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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
End Of The Year Thoughts 4

CHAPTER CONVERSATION
Thank You To Our Supporters 6

TURFGRASS DIAGNOSTIC LAB
2013 Learning What I Thought I Knew. 8

WISCONSIN SOILS REPORT
Mineral Deposits In Sand Putting Greens 12

WISCONSIN PATHOLOGY REPORT
The Next Chapter 16

MISCELLANY
Diamonds In The Rough 20

AN ARCHITECT'S OPINION
Devries Leaves Low Water Legacy at Reid Golf Club. ... 22

GCSAA
Chapter Delegates Meeting Outcomes 28

WISCONSIN ENTOMOLOGY REPORT
The Latest On The Emerald Ash Borer 30

BADGER STATE TURF CLIPPINGS
News and Notes From WGCSA Members 32

NOTES FROM THE NOER FACILITY
Worth The Wait: WTA Fundraising At Maple Bluff
Country Club 36

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK
Potpourri Of Time And Weather. 42

EVENT SCHEDULE 44

WISCONSIN TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION
UW / WTA Field Day Set For January 14th 32

ABOUT THE COVER

The par 5 fifth hole At Maple Bluff Country Club, host of the 2013 WTA Fundraiser.

We need to do everything we can to build interest in golf for the next generation. We need to keep the game friendly and fun.

By Annika Sorenstam, Professional Golfer

This quote by Sorenstam from the 2013 PGA Merchandise Show can serve as a reminder to provide a product that can challenge low handicap players without making it too difficult for new players.

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End of Year Thoughts

By Chad Harrington, Golf Course Superintendent, Autumn Ridge Golf Course

I am not sure this is my favorite time of year, but I definitely look forward to some of what late fall and early winter bring to our profession. Many of the superintendents in Wisconsin burn the candle at both ends during the golf season. We try to be everything to everyone, and unfortunately that dedication to the golf course can sometimes leave the most important ones in our lives getting the short end of that burning candle...including ourselves.

The recent weather change has afforded me to take the time for a few things that I have been putting off for a while. The first thing would be a knee surgery, that by no means was anything I was looking forward to and by default of the down time from a trip to the hospital, a little time to sit, with my leg up of course, and think about where 2013 had gone.

It seems like yesterday we were getting ready to usher in 2013. My first year in this position with our association has truly been a whirlwind. I look at all of the goals those of you who have served on this board have been able to accomplish during your time as leaders and I am honored and humbled to follow in


your footsteps and want to thank you for the groundwork you have laid for our association to follow. I, like I am certain many presidents of the WGCSA before me, have goals. One of my goals has been to attempt to work with our allied associations within our state to help enhance our presence and opportunities we may have as superintendents. Some of what I have found in conversation with many of the other golf oriented associations is that things are not easy at this time. I know that is preaching to the choir talking to all of you and at a time when other associations struggle to maintain membership; ours continues to be loyal and sound.

A few years ago, well at least I would like to believe it was just a few, under the Presidency of Mr. Dustin Riley the WGCSA Board of Directors went through a strategic planning session. I actually believe it to be four or five all day planning sessions with Steve Randall from GCSAA who help guide and organize the board thoughts into what we at that time were considered a list of long term goals and pathways for the WGCSA. Some of the items that we discussed

were matters of articulating into print what was the objective and mission statement of the aAssociation, but what took the longest was looking back at all of the great things we had done and where we had grown from and setting realistic goals and expectations for the future. One of the overwhelming sediments that came from all of the hours of conversation was that with our profession getting more and more time consuming to our lives, is that we would need help.

Our association hired Mr. Brett Grams as our Executive Director and he has done a fabulous job of guiding the WGCSA during an extremely turbulent time, he has done so in a very organized and fiscally responsible way. I urge all of you to thank Brett for his efforts. He has more than picked up the slack for items that could have slipped through the cracks he has afforded our association the ability to keep marking goals off of our preverbal checklist. That brings me back to being able to sit back with my leg up and think.

Our association is now at a point where we have discussed hosting another strategic planning secession and I have talked to Mr. John Miller, the GCSAA Regional Field Staff Representative, about sitting down with us again. We have discussed being able to do this between the first of the 2014 and our Spring Business Meeting. I ask each and every one of you to take a moment during this somewhat less hectic time of year in the golf world and ask yourself, "where do I want to see this association go in the next ten to twenty years". "What have we done well and what can we improve upon." I would love to hear from each of you as we start to assemble a new set of goals, a new set of standards, and a new set of priorities for the future of the WGCSA.

I hope that all of you had a great 2013 and even better 2014. I would also like wish each of you and your families a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I look forward to talking to you soon. 



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Thank You To Our Supporters!

By Brett Grams, Chapter Manager, Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association

Well I admit I have been spoiled by the recent warmer and longer falls of the past few years. So far the end of October and all of November have been quite cold, windy and wet. Every time I had plans to get away to woods for some hunting or in the yard to do some leaf clean up I was faced with less than ideal weather conditions. I hope all you had better luck with getting your fall projects completed than I did!

As most of you are winding down your golf maintenance season now is the time to start preparing for next year. The 2014 WGCSA Calendar has been completed. (Page 44) I am excited about our meeting sites for the season. We have a combination of familiar venues and other courses that we have not been to for quite a few years. I want to extend a big thank you to Scott Bushman who works diligently to confirm these sites many months in advance. The Education Committee is now working on bringing in speakers and identifying timely topics for our monthly speakers. I am happy to report


that Education Chair Kevin Knudtson has confirmed Dr. Nick Christians from Iowa State for our March 3rd Spring Business Meeting. This will be a great way to start off the education sessions for next year. In the coming weeks we will have the complete education topics and offerings for the upcoming year completed.

I am also happy to report that the 2014 WI Room at the GIS in Orlando, FL will be held Wednesday evening February 5th. Thanks to the continued and generous support of our Industry Partners we will again be hosting a complimentary evening for WGCSA members from 6 to 9 PM at the Brickhouse Tavern and Tap right on International Drive (down the street from the Convention Center).

This time of year is always a good time to review the past season and the WGCSA Leaders would like to thank all of the membership who attended our monthly meetings and educational events. We also would like to give special thanks to the vendor companies and Industry Partners who graciously support our association

and efforts. We simply could not provide all the meetings, educational events and of course this great magazine without their input and support! Please consider the sponsors of our association in your purchasing decisions. Please take the time to thank the companies that support us, let them know you are aware of this support when you can!

Good things continue happen throughout the state including UW Madison where we have just received a request for funding some new research. The WGCSA Board of Directors will be addressing these and other funding requests as we prepare our annual budget. I hope all of you will be able to attend the Fall Business Meeting that precedes our Turf Symposium in Kohler. Elections, budget approval, and other important chapter decisions are decided at this meeting. I hope you can attend and add ideas and provide feedback.

In closing I hope each member can spend some quality time with family and friends during the holidays. Take a break, you deserve it! 

WGCSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is committed to serve each member by promoting the profession and enhancing the growth of the game of golf through education, communication and research.

WGCSA VISION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- Enhancing the professionalism of its members by strengthening our role as a leading golf organization in the state.
- Growing and recognizing the benefits of a diverse membership throughout Wisconsin.
- Educating and promoting our members as leaders in environmental stewardship.
- Offering affordable, high value educational programs at the forefront of technology and service.
- Being key to enjoyment and the economic success of the game of golf.

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2013: Learning What I Thought I Knew

By Bruce Schweiger, Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab Manager, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility

As you all know I made a huge career change last spring to become the Director of the Turfgrass Diagnostic Laboratory at the OJ Noer Research Facility. After spending over 35 years in the field as a grower, sales rep and general manager this was going to be different. I have had a long relationship with the TDL as a contract member for many years. Through the Gregos, Abler and Koch years I thought I had a good idea of what this new career was going to entail. Let me say it publically boy was I wrong. I never knew Gregos and Steve Abler could work so hard, but I knew Dr. Koch did (he is my new boss). When I started in spring the snow mold rating from the winter had not been finished yet due to the cold spring and the fact that the UP plots had snow cover until May 6th. My real initiation to my new job was the trip from the OJ Noer to Antigo Bass Lake GC to rate the cover trials, then on to Wawonowin Golf Course for snow mold rating and last but not least on to Brainerd, MN all in one day. After a very short night we were off to rate more snow mold plots at The Legacy Course at Gragun's. Then the long trip home in the mist. After lunch Dr. Koch decided to make use of the windshield time and have Sam and PJ (our two great technicians) read the data we had just collected to him as I drove down the interstate. Imagine listening to them reading 76, 66, 74, 69, and 72 and so on for three hours on the interstate in the rain. What had I signed up for, what happened to into work by 8 and home by 4:30 and hitting balls at the University Ridge Driving Range over my lunch hour? Well

those days never did appear. I never made it to the range at University Ridge to hit balls. I played 7 rounds of golf, and never got my boat into the water to fish until early September.

I had to learn turfgrass disease from behind a microscope and if I was lucky a few pictures that accompanied the samples. We have been over this in past articles. I want to tell you I had so much fun this summer talking turf with homeowners, landscape contractors, sports field managers, sod growers, golf course superintendents other turfgrass professionals. At the OJ Noer the Pathology department is in charge of the maintenance of each of our research plots. With the help of Tom Schwab OJ Noer Facility manager, and two fantastic technicians, Sam Soper and PJ Leisch, I was able to keep up on all our work. I need to take a quick moment to thank PJ and Sam; they were fantastic sharing their knowledge with me and teaching far more than I taught them this summer, THANKS GUYS!!!

What did 2013 have in store for me? I was lucky that weather created a slow start to the growing season and I was able to slowly walk into the job and with Dr. Koch's guidance keep up with the diagnostics. As spring passed into summer



Fig 1. Flooding at the Noer Center when as much as 15 inches fell on the area in a week.

part of the state was berated with as much as 15 inches of rain in a week. Flooding was being reported in many areas of the state and we were not spared at the OJ Noer as shown in **figure 1**.

The prolonged cold spring lead to an increase in root pathogens such as Summer Patch (*Magnaporthe poae*) and Necrotic Ring Spot (*Ophioshaerella korrae*) in Bluegrass, and Take-all-patch (*Gaeumannomyces graminis* var. *avenae*) in bentgrass. Summer Patch and Necrotic Ring proved to be very active this summer. Many of confirmed diagnosis can be traced back to the extremely wet weather or just plain over watering with in-ground irrigation. It seems many homeowners and contractors feel irrigation systems are set it and forget it. As we have seen many times this does not work!

I learned that in diagnostics the present of a specific fungus does not automatically mean that the fungus is the causal agent. I was able to detect diagnose take-all-patch in many samples this summer but in most samples after careful examination and discussion with the golf course superintendent take-all-patch was not the issue.



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TURFGRASS DIAGNOSTIC LAB

2013 Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab Diagnoses

(2012 numbers in parenthesis)

Diagnosis	Professional*	Homeowner*
Take-All Patch	11 (10)	0 (0)
Abiotic	28 (53)	8 (21)
Microdocium Patch	0 (1)	0 (0)
Leaf Spots	4 (3)	2 (1)
Insects	0 (0)	0 (0)
Anthracnose (Foliar & Basal Rot)	15 (17)	0 (0)
Fairy Rings	2 (8)	0 (0)
Necrotic Ring Spot	1 (1)	7 (9)
Summer Patch	11 (15)	7 (16)
Brown Patch	1 (1)	0 (0)
Brown Ring Patch	0 (2)	0 (0)
Etiolated Tiller Syndrome/Bacterial Wilt	0 (1)	0 (0)
Typhula Blight	1 (1)	1 (1)
Weed ID	0 (4)	4 (20)
Dollar Spot	2 (2)	0 (0)
Pythium foliar blight or root rot	7 (7)	0 (0)
Other	12 (5)	2 (1)
TOTAL	96 (131)	31 (70)

Overall it was a low year for sample submission, which made my transition much easier. I am poised for a much more active year and let's hope that is in 2019 or beyond.

On the research side the Rust project that Dr. Koch is involved in presented a few issues we had to overcome. The plots where we planned to seed the bluegrass had a turf cover that needed to be re-

moved. After a couple of glyphosate sprays the sod had to be removed, but how were we going to accomplish that task. You are all way ahead of me, thinking just cut out the sod. The issue was the plot is 15,000 sq. ft. and that equates to a semi and half of sod. The only option was our Ryan sod cutter, this could take days. Well we overcame with the use of a commercial grade sod cutter (**Figure 2**). This

made for a few long days but we accomplished our goal and the plots were seeded mid-June. As you remember and saw in **Figure 1** we had 15 inches of rain at the OJ Noer and

our plots were completely underwater for 4 days. At field days the plots looked horrible, but with some tender loving care we finally had them established and started to collect data in late August.

As always, we would like to offer sincere thanks to our 2013 contract members listed on page 11. Quite simply, the lab would not exist without their generous support. We are well aware that more is asked of you every year, both at your own facility and in support of the associations that work on your behalf. In addition, we at UW and the TDL in particular rely on you to make our programs viable and successful. We do this knowing that every dollar in your budget, both personal and professional, is stretched to the limit and we work hard to make sure every dollar you send our way is managed in the most efficient way possible and that in the end it will make some aspect of your job easier in the future. We hope that no matter what the future holds, you will continue to support the UW and the TDL to the same degree you have in the past. If you aren't a contract member with the TDL, we urge you to join the 63 of your industry colleagues and help to make the TDL the foremost center for turfgrass diagnostics in the Midwest and one of the premier turfgrass centers in the country. We can't do it without your support. For more information, please visit the TDL's website at www.tdl.wisc.edu


Yes, it was a very exciting year and one full of new challenges and learning opportunities. I hope this past year was the same for you and your facility. I also hope we can continue to make every year challenging and a learning opportunity. I look forward to seeing many of you over the winter months and in the years to come. 



Fig 2. A commercial sod cutter was used to speed the process of removing 15,000 sq feet of sod to start with a fresh base for the Rust Project.

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