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MGCSA Upcoming Schedule

2006

Tuesday, December 5
 MGCSA Awards & Recognition Banquet
 Rush Creek Golf Club, Maple Grove
 Host Superintendent: Dale Hiebert

2007

January 3, 4, 5
 Minnesota Green Expo
 Minneapolis Convention Center

Thursday, February 22
 Hospitality Night at the Golf Industry Show
 Tortilla Jo's in Anaheim, California

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About the Cover

Dr. Donald White, University of Minnesota, recently was inducted into the Minnesota Section PGA of America's Hall of Fame. Pictured with Dr. White is Jon Tollette, executive director of the Minnesota Section of the PGA of America. (See story on Page 6)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Open Letter to the Members of Somerset Country Club

By James Bade

Dear Somerset Country Club member:

By virtue of your membership I would call you an environmentalist. As I drive around the grounds of Somerset I am stunned by the fact that some people feel golf courses are bad for the environment. On any given moment this is what one may see at Somerset: white egrets, blue herons, green herons, eastern blue birds, mallard ducks, mergansers, wood ducks, hawks, painter turtles, snapping turtles as well as songbirds and woodpeckers of all kinds. On rarer occasions owls, pileated woodpeckers, kingfishers, turkeys and migratory birds can be found at Somerset C.C.

I am not an ornithologist but for some reason the green heron does exceptionally well here. The egret and blue heron visit to feed on the minnows. I am always amazed that our ponds have as many minnows as they do. Plus they have crayfish and frogs. I'm not sure what the Chinese calendar year is but at Somerset it is the year of the duck! Due to predators (a sign that this plot of land is teaming with nature) ducks don't usually survive. However, this year we had a record amount of ducklings and mergansers moving onto adulthood. A fox, coyote, weasel, raccoon or raptor is missing this year, which has reflected in an increase of rabbits.

When the city of West St. Paul receives a lot of rain, Somerset Country Club is a very important part of the watershed. The golf course absorbs a lot of dirty water and trash. I would be willing to bet that the water that leaves Somerset, down the Ivy Falls and into the Mississippi, is cleaner than when it entered the golf course. Furthermore, when the water is really flowing through the golf course the wild grass and flowers help in erosion control. In your no mow areas are two different varieties of milkweeds which the Monarch butterflies just love. The staff keeps an eye out for noxious weeds like purple loose strife and Canadian thistle. We do miss some thistles, but when they go to seed the gold finches just love them.

The other very colorful bird that is a joy to see is the eastern bluebird. The bluebird houses scattered throughout the golf course have been quite successful. To see the vibrant bluebird chasing after insects is quite a joy. The no mow areas have created a nice habitat for the bluebird trail, and also allow a place for voles and field mice which the hawks and owls love.

In this day and age where hundred year old oaks come tumbling down for town homes and hill-sides are literally hauled away for the same purpose, the green space that Somerset Country Club provides is priceless. You should be applauded for your willingness to keep these 150 acres what they are, especially in this urban setting. With your membership you fulfill a quote by Aldo Leopold: "If the private owner were ecologically minded, he would be proud to be the custodian of a reasonable proportion of such areas, which add diversity and beauty to his farm and to his community." The staff and I would like to thank you for being stewards of this wonderful place that is teeming with all sorts of natural events 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

*Partnering in stewardship with you,
James*

Fellow greenkeepers: Don't underestimate all that you do for the environment by managing the land that you do. Being a steward of this planet is quite rewarding and a privilege. You could be classified as a conservationist with all your hard labors. Get involved with the Audubon if you can.

"Improving the environment one green at a time."

James

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Editor

Jack MacKenzie, CGCS
jmackenzie426@msn.com

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Glencoe CC
Glencoe
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BUSINESS OFFICE AND HOLE NOTES OFFICE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Scott Turtinen
700 Twelve Oaks Center Dr., Suite 706
Wayzata, MN 55391
952/473-2582 Fax: 952/473-2586
Toll Free: 1-800-642-7227
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Recognition for a Lifetime of Dedication to Minnesota Turf

Dr. Donald White Inducted Into MPGA/MGA Golf Hall Of Fame

By Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, North Oaks Golf Club

"... a teacher, mentor and friend to those of us who battle Mother Nature on a daily basis to provide Minnesota golfers with the finest playing surfaces in the Midwest." Indeed Dr. Don White fits those descriptive words, spoken by Jack MacKenzie just prior to Dr. White's acceptance of induction into the Minnesota Professional Golf Association/ Minnesota Golf Association Golf Hall of Fame on the evening of Sunday, October 1st. Finally, one of our own has been recognized for his relentless dedication to the industry.

After 45 years of passionate education and research Dr. White, a leader in annual blue grass breeding, was given a place upon the wall of infamy at the MPGA headquarters at Bunker Hills Golf Course. Almost speechless, he received his plaque to the twice standing ovations of those in attendance at the ceremony. His resounding message: "Above all else, support your Golf Course Superintendents and their Association. There are big battles looming on the horizon and they will need your support to continue providing you with the best turf conditions possible."

Throughout his distinguished life, Dr. White has had a significant impact upon the turfgrass industry locally, nationally and internationally. White began his career at the University of Minnesota in 1961 and has since taught several courses related to turfgrass science, landscape design and nursery management to many of today's superintendents throughout Minnesota and the United States.

Perhaps Dr. White's most important

contribution to turfgrass research has been the development of seeded varieties of creeping bluegrass, *Poa annua*. *Poa annua* has long been considered a weed that should be eliminated from golf courses; however White's research led to the release of the first creeping bluegrass in 1997. The bluegrass is being used by golf courses throughout the world including Pebble Beach.

Dr. White's perseverance and drive have served the State well and his contributions to education and research have been invaluable to golf course superintendents in Minnesota and beyond.

The Minnesota Section of the PGA provided a grand evening for the event. A well-attended and spacious reception,



Dr. Donald White with his wife, Jean.



Dr. Donald White with former students and MGCSA members, from left: Drew Larson, Dr. Brian Horgan, Jeff Johnson, John Steiner CGCS, Erin McManus, Dr. Donald White, Jack MacKenzie CGCS, Doug Mahal CGCS, Ben Just, James Gardner CGCS, and MGCSA President James Bade.

complete with a fantastic display of delicious edibles, allowed participants a relaxed atmosphere to visit before a sumptuous dinner. Throughout the evening award winners of the MPGA were announced and recognized for their

achievements. But the best was saved for last as Dr. White was presented by a legion of his grandest supporters, former graduates of his at the University of Minnesota.

During the final presentation Dr. Brian Horgan, Extension Turf Specialist at the University of Minnesota, described the demands and challenges of breeding turf for commercial production. And Dr. White's posse of graduates presented him with a token of their appreciation, a glass pitcher filled to the brim with golf balls recognizing all of the courses that shared his knowledge through them. Jon Tollette, Executive Director of the Minnesota Section PGA, honored Dr. White with a plaque and hearty "thanks" for his contributions to Minnesota golf.

And then the crowd went wild as Dr. White lit up the room with a smile from wall to wall. Congratulations, Doctor, on a well-deserved achievement.

(Dr. White's) resounding message: "Above all else, support your Golf Course Superintendents and their Association. There are big battles looming on the horizon and they will need your support to continue providing you with the best turf conditions possible."

At Minneapolis Convention Center
Minnesota Green Expo Jan. 3-5
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The Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association (MNLA) and the Minnesota Turf & Grounds Foundation (MTGF) are partners in the regional trade show and educational program which targets a broad spectrum of green industry professionals. The show includes 90 educational seminars and 1,000 trade show booths and exhibits. For registration information, visit www.minnesotagreen-expo.com or call toll-free 888-886-6652.

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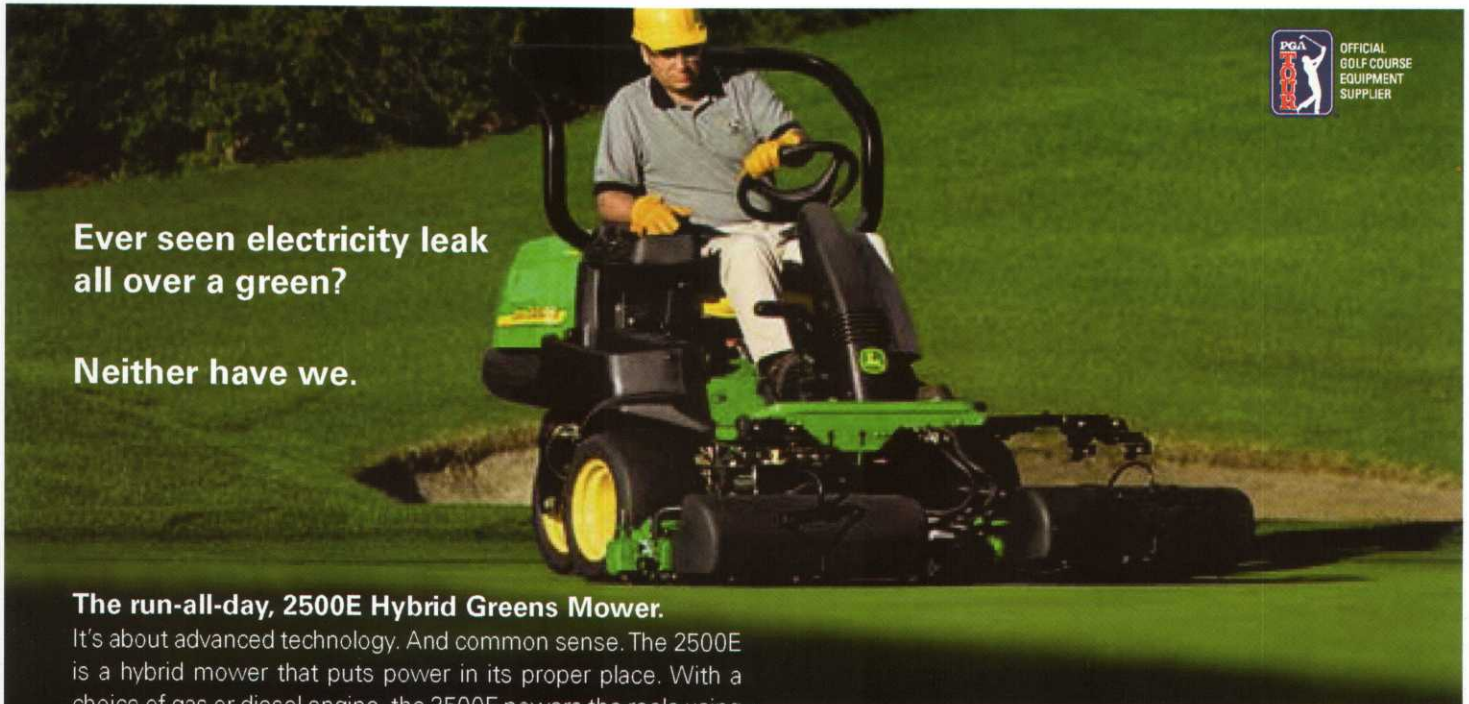
+ "This show is the best educational investment we make. I encourage all my employees to attend."

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- + Low Input IPM/WPM
- + Foliar Feeding
- + Turf Problem Solving Techniques
- + What's the Problem with OM in Greens
- + Multiple Target Principles to Maximize Golf Course Insect Control
- + and much more!

The show's audience includes nursery and greenhouse growers; garden center operators; landscape and irrigation contractors; landscape designers; lawn, tree and gardening professionals; golf course and park superintendents; school and cemetery grounds supervisors; sports turf managers and arborists. Over 7,500 green industry professionals are expected to attend from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota.



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Some of the MGCSA members attending Dr. White's Minnesota Section of the PGA Hall of Fame induction ceremony were, from left, MGCSA President James Bade, Somerset Country Club; James Gardner, CGCS, Indian Hills Golf Club; Doug Mahal, CGCS, The Jewel; Pat Walton, Reinders; Jeff Johnson, The Minikahda Club, and Ben Just, Midland Hills Country Club

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What Kind of a Toad is a Nematode?

By D. H. MacDonald, Department of Plant Pathology, and
D. B. White, Department of Horticultural Science, University of Minnesota, St. Paul

Although our random probing with a Hoffer tube of 142 greens on 36 golf courses back in 1969 and 1970 did work to provide documentation that just about every established green (139/142) that we sampled was infested with plant nematodes, I am not necessarily comfortable in recommending such "randomness" with regard to sampling. Plant pathogens (organisms that cause plant disease) of all types (and plant nematodes really can be the cause of plant disease) rarely are evenly distributed across any piece of "plantscape" including a green. Soil cores possibly collected from "hot spots" as well as "cold spots" across a green may provide an "average" that may mask a significant potential stress with which the turfgrass manager may have to deal. Or, in other words, averages include "extremes" which, in the case of plant nematodes, may be growth-limiting or "predisposing" populations. That fact became very evident back in 1995 when two soil samples cut with a cup-cutter arrived at the Plant Disease Clinic (PDC) in Stakman Hall. The samples were taken from two of the USGA greens at Keller Golf Course that had been rebuilt in 1991 and sodded in either the fall of 1991 or the spring of 1992. The sod that was used had been grown on sand and theoretically should have grown well when laid on the sand of the USGA greens. By the summer of 1995 several but not all of those 12 greens had become essentially unplayable during the heat of a summer that Charlie Pooch (Superintendent at Les Bolstad course) described as being "a beast of a year for growing turfgrasses." The Keller superintendent at that time felt that he had explored all of the chemical and cultural options other than application of a nematocide that existed to him. And so in early September he collected a soil sample from each of the two worst greens to learn if plant nematodes could be "at the root of his problem." Ms. Sandee Gould, Chief Diagnostician of the PDC at that time, asked for advice about how she should proceed to process those samples for plant nematodes. Essentially she was asking: "How do I proceed with this bag of loose



No. 6 at Keller Golf Course in St. Paul

sand topped with a very thin disc of sick plants with unhealthy roots?" We decided that she should try to get 100 cm³ of sand from each "thin disc" and process it for nematodes. One sample in particular turned out to be from what some plant pathologists would call a very "hot spot" on Green #8. It contained in excess of 5,000 plant nematodes. Most of which were stunt nematodes, (*tylenchorhynchus* spp.) which is the most common plant nematode inhabiting Minnesota's golf greens. No other sample from Keller has ever been found to contain anywhere close to that many nematodes. The other cup-cutter sample from Green #18 also came from a "bad" area because it contained over 1,100 stunt nematodes. How did the superintendent find such "hot spots"? Was it luck, skill, chance? Could he have repeated his sampling prowess if he had gone out a second time? I believe that the "hot spot" sample came from the left rear portion of Green 8 where the turfgrass may have been a bit more healthy than it was in the center of the green. But why there? If the superintendent had a specific reason for sampling there that reason has been lost. At any rate the plant nematode populations present in those two samples from greens that were visually "in trouble" dramatically re-aroused our interest in the plant nematodes that can parasitize turfgrasses. It seemed to be a classic example of a disease that could be caused by plant nematodes: 1) the grass started off OK in spring when plant stresses that adversely affect the growth of turfgrasses tend to be minimal and plant

nematodes in the cool soil tend to be sluggish. 2) The amount and quality of plant growth declined as the various plant stresses including nematode activity built-up with the heat of June. 3) Nothing that the experienced superintendent did with fungicides and watering had any beneficial effect on the diseased turf. 4) The grass started to come back in September with cooler conditions that are more favorable for the growth of turfgrasses and which slow down the activities of plant nematodes. And 5) the entire recently published issue of *TurfGrass*

Trends (Volume 4, Issue 10, October, 1995) was devoted to "Nematode Disorders of Turfgrasses: How Important are They?" by Eric B. Nelson. Table 4 in that article listed "Damage Thresholds for Various Nematodes on Representative Cool-season and Warm-season Turfgrasses". The threshold for damage by the "Keller Nematode," a stunt nematode, was listed as 300/100 cm³ of soil. The stunt nematode populations detected by two "cup-cutter" samplings thus exceeded a published threshold for damage by a factor of at least 3 to about 17. Our interest in plant nematodes in putting greens probably would not have been "jump-started" if the Keller superintendent had done his collecting by combining 10 randomly-selected one-inch diameter "Hoffer tube" cores in one bag. More intensive sampling (one sample from each of the 18 greens) in the fall of 1995 revealed that the average Keller "Hoffer tube" sample contained about 409 stunt nematodes/100 cm³ of soil which could be considered by some as being sort of a "Ho-Hum" population. And the randomly collected Hoffer tube samples from those two worst greens (#8 and #18) only contained 831 and 233 stunt nematodes/100 cm³ soil, respectively. In defense of the cup-cutter sampling technique, it did provide data documenting what could happen in terms of multiplication and survival of plant nematodes in two Keller greens as affected by the environment, the management practices and amount of play that existed in 1995. And

(Continued on Page 11)