainability will lead to browner golf course conditions. His opinion differed with many as he expressed "For golfers to expect lower quality conditions is stupid". We as turf managers need to get better with the tools we have and use fewer inputs to provide quality conditions in order to attract and keep customers.

The Golf Course Builders Association of America presented "Estimating Costs for Golf Course Construction Projects" and gave attendees insight into how to budget for projects. One challenge they face is golf course managers and owners often want to buy materials themselves at a lower price but often underestimate transportation, unloading and storage costs and hassles along with the loss of soil materials from settling and contamination.

The Society of Golf Course Appraisers gave a frightening presentation titled "Recovering from the Great Recession". I say frightening because after they discussed ways to do more with less and help your clubs recover economically they laid the reality of the golf business on the line with one statement. Over the next three years 8,000 golf course mortgages with 5 to 10 year balloon payments will come due. These loans total in the hundreds of billions and lenders are very skeptical about golf course loans. The bright side is if you have cash to buy a golf course, there will be plenty for sale.

The society suggested golf courses work closely with their current loan provider to try and extend terms or lower interest rates before the course has major problems.

Cheers, Tears and Fears: Hosting a Major Golf Championship was moderated by Ron Whitten, Senior Editor for Golf Digest and featured panelists Mike Davis, Senior Director of Rules and Competitions for the USGA, (Mike Davis was selected to serve as the 7th Executive Director of the USGA on March 2) Stan George, CGCS, Prairie Dunes Country Club, Matt Shaffer, Director of Golf Course Operations, Merion Golf Club and Tom Roy, Executive Producer for NBC Sports. The group highlighted the challenges and benefits of preparing for a major golf championship including how to provide firm and fast conditions. Merion Golf Club offers those conditions all year long, while Prairie Dunes is more of a family club so they increase their tournament conditions for major events.

The USGA Green Section ever popular session titled *Lessons Learned Come In All Forms* highlighted lessons learned by the agronomists travels visiting golf courses each year. The 9 talks and the highlights from USGA Green Section Award Winner Dennis Lyon will be presented in a future *USGA Green Section Record* e-newsletter.



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The final session of the 2011 GCSAA Education Conference was the exciting *You Asked For It... You Got It* on Friday afternoon. By then many of the attendees were headed home but Wisconsin was well represented by Tod Blankenship, Jerry Kershasky, Steven Schmidt and yours truly to “close the show”. This session speakers and topics are picked by GCSAA members during the season leading to timely information.

Dr. Mike Richardson, University of Arkansas started with “Surviving Weather Extremes of Heat and Humidity” as he discussed how the extremes affected photosynthesis and respiration of cool season turfgrasses. Turf managers need to carefully monitor fertility, moisture and perform proper cultivation during stressful times.

Bob Oppold, Vice President, International Sports Turf Research Center presented “Water Problems? Spot Drainage May Be For You” as he discussed how to improve problem drainage areas temporarily without severe damage to the playing surface. Bob presented 4 case studies and the investigation to find the cause of the drainage problem and the solution to fix it.

Dr. Zac Reicher, University of Nebraska gave “Poa Trivialis: Where Does it Come From and How to Control It.” This pesky plant is a contaminant in seed fields after being grown for winter overseeding in the south. This weak perennial outgrows other cool season grasses in the spring and fall but goes dormant or dead in the heat of August before re-growing in September from crowns and stolens. Reicher’s research

has shown the use of Velocity and Certainty can control and eventually eliminate the Poa Trivialis in bentgrass fairways. In bluegrass fairways control can be tricky as the products can damage the desired species under some conditions.

Mark Esoda, CGCS Atlanta Country Club presented “Communication Techniques for Exceeding Expectations While Managing a Budget” and not how to do more with less, but how to do less with less but to do so “strategically”. Esoda suggested turf managers use Blogs, Twitter, Facebook or simple e-mail to communicate regularly with members and decision makers.



PGA Golfer Larry Nelson addresses the Prayer Breakfast

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Dr. Cale Bigelow, Purdue University presented “Understanding Nutrient Fate” and how the 17 elements needed for plant growth interact with the environment. Public perception is that turfgrass is a major contributor to declining water quality and weather that is right or wrong perceptions are reality for many outside the golf industry. Cale discussed the nutrient runoff and leaching studies they are doing at Purdue and how nutrients applied in the proper amounts move very little above or underground. The key is to maintain a healthy turf stand and apply only the nutrients needed to maintain that stand with a thorough understanding of your soil tests and plant needs.

The show is a great place for “rubbernecking” or listening to and meeting stars of the game. Celebrate GCSAA featured awards given by GCSAA and finished with Nick Price winner of the Old Tom Morris Award. The award given to an individual who “through a continuing lifetime commitment to the game of golf has helped to mold the welfare of the game in a manner and style exemplified by Old Tom Morris.” Morris (1821-1908) was greenkeeper and golf professional at the St. Andrews Links Trust Golf Club of St. Andrews, Scotland; a four-time winner of the British Open (1861, ‘62, ‘64 and ‘67); and ranked as one of the top links designers of the 19th century.

Price, who is from Zimbabwe and lives in Hobe Sound, Fla., has won three majors and finished second in two others. He has three victories on the Champions to go with 18 PGA Tour wins and 24 international wins. Between 1992 and 1994, Price won 16 of the 54 tournaments he played in worldwide, the victories including the 1992 PGA Championship, 1993 Players Championship, and both the British Open and PGA Championship in 1994.

Price’s talk was filled with humor from stories from the game and he offered his opinion on golf course conditioning. “Golf is not a game of perfect” he said and we need to get back to skinny lies, bounces and firm conditions so the ball releases through the dry months.

Wednesdays General Session featured 2010 Old Tom Morris Award Winner Judy Rankin. Rankin had to cancel her visit to the show last year when a family emergency arose. Rankin won the 1959 Missouri Amateur at age 14 and finished as the low amateur in the 1960 U.S. Women’s Open at age 15. She turned pro in 1962 at age 17 and accumulated 28 professional wins, including 26 LPGA tour victories. Rankin finished in the top ten on the money list 11 times between 1965 and 1979 but was

forced to retire from full-time competition at the age of 38 due to chronic back problems. She then embarked on a highly successful career as a golf commentator for ABC and ESPN, which included being the first woman to work full-time on broadcasts of men’s events. She captained the victorious American teams in the 1996 and 1998 Solheim Cups. Rankin became the first player voted into the LPGA Tour Hall of Fame in 2000 under the veteran’s category.

She has won awards from every major golf association including the USGA Bob Jones Award, the Patty Berg award from the LPGA, The First Lady in Golf Award from the PGA of America and was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2000.

Rankin received an immediate applause when she

stated I am one of the few professional golfers who does not consider themselves an architect. Rankin described what she called the “simple joy of hitting balls at a facility” and thought

courses should “have more respect for the nine-hole golfer”.

Thursdays General Session featured Pat Williams, Senior Vice President and co-founder of the Orlando Magic. The author of 40 books and a 7 year veteran of the United States Army, Williams is considered a top motivational speaker. He and his wife are the parents of 19 children including 14 adopted who range in age from 20 to 34.

Williams discussed the importance of leadership and how some leaders are born but most are made. He stressed the importance of continuing education and to never be satisfied in your knowledge of leadership and/or your profession and hobbies. He thought the best way to exercise and expand your mind was by reading.

The Prayer Breakfast is one of the earliest sessions of the week but well worth the wake up call to share breakfast, music, scripture, camaraderie and to hear a fabulous speaker. PGA Golfer Larry Nelson joined and entertained us this year as he discussed his career in the golf and his journey with Christ.

Nelson did not take up the game until he was 21 after he returned home from Vietnam and said he taught himself golf by reading *Ben Hogan’s Five Lessons: The Modern Fundamentals of Golf*. It must have been a good book as he broke 100 the first time he played and 70 within nine months. Along with his stories from the tour he discussed how although he and his family were regular church goers he had to grow his relationship with God. “Going to church does not make you a Christian any more than standing in your garage makes you a car”.

“Golf Is Not A Game Of Perfect”
Nick Price

That is what I saw for the week and when you consider I attended 1 of 116 paid seminars and a quarter of the general sessions the GCSAA Educational Conference offers something for everyone. Power points from many of the seminars can be found on the GCSAA website along with video reports and interviews from the show floor.

Congratulations to the team from University of Wisconsin-Madison took 8th place in the 17th annual Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition won by Iowa State University. The event included 320 students forming 87 teams from 39 colleges and universities. The top ten include Iowa winning for the 11th time in 13 years followed by Purdue (2nd), Massachusetts (3rd), Penn State (4th and 7th), Ohio State (5th), Cal Poly Pomona (6th), Wisconsin (8th), Virginia Tech (9th) and Colorado State (10th).

Congratulations to Tod Blankenship who recently moved back to the badger state to become the Certified Golf Course Superintendent at Trappers Turn Golf Course, for receiving a Watson Fellowship Grant. Blankenship joined Emily Merewitz and Alexander Putman in receiving \$5,000 postgraduate grants by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) as winners of the 2010 Watson Fellowship Program. Blankenship is working toward a master's degree at Oregon State University, Merewitz is pursuing a doctorate degree at Rutgers University, and Putman is a graduate student at North Carolina State University.

The Watson Fellowship is funded by a partnership between The Toro Co. and The Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG). It is named after James R. Watson, Ph.D., a retired vice president for Toro who pioneered turfgrass research. The winners, students working toward postgraduate degrees, have been identified as promising future teachers and researchers in the field of golf course management. They also received an all-expense paid trip to the 2011 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show.

Congratulation goes out to Derek Kastenschmidt of Reinders for receiving the 2010 Toro Commercial Equipment Master Salesperson award. Toro has an annual awards presentation and Derek had no idea he was the recipient or that his wife Shelly and family were secretly flown to Orlando until his wife walked on stage as they

read the persons past several years accomplishments. Needless to say, Derek and the entire Reinders team were very surprised and excited to see this unfold and hear Derek's name announced.

Derek is a 1992 graduate of Michigan State University where he received his degree in Turfgrass Management. He began his sales career in November of 1992 and has been a sales representative for Reinders since 1998. He received Toro's Green Jacket award in 2002 and is a certified professional sales representative from Sales Marketing Executives International.

Congratulations to UW-Madison student Glen Obear for winning the GCSAA Scholars Program. Obear from Sheboygan was selected as the first place winner and is named the Mendenhall Award Winner. He received a \$6,000 scholarship.

The GCSAA Scholars Program, funded by the Robert Trent Jones Endowment, was developed to recognize outstanding students planning careers in golf course management. Winners were selected to receive scholarship awards based on the final ranking in a competition judged by GCSAA's Scholarship Committee. Factors considered were academic achievement, potential to become a leading professional, employment history, extracurricular activities, and recommendations from a superintendent with whom the student has worked and a current academic advisor.

The Mendenhall Award is given in memory of the late Chet Mendenhall, a pioneer in the golf course management industry. A native of Kingman, Kan., Mendenhall's upbringing on an Oklahoma farm served him well. His career in working with the land began in 1920 as an employee of the Wichita (Kan.) Parks and Forestry Department, where he designed and built his first course despite having no previous experience with the game.

**Toro Master Salesman Award Ceremony:
From Left to Right Jim Heinze, Derek Kastenschmidt, Shelly Kastenschmidt, Darren Redetzke, Peter Whitacre, Dale Getz**



Celebrate Certification allowed certified superintendents to gather for recognition, lunch and networking. Wisconsin's Rod Johnson received his 25 year plaque for renewing his certification 5 times. Ron Whitten, Senior Architectural Editor For Golf Digest was the guest speaker. Ron brings a unique background a former attorney turned architectural expert. He joined Dr. Michael Hurdzan and Dana Fry in designing Erin Hills near Hartford.

The GCSAA National Championship and Golf Classic were held at PGA National in Palm Beach, FL February 5 and 6 with a mixer bestball the day before. The Championship was played on the National Course was won by David Brown of Flatirons Golf Club in Boulder, CO. Scott Bushman led Wisconsin with a tie for 53rd place in the Championship.

In the Golf Classic played on the PGA National Haig and Palmer Courses leaders from Wisconsin included Steve Schmidt at Butte Des Morts Country Club with a 11th place in the Div 1 Senior Gross and Tom Wentz of Lebanon with a 12th place in the Affiliate Gross.

The GCSAA Championship is a great way to get away for a couple days of relaxation and competition before the

show. GCSAA offers the National Championship and the Golf Classic for serious and serious but fun competition respectively.

I thought the week was a great opportunity and if I had any negative observations it would be the hockey game next to the Answers on The Hour sessions was a noise distraction and for some of the speakers they clearly needed more seating. The other problem I noticed was the educational conference had two programs or guides available. The 1/3 width program is convenient to carry but did not include the names of speakers and topics of some of the free educational sessions leading to less attendance at those events. The full width program was harder to carry but included everything, but why would you carry two programs? Many attendees only grabbed the smaller incomplete program guide. Next year GCSAA should just provide one program and include all the information in it.

Next years GCSAA Conference will be Las Vegas Feb. 27 to March 2 with the Golf Industry Show Feb. 29 to March 1, at the Las Vegas Convention Center. Bring your nickels and enjoy the hustle and bustle of the strip.



25 Year Certification Class: Rod Johnson, CGCS at Pine Hills Country Club is back row, third from left.



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Comparison of Three Commercially Available Wetting Agents

By Dr. Doug Soldat, Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin - Madison

Choosing a wetting agent can be a tricky business. Marketing claims run rampant, with some of them solidly backed by data, and others not so much. Last summer, we evaluated three commercially available wetting agents, Revolution (Aquatrols), Tournament Ready (Kalo), and APSA-80 (Amway). While the summer of 2010 was too wet for localized dry spot to appear, we did find differences in the potential hydrophobicity of the soil. The greater the potential hydrophobicity, the greater the chance that localized dry spot would develop under moisture deficit conditions. Our research plots are flat, but it is likely that many of you experience dry spots on knob or areas with deeper root zones due to non-uniform construction and/or topdressing. This article will summarize our findings and help you make an informed decision when purchasing a wetting agent.

Study Conditions

The study was conducted on a L-93 USGA-specification sand putting green. The treatments consisted of an untreated control and different experimental wetting agents applied at the rates and frequencies listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Products and rate used. All products were applied monthly.

Treatment Name	Rate * (oz/1000 ft ²)
Control	N/A
Revolution	6
APSA-80	4
Tournament Ready	8 initially, 4 monthly

*Treatments were applied in 2 gal/1000 ft² and immediately watered in with 0.25 in.

Wetting agents were applied on May 15, June 14, July 12, and August 8; data was collected through September 15. The putting green was mowed at 0.120 inches six days per week. Irrigation was applied at 30% of estimated ET until June 21, after which no irrigation was applied for the remainder of the season. The water drop penetration test was conducted on soil cores monthly during the study to determine potential soil hydrophobicity. To conduct the test, small drops of water were placed at 1 cm intervals down to a depth of 5 cm of an air dried soil core. A stopwatch was used to record the amount of time required for each drop to fully penetrate the soil core.




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